Social Media Guidelines

Social media is an online community of sharing, with many different platforms. Finding commonalities and similarities with others strengthens your social media presence, but so does serving as a valuable and reliable information source. Interaction is key, and finding content that generates interest and sharing is essential for growth and success.

Develop a social media plan
-- Who will be responsible
-- What is the purpose
-- Define goals, resources
-- Identify your "voice"
-- Identify your audience(s)
-- Thoughtfully select a name, title for each account (consistency and ease of use)

Commitment
-- Regular updates are a must
-- Engage followers
-- Use compelling content
-- Plan ahead, use strategically

Learn and adjust
-- Take note of the content that is popular, and the content that is not
-- Check your analytics
-- Visit your peers' social media channels
-- Evaluate your impact and success

Think before you post
-- Don't post when you're angry or emotional; cool off
-- Picture your post as a top (not good) news story … Does it pass the sniff test?
-- Grammar and spelling are important
-- Consider privacy and liability
-- Can the post be negatively interpreted?

Personal vs. professional
- Separate your personal and professional time on social media platforms. It will help keep you professionally focused and minimize the room for error (ex: posting something on your professional account that you meant to post on your personal account).
- If you have a personal account that affiliates you with Iowa State University, or you talk about your affiliation with ISU openly on that account, readers WILL associate your content with the university (despite any disclaimers that your views are your own).
- Resist inserting personal views on professional accounts (ex: politics, religion, social issues)

Tips

- Instead of jumping into every social media platform that comes along, invest quality time and effort in those that most benefit your needs
- Test drive the social media platforms individually before launching an official account
- Cross-pollinate with other ISU programs (ex: Use their twitter handles, tag others, etc., in your posts; or retweet/share content from other ISU programs)
- Prepare for criticism. Don't engage in arguments, and don't stray from a professional, respectful dialogue.
- Be transparent. Don't pretend to be someone you're not.
- Eliminate posts only if there is profanity, personal attacks, spam -- not user posts that disagree or argue with your content
- Join Iowa State's Facebook group for social media communicators, a discussion forum for questions, ideas and collaboration (https://www.facebook.com/groups/ISUpages/)

Applicable university policies

Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources
http://www.policy.iastate.edu/ITacceptableuse

Personal Use and Misuse of University Property
http://www.policy.iastate.edu/policy/personaluse

Email, university communications
http://www.policy.iastate.edu/policy/email/

Privacy: FERPA
http://www.registrar.iastate.edu/info/ferpanotice.html

Privacy: HIPAA
http://www.policy.iastate.edu/policy/healthinfo/

Student code of conduct
http://policy.iastate.edu/policy/SDR

Discrimination and harassment
http://policy.iastate.edu/policy/discrimination/

Faculty conduct policy
http://www.provost.iastate.edu/resources/faculty-handbook (chapter 7)