Union Website & Social Media Guideline

This policy governs the publication of and commentary on social media and the Union website by the A. Ray Olpin Student Union building employees, volunteer leaders, students and the general public. For the purposes of this policy, social media means any use of web-based and mobile technologies to turn communication or publication into interactive dialogue or user-generated content, including, without limitation, blogs, wikis, discussion forums, and social networking sites.

Union employees, volunteer leaders, students and the general public are free to publish and comment via social media in accordance with the social media posting guidelines below. Union employees and volunteer leaders are subject to this policy to the extent they identify themselves as a Union employee and volunteer leader.

All uses of social media must follow the same ethical standards that Union employee and volunteer leaders must otherwise follow. All users of the website and social media are subject to the Union's website and social media terms of use.

Website and Social Media Terms of Use

We are all **busy people** and do not review your contributions before they are published. We expect you to be responsible for your own posts and comments. Defamatory content, illegal content or content that substantially or materially disrupts or interferes with University activities may be removed by Union employees identified as account administrators. If you share something that fits into one of these categories, the Union reserves the right to remove it without your approval. Please save us the time of doing so—and yourself the embarrassment and public scorning. The Union assumes no obligation to monitor the content on the website or to take down content that is posted by you or others.

With your reputation and the Union's in mind, we offer the following guidelines:

- **We do not accept anonymous postings.** By uploading materials to the Union website or social media, you agree to your user name and your content being visible to other users. Content that is posted anonymously may be removed by the Union.
- **Ask yourself if you might later be ashamed of what you upload.** These items include anything that is knowingly false, vulgar, offensive, defamatory, obscene, threatening, harassing, or abusive. If you would not feel comfortable sharing it with a child, supervisor, or grandmother, consider whether it is appropriate for the Union's website or social media. And please, no nudity.
- **Be yourself.** Authenticity is essential, so share using your own voice and reflecting your own interests and knowledge. Share stories and insights like you would in-person. If you post content concerning the University or the Union, make it clear that you are expressing your own views and not the views of the University or the Union.

- **Be honest.** Do not post anonymously, using pseudonyms, or false screen names. We believe in transparency and honesty. People want to know who you are. Nothing gains you notice in social media more than honesty—or dishonesty. Also, do not post under someone else's name—it's illegal.
- **Don't tell secrets.** It's perfectly acceptable to talk about your work and have a dialog with the community, but it's not okay to publish confidential information. This includes things such as unofficial details of current projects, financial information, and employee information.
- **Recognize Your Postings May have <u>Consequences.</u>** Know that if you do something illegal or violate the University's policies using the Union's website or social media there may be consequences. Even if your postings are not illegal, the content you post could have life-long ramifications for you and your reputation.
- **Protect your own privacy.** Be mindful of posting information that you would not want the public to see, protecting yourself and your privacy.
- **Give credit where credit is due.** Always cite when quoting someone else. Make sure all images are attributed (if needed). Never infringe on copyright or intellectual property rights without permission.
- **Respect your audience, the Union, and your coworkers.** Feel free to express your opinion on a range of topics but do so in a respectful manner. Nobody benefits from expressions of opinion that are made in an offensive or insulting manner. Treat with respect topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory. If you see misrepresentations made about the Union in the media, you may point that out. Always do so with respect and with the facts. Avoid arguments. Brawls may earn traffic, but nobody wins in the end.
- **Be the first to respond to your own mistakes.** If you make an error, be up front about your mistake and correct it quickly. If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so. If someone accuses you of posting something improper (such as their copyrighted material or a defamatory comment about them), deal with it quickly— better to remove it immediately to lessen the possibility of a legal action.
- **Don't be shy.** We acknowledge that content on the Union website and social media is so thrilling that you just can't keep yourself from sharing it with colleagues, and as a Union employee or volunteer leader, you agree to act upon that instinct. Shameless self-promotion of your own content is acceptable in this circumstance.
- **Last but not least, think before posting.** Think about all the consequences before posting. Consider that everything you post online contributes to a lifetime record that is readily accessible to others. What you post could substantially impact your life including future employment opportunities by employers who may view your posts.

Inspired by:

ACUI Social Media Posting Guidelines:
http://www.acui.org/content.aspx?menu_id=22&id=15414

The University of Texas at Austin Social Media Guidelines:
http://www.utexas.edu/know/directory/guidelines/