Eastern Washington University's

Social Media Playbook

A guide to social media

Our Strategy

On Eastern's official social media accounts, our goal is to show our community what makes EWU incredible, and engage our diverse audience with regular content suitable for everyone. Our audience includes potential new students, current students, other universities, faculty and staff, community members and alumni. We post content from affiliated pages, news articles and pictures and videos about EWU using an informal and spirited voice. Constructive criticism is welcome as long as it falls within acceptable community standards. We do our best to address the concerns of the poster, however posts are hidden if they are deemed inflammatory or considered spam. All content posted is designed to establish consistency of branding across all platforms using appropriate logos, colors and the hashtag #EWU. We use proper grammar whenever possible, with some exceptions to accommodate character limits.

Follow Us

Be sure to follow Eastern Washington University on our social media channels!

f /ewueagles

○ @easternwashingtonuniversity

▼ @ewueagles

👻 @ewuofficial

in Eastern Washington University

Need help?

We are here to help you set up an account and discuss the need and strategy for social media in your department. Email us at digital@ewu.edu or visit ewu.edu/socialmedia.

Why Are You Receiving This Playbook?

Social media is about creating dialogue and engaging your audience to help them feel closer to you and your department or program. It can help improve brand recognition, repeat exposure, website traffic and public influence.
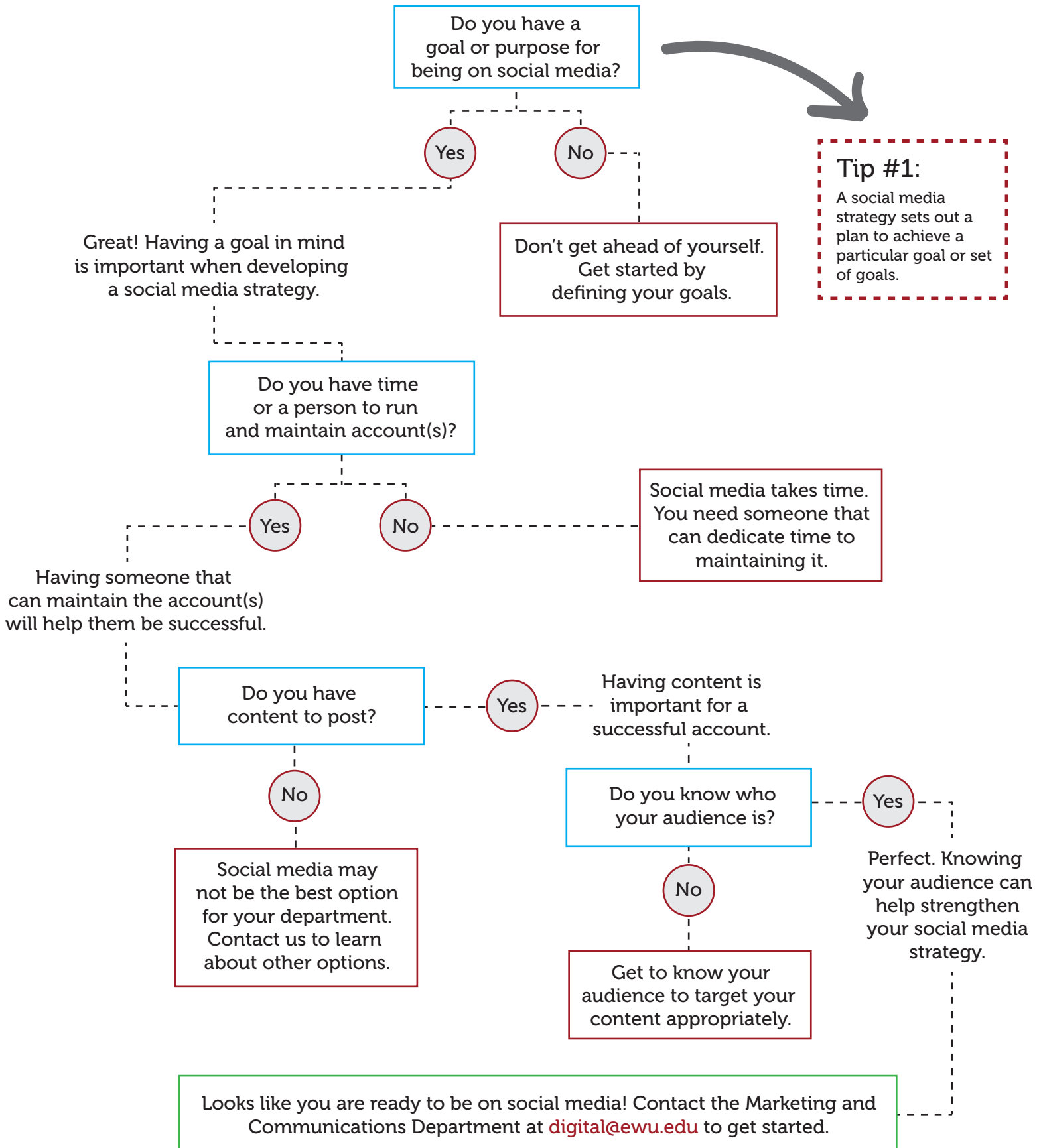
EWU's Social Media Playbook was created based on the experience and insights of EWU's marketing and communications team and its online network with tens of thousands of followers. This playbook does not review all social media platforms. Instead, it focuses on the most used platforms of EWU's target audience and those that are most essential for departments on campus who seek effective social media accounts and strategies. By reviewing and learning the fundamentals, strategies and tactics of social media, this playbook can help your department to achieve the best social media results and increase engagement on your accounts.

Who Is This Playbook For?
This playbook was created to help new users feel comfortable and gain knowledge to become successful with social media. Users who are already engaged in social media and want to take their participation to the next level will also find suggestions, tips and facts to help increase the success of their social media accounts.

Both new and current users will find this playbook helpful in engaging and interacting more effectively online. You'll learn best practices including key information about audience, voice, brand and style.

Does your department/organization need a social media account?

Do you have a goal or purpose for being on social media?

Yes

No

Tip #1:
A social media strategy sets out a plan to achieve a particular goal or set of goals.

Great! Having a goal in mind is important when developing a social media strategy.

Don't get ahead of yourself. Get started by defining your goals.

Do you have time or a person to run and maintain account(s)?

Yes

No

Social media takes time. You need someone that can dedicate time to maintaining it.

Having someone that can maintain the account(s) will help them be successful.

Do you have content to post?

Yes

Having content is important for a successful account.

No

Social media may not be the best option for your department. Contact us to learn about other options.

Do you know who your audience is?

Yes

No

Get to know your audience to target your content appropriately.

Perfect. Knowing your audience can help strengthen your social media strategy.

Looks like you are ready to be on social media! Contact the Marketing and Communications Department at digital@ewu.edu to get started.

Audience

Knowing your audience can help you identify your goals – determine how they want to connect with you and which social media channels they prefer. Once you know who your audience is, you can direct the content, voice and image of your page to achieve your goals. Monitoring tools can provide audience insights including demographic data, location and interests.

Tip #2: Know what you want to achieve.

Before you can write your social media strategy, you need a clear understanding of your department's goals. What is your department trying to accomplish?

Content Strategy

Consider your audience and their needs as they relate to your purpose. Decide how often you want to post, while keeping in mind that the quality of your content is more important than the quantity. Engaging content will achieve a far greater audience.

Content ⟶ Connection ⟶ Engagement

While writing your content strategy, keep your objectives realistic and measurable. Beginning your social media efforts with one or two goals is a good starting point.

A content strategy should be informed by a number of factors:

- Listening to online conversations. What do your users want to see/hear/need help with?
- Messaging/campaign priorities for your department
- Historical data on how previous posts have performed

Your content strategy should align the needs of your audience and the needs of your department. This can be a challenge, but it is important to consider both. One way to help balance their needs and your needs is by using an editorial calendar to plan future posts.

Platforms

Choosing the right social media platform is an important part of building your social media approach.

Tip #3: Social Media Explained...With Donuts

f "I like donuts."

◎ "Here's a photo of my donut."

🐦 "I'm eating a #donut."

👻 "My donut will disappear in 10 seconds."

in "My skills include donut eating."

YouTube "Watch me eat a dozen donuts!"

P "Here's a recipe for donuts."

G+ "I'm a Google employee who likes donuts."

Different Platforms and What They Do

If you are new to social media, try starting out with one platform before expanding across to other platforms. The platforms you choose to use should depend on what platforms your audience uses. For Facebook and Twitter mechanics, see page 7.

f Facebook

Facebook is the biggest and most active social media platform and mandatory for any organization attempting to develop an online presence.
• Has potential to reach largest audience of all platforms
• Integrates well with other platforms
• Paid advertising is extremely cost effective

🐦 Twitter

Twitter is most effective when used to broadcast brief, relevant news and information. No matter your business, there's an audience for you here.
• Real-time updates and rapid communications
• Easy and effective to use
• Multiple posts per day

◎ Instagram

Instagram is an indispensable tool for your department in the social media universe. Use images to build a following.
• Integrates well with other platforms
• Visually showcase your department
• Use industry-related hastags for effective networking

👻 Snapchat

Snapchat is gaining popularity amongst the younger generation, ages 18-24.
• Auto-delete apps have grown in popularity over the past few years
• Good for "behind-the-scenes" look at your department
• Less formal, more fun

P Pinterest

Pinterest is a content sharing site with a predominately female user base. Very effective for marketing products to consumers.
• Rapidly growing platform
• Content stays active long after you post it
• Distinct advantage if your company produces quality images

in LinkedIn

LinkedIn is for businesses and professionals whose objectives are to build a professional network and establish B2B (business to business) relations.
• Post job applications/search freelancers
• Establish your organization in the professional community
• Conduct market research

ⓕ Facebook Mechanics

Analytics – **Identify successful posting strategies to evolve your posting approach**
- Likes, comments and shares represent increasing degrees of community engagement and correlate directly with reach.
- Organic reach – Facebook initially serves content to select portions of your followers and ramps up exposure based on combined likes, comments and shares.

Information Dispersion – **Post content selectively to maximize engagement**
- Paid reach – Posts reach a significantly larger number of people as advertisements based on targeted demographics.
- Boosted posts – Paid advertising that makes your post appear higher in Facebook's newsfeed, so there's a better chance your audience will see them.

Content – **Post content on Facebook whenever possible to expand post reach**
- Content posted on Facebook (uploaded picture, videos and text) has priority over content hosted externally (YouTube videos, links or pictures).
- Avoid large amounts of text on images. This is not accessible to people who may have disabilities.

Timing – **Find a balance between the effects of elapsed time, relevant content and competition**
- A post's reach decays over time, so it's important to post at times of high activity to reach more people. Refer to Facebook Insights to determine when your audience is most active.
- More interesting content will overshadow less interesting content, so it's important to post content relevant to your audience and not post too frequently about the same subject.

Targeting – **Enable targeting to restrict or promote content among specific demographics**
- Use Facebook Insights to target specific demographics based on age, gender, geographic location and more.

🐦 Twitter Mechanics

Hashtags – **Use the # symbol to create tags that make your tweets searchable**
- When appropriate, use relevant trending topics in your post, such as #Eagle4Life.
- Always test hashtags ahead of time to make sure they're not already used for a different purpose.
- Use capital letters to make multi-word hashtags readable as in #GivingJoyDay

Measuring Success – **Identifying successful posting strategies**
- Retweets represent an endorsement of your post and exposes it to the retweeter's audience.
- Favorites are used to show approval and also to save a tweet to be accessed later.
- A large number of followers give legitimacy to your account and increase the number of people seeing your tweets.

Content – **Quality content is paramount to a successful Twitter post**
- Tweet "behind-the-scenes" content your followers couldn't get any other way.
- Statements get more retweets than questions, questions get more responses than statements.
- Grammar can be flexible so long as it is understandable; however, use proper grammar whenever possible.

Structuring Posts – **Use links, hashtags and retweets to get the most exposure for your 140 characters**
- Include a call to action, encourage response.
- Link people, or groups mentioned, in your tweet to their own Twitter accounts, as this will help expose your tweet to their audience.

Cross Platform – **Play to Twitter's strengths and use other platforms to achieve other objectives**
- Use bit.ly to shrink URLs and track real-time engagement with your linked content.
- Use Twitter as a broadcasting platform, update with real-time information.
- Do not connect Twitter and other platforms to automatically mirror posts. Write them separately and appropriately.
- Network between platforms by encouraging interaction between them (like linking Instagram pictures on Twitter).

Brand

It's no longer what you say about yourself, but what your audience says about you. You represent your department, but also the university as a whole. Your page should visually reflect your department and EWU. Post content that helps you achieve your purpose. Be transparent and interact with other pages by sharing their content.

Style Guide

When creating graphics and copy for your social media posts, keep in mind the Identity Standards Guide and Editorial Style Guide set by the EWU Marketing and Communications Department. These guides will help your department maintain EWU's brand.

Identity Standards Guide

The identity standards guide is your resource for everyday usage of official logos, tagline, graphical elements, school colors, color palette, typography and other elements.

Official EWU logos can be viewed and downloaded at **ewu.edu/logo**

Editorial Style Guide

The Marketing and Communications Department oversees grammatical standards for all materials, print and online, that come from EWU to external audiences. While there may be more than one "right" way to write a sentence, it is important to conform to one style to establish desired consistency.

EWU follows The Associated Press Stylebook (AP Style) as its house style, with a few exceptions, and follows the Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary for spelling.

View EWU's official style guides at **sites.ewu.edu/marcom**
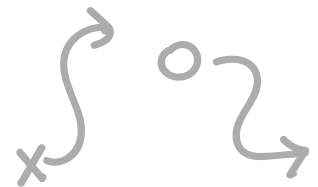
Voice

Create a voice for your page that is relatable to your audience. Speak in the first person and be professional. Be consistent in your word choice and avoid jargon. You want to be as approachable as possible, while positively representing EWU.

Best Practices

Social media best practices can change as quickly as the social media platforms themselves. Here are a few best practices to adopt as well as common social media mistakes departments/organizations may make.

Do's

Know your audience. Content on your social media pages should be custom to your audience. For balance, follow the 80/20 rule. That is, 80 percent of your content (or more) should be relevant to them, while 20 percent or less can be specifically about your department, mission or services.

Understand which social media platform(s) are best for your department. Social media isn't "one size fits all." Consider your content, goals and objectives. If you want to drive traffic to your site or improve engagement, then Facebook and Twitter might be a good fit. See more platforms on page 6.

Be active but don't overdo it. Be active on your social media pages, but don't post so often that you overwhelm or annoy your audience. This could lead to too much information and can cause your followers to stop following your posts. Your posts can get lost within their newsfeeds and they may not see content that could be valuable to them.

Maintain one voice and have a personality. Social media is great for sharing, but make sure your message is clear and consistent across all channels: website, print marketing, social media, etc.

Follow a checklist. Checklists are great for different situations, including social media. It may sound simple: log on, type a post and hit publish, right? Unfortunately, it's not quite that simple. Attention to detail could save you time and trouble later. See an example of a checklist on page 11.

Don'ts

Don't like your own posts. Of course you like your post. You made it! But don't "like" your own posts on social media. Encourage your employees and coworkers to share and like the material that is posted. They can be your brand's greatest ambassadors.

Don't neglect your profile(s). Use your social media accounts! Having a Facebook page or Twitter account isn't enough. You have to maintain your accounts for them to be successful. Consider scheduling content, but only a week or two in advance.

Don't share too much. Be careful of the things you share. Don't share too much information. Send your audience to a website or article for more information. Having a posting calendar can help maintain the amount of content being shared.

Don't ignore comments. It is important to engage with your audience. If you do not engage, they may feel as if you don't care about their question, comment or concern. Use their comments as an opportunity to interact and show your followers how you address positive and negative situations.

Don't delete negative comments. Acknowledging the problem can not only make an upset person happy, but it can also prevent the department from issues in the future. Addressing negative comments shows that your department is proactive in resolving issues and aim to serve your audience. See page 11 for more information on how to handle negativity.

Don't post the exact same content across all platforms. Stay true to the purpose of each platform. Post photos on Instagram, not posters or text. Also be wary of using scheduling software to send the exact same message on all of your platforms – customize as much as you can on each social channel.

Social Media Check List Example

Create and review a check list to follow before posting. This will help prevent any mistakes being posted on social media.

☐ Write copy for the post

☐ Find/create images or graphics for the post

☐ Using links? Make sure they work

☐ Check for any errors in the text

☐ Tag departments, organizations or people when appropriate

☐ (Add your own!)
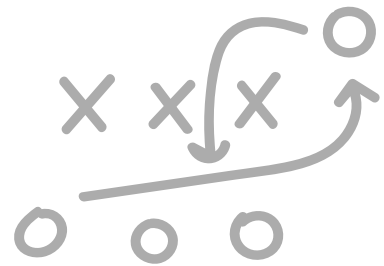
Negativity

When dealing with negative comments, do your best to immediately offer help and provide resources for direct assistance. Be very selective when hiding posts. Deleting spam/inflammatory posts is appropriate, but constructive criticism should be allowed to stand and addressed promptly.

In negative situations, try to:
- Stay positive and offer resources
- Take the conversation offline as soon as possible by offering to direct message or email them
- Let your fans speak up for you

Fun Fact:

If we could cancel class whenever there's the slightest hint of snow, that would take care of about 90 percent of negative comments.

Crisis Communication

In case of a campus emergency or other situation (such as a campus closure), make sure that you are signed up for EWU alerts. When posting to social media, share information directly from the Eastern Washington University Facebook or Twitter account, as well as the EWU Police or EWU News Twitter accounts. Information from these accounts is official and accurate. Learn more about emergency info at ewu.edu/emergency

Note: Be mindful of national tragedies when posting on your social media pages. Posting a goofy photo of Swoop directly after a national emergency may be seen as insensitive.

Eastern's Social Media Policy

Please review EWU's 203-04 Social Media Policy. Becoming familiar with this policy will prevent any future issues from arising. Violation of EWU policy by university employees or students may result in disciplinary action.

Social Media

University Operations – Information Services

EWU Policy 203-04	**Authority: EWU Board of Trustees**
Effective: May 19, 2011	**Proponent: Marketing & Communications**

Purpose: This policy prescribes university standards for creating and maintaining social media venues related to the administrative, operational, or instructional activities of Eastern Washington University. It includes standards and guidelines for communicating or otherwise participating within social media venues.

History: This policy is new. It was adopted by the EWU Board of Trustees (BOT) on May 19, 2011.

Applicability: This policy pertains to all faculty, staff, students and other members of the university community.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1 – GENERAL

1-1. General

Eastern Washington University encourages the responsible use of social media to support its objectives, goals, operations, instruction and sanctioned business endeavors to include professional networking, distribution of University news, and other information sharing.

Eastern uses social media to support engaged and transformative learning and to foster positive and enriching interaction with the University community and the general public within the scope of the University's mission.

The policy provides rules and guidelines designed to encourage the use of social media as a business tool while ensuring that any interactions on behalf of EWU are conducted consistent with applicable laws and represent the best interests of the University and its members.

1-2. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

Social Media refers to providers or services that use the Internet for blogging, mircroblogging, photo sharing, video sharing, podcasts, wikis, discussion boards, mashups, virtual worlds, and networking.

Social Media Network Site is defined as an external website or service based on an architecture of participation where users contribute to the sites content. Examples include, but are not limited to: Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Flickr, and YouTube.

Department/Unit refers to colleges, schools, departments, units, and other academic or administrative entities of Eastern Washington University. It includes faculty, staff and employees of the University when acting in an official capacity. It also includes Student Clubs and Organizations that are registered with the EWU Student Organizations Office.

Affiliated Site is defined as a non-instructional social media venue that is developed and maintained to support the administrative, operational, or marketing needs of a university department/unit. Affiliated sites are intended to present a web presence for the university that is open to the general public.

Instructional Site means any social media site or venue that is developed and used, at the direction of a faculty member, for teaching and learning activities related to an academic course or program. This includes library programs designed to support instruction.

1-3. Office of Marketing and Communications

a. The Office of Marketing and Communications (MARCOM) has overall responsibility for the University web presence. MARCOM will:

(1) assist departments/units with social media needs/issues as requested;

(2) provide training, as needed, related to social media and this policy;

(3) maintain a register of Affiliated Sites; and

(4) advise university leaders on matters related to social media.

1-4. Violations

Violation of this policy by University employees, students, or student clubs may result in disciplinary action, up to, and including, termination, dismissal or charter revocation. Employees are subject to disciplinary action under related collective bargaining agreements and/or university policies. Students who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action under the Student Conduct Code.

CHAPTER 2 – SOCIAL MEDIA SITES / VENUES

2-1. General

EWU reserves the right to monitor all content posted to its social media sites and may remove any content including, but not limited to, content that it deems discriminatory; harassing; threatening; obscene; defamatory, slanderous, false, or misleading; a violation of copyright or privacy laws, a violation of Washington State Ethics or privacy laws, or otherwise injurious or illegal.

2-2. University Sites

Eastern Washington University maintains an official presence on a variety of social media and content sharing sites that can be used by the campus community to disseminate information to various audiences including prospective students, donors, alumni, and visitors.

Departments/Units and other persons or groups who wish to contribute content to these University social media sites may contact MARCOM for assistance. MARCOM services as the primary point of contact for all University Sites.

2-3. Affiliated Sites

Departments/Units may develop an Affiliated Site when University sites are insufficient or inappropriate to support their needs.

Departments/Units shall manage social media sites under their control to maintain a positive and professional appearance which promotes the interests of the University. This includes monitoring and removing or modifying content that violates this policy or that is otherwise inappropriate.

Affiliated sites should be easily identifiable and clearly represent the organization/activity to which they relate. Affiliated sites should also include links to related pages on the University website.

Affiliated Sites shall be coordinated through MARCOM. The MARCOM web team will provide assistance, as needed, in order to satisfy identification and brand recognition standards.

Affiliated Sites will have at least one designated account administrator who has primary responsibility for maintaining the site.

2-4. Instructional Sites

Faculty members often use social media to support teaching and learning activities. Faculty may freely develop and use these instructional sites to support their academic courses and programs. Instructional sites are not subject to registration or identity standard requirements. Maintenance and content management of instructional sites is at the discretion of the faculty.

2-5. Unaffiliated Student Sites

Unregistered student organizations are welcome to create social media accounts; however, they will not be officially recognized by EWU.

CHAPTER 3 – PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

No one shall use University or affiliated social media accounts to transmit information or knowingly connect to sites for an unlawful or prohibited purpose. Such purposes may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Disclosure of privileged, proprietary, or confidential information about the University, its staff or its students that is protected by privacy laws or other legal provisions (see EWU Policy 203-01, Information Security);

- Disclosure of official information without proper authorization (MARCOM and other designated offices are responsible for posting and publishing online official information on behalf of the University);

- Disclosure or other use of intellectual property without proper authorization (also see UGS Policy 435-040, Patents, Copyrights, & Royalties);

- Transmission or posting of any content that is threatening or obscene;

- Violation/infringement of copyright laws;

- Violation of federal or state discrimination laws or of related university policies;

- Sexual harassment;

- Defamatory, slanderous, false, misleading or illegal statements; and

- Any other activity that violates the State Ethics law, RCW 42.52, or the university Appropriate Use Policy, UGS 590-060-140.

CHAPTER 4 – REPRESENTATION

4-1. Individual Representation

Individuals who post content to or otherwise interact with any social media site are responsible for their postings. If employee postings are outside the scope of their employment, e.g. defamatory, discriminatory, infringement of copyright, etc. they may be held personally responsible.

4-2. University Representation

What you post online shall not be attributed to the University and shall not appear to be endorsed by or originating from the University, unless you are authorized to officially act in this capacity on behalf of the University.

Do not use the EWU name to promote any opinion, product, cause, or political candidate.

The use of a University e-mail address may indicate to others that the individual is acting on behalf of the University. Individuals should be clear when that is not the case.

APPENDIX A – SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

- **Respect individual privacy**. Do not disclose private information about University employees, faculty, students, alumni or other members of the university community. Social networks are in the public realm and are not appropriate venues for the discussion or dissemination of private matters.

- **Use good judgment.** Be thoughtful, accurate, relevant and respectful. It is important to remember that we are subject to the same laws, professional expectations, and guidelines when interacting online as we would in-person with students, parents, alumni, donors, and the media. Generally try to avoid airing grievances. Social networks are often not the best forums for raising grievances that might be better addressed in other venues or handled privately.

- **Be accurate and transparent.** Have the facts before you post. If you post inaccurate information then correct it quickly.

- **Consider the intended audience when posting.** University social media sites are frequented by prospective students, alumni, friends, and other interested parties.

- **Be courteous.** Never resort to personal attacks, harassment, cultural insensitivity, or discrimination in expressing your opinions in a social media setting. The University encourages thoughtful social media interaction and does not seek to censor contributions to these sites. However, profanity, racist, sexist, or derogatory remarks, content that incites hate or encourages unethical or illegal activities, comments on litigation involving the University, spam and off-topic remarks may be removed and the user could be banned from further participation on the site. EWU may also remove any content that it deems a violation of intellectual property rights or privacy laws, or is otherwise injurious or illegal.

- **Use appropriate citations.** When using or posting online material that includes direct or paraphrased quotes, thoughts, ideas, photos, or videos, always include citations. Provide a link to the original material if applicable.

- **Remember that your interactions are not private.** The Internet is an unsecured, publicly accessible network. Users should have no expectation of privacy in the use of Social Media Network sites and other Internet resources. Users should take into consideration the lack of anonymity and should exercise sound judgment, including considering whether usage may impact work performance, University operations, or morale. Information maintained on the site may be deemed a public record and subject to disclosure as provided by the Washington State Public Records Act. Additionally, University community members should recognize that the University's Record Retention and Destruction Policy may also apply to this information.

- **Social Media Platform.** Know the terms of service of your social media platform. Be sure to understand and follow the terms of service of any platform used.