

## **Best Practices for Social Media**

Social media can be a powerful, community-building technology that helps us connect with audiences across the globe. Dickinson encourages community members to harness this powerful tool in accurate, effective, thoughtful ways.

While social media platforms are a great news distribution tool, they're also an engaging way to start a conversation. In addition to sharing information about your department or club events, consider asking your followers a question or inviting them to comment.

The basic rules of good communication still apply. Remember that anything posted is instantly and permanently public. Casual conversation is great, but it should be civil. Verify facts and dates prior to posting so that you're providing accurate information, but if erroneous information is publicized, post a correction. Your followers and fans will appreciate it!

This guide is meant to raise awareness about key issues and provide information regarding best practices for using social media. It does not form new policy.

### **Best Practices for Institutional Social Media**

- Marketing and Communications – Best Practices  
For social media sites that promote or represent Dickinson departments, groups, or organizations: have multiple administrators of the site; have a plan for sustainability including maintenance and succession in case of administrator turn over; share the identity of administrator with ADC and MarCom to aid in coordination. Dead links and neglected sites send the wrong message.
- Be aware of FERPA and HIPAA regulations.

### **Best Practices for Institutional and Personal Social Media**

- What do I need to keep in mind when expressing personal views?  
Faculty are advised to consult Chapter Four (I. Conditions of Employment part D) regarding speaking as a citizen, as an agent of the College, and as a member of a learned profession.
- Be aware of how Dickinson is referenced (images, listed as your employer, etc.) on any sites that you are using and what that reference might imply in regard to what you are posting.
- It might be helpful to provide a disclaimer that distinguishes between personal views and those held by the College.
- Anytime you are speaking publicly on social media, be aware of your responsibility with regard to issues such as libel, copyright, plagiarism, breach of confidentiality, etc.
- If you “friend” students on social media you become responsible for reporting things that raise concern. If you see something online it is

the same as seeing it in real life where reporting is concerned. As stated in Ch. 4 of the Academic Handbook, faculty members are reminded not to impair their ability to function as teachers and evaluators.