State University of New York System Administration
Social Media Policy

The State University of New York encourages the appropriate use of social media as a method for communicating ideas and information, and as part of the educational mission of the State University and its campuses.

This policy governs employees of the State University of New York System Administration. This policy governs behavior of individuals as they utilize a variety of Social Media technologies and is not limited to any specific media format.

Social Media Defined:

For the purpose of this policy, Social Media is defined as Internet or Mobile digital tools and systems used to share and/or receive information or conversation.

Personal Use of Social Media on Personal Time:

Personal use of Social Media on personal time is not governed by this policy, however individuals may not make statements or take actions at any time on Social Media that violate applicable law or SUNY policy. Violating actions or statements over Social Media with a nexus to State employment may be governed by SUNY policy.

Personal Use of Social Media on State time:

Personal use of Social Media on State time is governed by the New York State Public Officers Law and other Federal, State and Local laws; the State University of New York Acceptable Use Policy as issued by the Office of Administrative Systems; and SUNY Human Resources policies.

Official Use of Social Media:

Unless specifically authorized by the Office of Communications, no SUNY System Administration employee may create an “official” SUNY presence on any form of Social Media, now in existence, or created in the future, or represent themselves as a spokesperson or authorized representative of the State University of New York.

Some employees of SUNY System Administration may be required to use Social Media as part of their employment responsibilities. If so, such status will be clearly stated in an employee’s work responsibilities, and will be approved in advance by the Office of Communications.

The Office of Communications and other System Administration offices designated by the Office of Communications may utilize Social Media to present
information and content to the public and receive feedback from the public and the SUNY community. Content and information released on Social Media is equivalent to content and information released to the press and the public in any other format, including press release, letter to the media, open letter to the public, etc. Care must be taken that content and information released to the public over Social Media is accurate, does not violate applicable laws (including, but not limited to, copyright, trademark and defamation law) or SUNY policy.

Official SUNY Social Media may allow members of the public to comment or react to posted content and information. Individuals, including employees of SUNY System Administration acting in their personal capacity, may post or comment anonymously or identifiably.

In general, SUNY invites discussion of important ideas and issues through Social Media. However, SUNY reserves the right to remove posts or comments that are obscene, defamatory, offensive, contain threats of violence, abusive, spam or advertising, or unrelated to the content or information. SUNY also reserves the right to remove posts or comments that violate applicable laws including, but not limited to, copyright and trademark, or those that violate the use policies promulgated by the applicable Social Media provider.

SUNY use of Social Media is governed by Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, which provides a safe harbor for Internet Service Providers and Web sites for activity that takes place on said sites, provided that the site or domain takes certain actions when legally required.

Amendment and Questions:

This policy is maintained by the Office of Communications. It may be amended from time to time by the Office of Communications in consultation with other appropriate officials.

Questions may be directed to the Office of Communications at communications@suny.edu or 518-320-1311.