



Social Media Guidelines

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Introduction to Dickinson State University Social Media Guidelines

These guidelines are designed for Dickinson State University (DSU) employees and students who participate in social media on behalf of or representing the University. "Social media" includes blogs and other websites or applications, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, etc.

Participation in social media on behalf of DSU is a privilege, not a right.

Be Honest and Open

- Be professional in your communications. Represent yourself and DSU with integrity.
- Your truthfulness, or lack of, will be noticed. What you publish must be factual and not misleading.
- Using your name and contact information shows both transparency and accountability, which are the first steps toward credibility.
- If you talk about DSU or DSU-related matters through social media, **disclose your connection to DSU**.

Be Mindful

- Online also means on-the-record, forever. Once you publish something, you can't get it back. You must **take responsibility** for what you write.
- Do not violate privacy and/or legal guidelines.
- If you say you'll do something, follow through.
- When you're posting, ask yourself if your content adds value or has already been said.
- There's a fine line between debate and argument, so be cautious in what thought-provoking discussion you enter into. And, if you make a mistake, admit it. Be upfront and quick with a correction.

Governing Policies and Procedures

In addition to the guidelines outlined in this document, all students and employees must adhere to Dickinson State University, State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) and North Dakota University System (NDUS) policies and procedures. Students and employees must also adhere to their respective Codes of Conduct and follow the terms of service outlined by social media service providers.

Using paid time to access social media accounts not officially approved by DSU may be a violation of policies and procedures.

This guide covers specific social media services but should be considered general guidelines for social media services not specifically listed within this document.

Officially Recognized Accounts

Creating an Officially Recognized Account

To create an officially recognized social media account or make an existing account official, contact DSU's Office of University Relations (UR) at dsu.communications@dickinsonstate.edu.

It is recommended that UR is consulted **prior to** creating a social media account that is intended to become officially recognized.

Social Media Directory

UR maintains a list of all officially recognized social media accounts on DSU's Social Media Directory at dickinsonstate.edu/socialmedia. All social media accounts linked to from dickinsonstate.edu must be on this directory. Accounts listed on this directory must adhere to the guidelines outlined in this document.

Social media accounts related to DSU but not listed on the directory cannot be included on or linked to any Dickinson State University print or digital medium. Social media accounts managed by UR, including all "main" Dickinson State University social media accounts, will refrain from interacting with social media accounts related to DSU if they are not listed on the directory.

Account Access

Once an account becomes officially recognized, ownership of the social media account transfers to the University with **liability for content and usage falling to a designated individual(s)** based on University Relations' records.

Sharing Access

Sharing access could make you personally liable for the content and usage of a specific account by another individual. Please refer to NDUS 1901.2 Computer and Network Usage and specifically 3.5.1 Sharing of Access.

Roles

If the social media platform allows for the assignment of roles (i.e. Facebook), roles may only be requested by the individual responsible for the account and liability may fall to that individual for usage and content delegated to other individuals.

All Facebook pages listed on the University’s official directory must have all “Admin” roles assigned to the official University Relations (Marie Dickinson) account. Approved employees and students may have access to other roles as described below (with the exception of “Admin”).

- [Contact UR](#) to add an individual to a role on your official social media account.

	Admin	Editor	Moderator	Advertiser	Analyst
Manage Page roles and settings	✓				
Edit the Page and add apps	✓	✓			
Create and delete posts as the Page	✓	✓			
Send messages as the Page	✓	✓	✓		
Respond to and delete comments and posts to the Page	✓	✓	✓		
Remove and ban people from the Page	✓	✓	✓		
Create ads	✓	✓	✓	✓	
View insights	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
See who posted as the Page	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Relinquishing Access

Upon termination or exit from the University, you must relinquish your access to any social media accounts that are officially recognized by DSU. You will either be removed from your role or you will be required to log into the account with the current credentials and a member of the UR team will manually change the password.

Maintenance

Maintenance of an officially recognized account falls to the designated individual(s) based on UR records. This individual must keep the account active by posting regularly, respond to comments and direct messages, keep information up-to-date, and all other types of maintenance that are required to keep a consistent and accurate presence on the social media platform.

Inactive Account Closure

Accounts must remain “active.” After six (6) months of inactivity, UR may contact you and/or your supervisor to determine the intent of continued maintenance of an account. After thirty (30) days from the initial notice, the listing may be removed from the official directory and the account itself may be terminated.

Event Promotion

Promotion of events must meet one of these requirements:

- Sponsored by a recognized DSU club/organization
 - Events sponsored by a DSU club/organization must receive approval through Student Life.
- Held on the DSU campus
- Sponsored by a local healthcare organization
- Sponsored by Dickinson Parks and Recreation
- Affiliated with the DSU Heritage Foundation, Hawks Point, the Theodore Roosevelt Center or the Henry Biesiot Activities Center
- Medical benefit for DSU community member

Exceptions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by UR.

Photos/Videos of People

Dickinson State University does not regularly seek written permission for most of the photography or videography taken for University use. Written permission is not required when taking photographs or videos of individuals in public settings. However, care should be exercised to ensure that published content and text do not imply details about an individual that are not known to be true.

Whenever possible, **identify yourself** and **seek verbal permission** when taking photos for use on your social media page. Inform subjects about the potential uses of the photo. Please respect instances when an individual asks to not be photographed.

Written permission is required for photos or videos of children, patients in medical settings, or subjects who are primarily being featured in advertisements in which a person’s name, image and/or likeness are being used in a context that implies endorsement.

- [Contact UR](#) to obtain a release form.

Copyright Restrictions

Copyrighted materials cannot be used or altered without written permission of the copyright holder (generally the creator or source of the original photo). Please be aware of this when creating content for your social media accounts.

Photographs should be considered to be copyrighted materials. Photographs should not be altered without written permission from the copyright holder, even if the image belongs to DSU. If you obtain permission to edit photo, please keep in mind that you should not alter the meaning or context of the photo.

Inappropriate Content

If you notice inappropriate content on an account, follow these recommendations:

1. Contact the department leader or supervisor of the individual who manages the account
2. Contact your supervisor
3. Contact University Relations

If something is in violation of University standards, it may be deleted.

Personal Accounts

Unless approved by UR, your personal social media “identity” should not include DSU's name or logo. If you have questions about what is appropriate to include in your social media profile(s), contact UR.

For personal social media accounts where your connection to DSU is apparent, you should not imply that an endorsement of a person or product is on behalf of DSU. As an example, LinkedIn users may endorse individuals or companies but may not use DSU's name in connection with the endorsement, state or imply that the endorsement is on behalf of DSU, or state specifically that the endorsement is based on work done at DSU.

Social Media Ad Placement

All advertisement placement should be initiated by UR. This allows for centralized advertisement tracking, enforcement of branding standards, and centralized financial management, amongst other benefits.

Branding

If your account is included in the official directory, you have the ability to brand the approved social media account as a Dickinson State University entity, which includes the use of trademarked, protected images and text. Your account must adhere to DSU's Logo Usage Guide and Editorial Style Guide found [here](#).

Who should have a social media account?

Departments and Schools

Departments and Schools are allowed to have one account per platform to represent their academic programs.

Offices

Administrative offices on campus will not be approved to maintain official accounts. These offices should utilize other existing pages (i.e. the official DSU Facebook page) or other communication channels (i.e. listservs) to communicate their messages.

Centers

Centers are allowed to have one account per platform to represent all of their services.

Clubs and Organizations

Clubs and organizations may have one account per platform to represent all activities.

Athletics

The Athletics Department may have one account per platform to represent the entire program and may contain aggregate information related to all sports.

Individual Sports

Individual sports may have one account per platform per sport to represent all activities related to that individual sport.

Other Pages

Other page requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Username and Vanity URL's

All names are subject to review and approval prior to being accepted into the official directory.

Non-Athletic Accounts

For consistency purposes, the following naming conventions are recommended.

	Title	Vanity URL	Username
1	Dickinson State _____	/dickinsonstate_____	dickinsonstate_____
2	DSU _____	/DSU_____	DSU_____

Intercollegiate Athletic Accounts

For consistency purposes, the following naming convention is recommended.

	Title	Vanity URL	Username
1	Blue Hawk _____	/bluehawk_____	bluehawk_____

Proper use of the words “Blue Hawk”

The words “**Blue Hawks**” are to be used when describing **more than one individual**. Example: DSU Blue Hawks, “Go Blue Hawks!”

The words “**Blue Hawk**” are to be used when describing a **group or entity**. Example: DSU Blue Hawk, Blue Hawk Volleyball, Blue Hawk Boosters

These two words **should not** be combined. “Bluehawk,” “BlueHawk,” “Bluehawks,” and “BlueHawks” are not acceptable.

Profile and Cover Photos

Profile and cover photos may be customized but must follow DSU, SBHE, and NDUS policies and procedures.

Keep in mind that, on many social media platforms, the profile photo sits on the top of the cover photo and may block certain aspects of the image.

It is recommended to keep a profile image consistent for a long period of time, as users who engage with your account will come to recognize the image as it appears on all content and interactions initiated by the page. Update cover images frequently for a fresh look.

Use helpful tools like [Canva](#) to correctly size your image for the desired social media platform. Any images on Dickinson State University’s [Flickr page](#) may be downloaded and used on any official social media accounts related to DSU.

General Social Media Guidelines

UR can provide **recommendations** and **training** for appropriate use of social media.

Post Frequency

There is no “best method” when it comes to the frequency of posts or the time of day a post is made. However, you should be aware that a user can become tired of seeing too many posts from one account, or the same post from an account that has a presence across multiple platforms.

Try to post no more than **three times per day**, and if posting the same content across various platforms, try to alter the text slightly.

Official Hashtags

Dickinson State University currently utilizes the following hashtags:

- #hawksareup
- #discoverdsu

#BestPractices: Hashtag Dos and Don'ts

- Keep your messages focused and on-point by using only one or two hashtags per communication. This clearly defines your vision and brand with your audience.
- When developing a social strategy that includes unique hashtags, research the hashtags your brand wants to use to tell your story. Read the hashtag in all uppercase, all lowercase and a combination of the two to ensure your meaning won't be lost.
- The best hashtags are easy to spell, easy to remember and short. Some experts recommend limiting them to six characters or less. That may not always be realistic. Consider an abbreviated hashtag, but don't sacrifice the right hashtag for a shorter one.
- Spaces, special characters or punctuation will end the hashtag: #Bill'sShop will truncate to #Bill. Most platforms allow underscores.
- Capitalizing the first letter of multi-word hashtags makes them easier to read.
- Consider context. A Tweet can cause a PR crisis if a hashtag is used out of context. Likewise, consider other meanings that the hashtag may have, including in other languages, as your post may gain global exposure.
- Consider the particular network. Hashtags are used differently on different social media networks and have varying degrees of functionality.