



Administrative Policy #: 1501
Title: Official University Social Media Accounts
Effective Date: January 20, 2026

SECTION 1. PURPOSE & SCOPE

- 1.1. PURPOSE: This administrative policy establishes guidelines for the creation, management, and responsible use of official Fairmont State University social media accounts. The intent is to ensure consistency, protect the University's reputation, maintain compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, and leverage social media as a tool to engage audiences, promote University values, and share accurate information.
- 1.2. SCOPE: This administrative policy applies to all University employees and representatives when developing or managing social media accounts that represent the University and/or execute social media initiatives on behalf of the University. This administrative policy does not apply to individual faculty, staff, or student personal accounts, unless they explicitly identify themselves as representing the University. If Fairmont State is identified as the individual's employer, then section 4.6 of this administrative policy applies. Registered Student Organizations are required to follow additional guidelines as determined by Student Affairs.

SECTION 2. APPROVAL, DELEGATION & APPLICABILITY

- 2.1. AUTHORITY: Supervisors within each Fairmont State University unit shall monitor and enforce compliance with this administrative policy. The University's Communications, Marketing, and Creative Services department (CMCS) oversees implementation, provides training and resources, will be granted full account access, and may – in consultation with General Counsel – remove content, restrict access, and deactivate accounts if necessary.
- 2.2. DELEGATION: Additional delegation is not permitted.
- 2.3. APPLICABILITY: This administrative policy applies to all Fairmont State University



faculty, staff, students, interns, volunteers, and contractors who create, post, or manage content on Official University Social Media Accounts.

SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1. **ACCOUNT MANAGER:** The designated Fairmont State University employee or representative responsible for maintaining and monitoring a University social media account.
- 3.2. **BRAND GUIDELINES:** Official Fairmont State University standards regarding use of logos, colors, tone of voice, accessibility, and visual identity.
- 3.3. **CONTENT:** Posts, images, videos, comments, messages, or any form of communication shared on social media platforms.
- 3.4. **OFFICIAL UNIVERSITY SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT (OUSMA):** Any social media account that represents a Fairmont State University unit, department, program, or office.
- 3.5. **SOCIAL MEDIA:** Online platforms and tools that allow for the creation, sharing, and engagement of content in digital communities, including but not limited to Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Snapchat, TikTok, X (Twitter), YouTube, and other similar platforms.

SECTION 4. POLICY

- 4.1. **POLICY:** It is the policy of Fairmont State University that all Official University Social Media Accounts (OUSMAs) shall be used to:
 - 4.1.1. Share accurate, timely, and relevant information.
 - 4.1.2. Promote the news, events, achievements, and initiatives of the unit, other University entities, and approved external organizations that align with the University's mission.
 - 4.1.3. Foster responsible and safe community engagement while promoting the University's brand, reputation, and values.
- 4.2. **ACCOUNT MANAGER:** All OUSMAs must designate at least one (1) full-time University faculty or staff member as the Account Manager.
- 4.3. **ACCOUNT APPROVAL:** Employees or representatives desiring to create OUSMAs after the effective date of this administrative policy must first receive approval from



CMCS and grant CMCS Account Manager rights. The University reserves the right to deny OUSMA creation or revoke the privilege to any account that violates this administrative policy, harms the University brand, or presents risk to the institution. Accounts created prior to the effective date of this administrative policy are still subject to its terms and must apply for approval within sixty (60) days of this administrative policy's effective date.

4.4. ACCOUNT CREATION: Following approval by CMCS, the identified Account Manager(s) may create the OUSMA. Account Managers will work with CMCS to review or secure profile images and/or graphics for OUSMAs.

4.5. ACCOUNT OPERATIONS: All OUSMAs shall adhere to the following provisions:

4.5.1. University announcements and emergencies. OUSMAs shall not post University announcements related to significant institutional news, issues, or incidents that have not yet been announced by the University. This includes, without limitation, situations where the University is waiting to officially release information to the public and/or press.

4.5.2. Brand Guidelines. OUSMAs shall adhere to all Brand Guidelines. Questions regarding Brand Guidelines are to be directed to CMCS.

4.5.3. Relevant Content. OUSMAs may post original content or repost external content that is relevant to the unit or repost content from other Fairmont State University units. OUSMAs shall not be used to post original content or repost external content that is not germane to the unit or is inconsistent with the standards established in paragraph 4.1.

4.5.4. Copyright. OUSMAs shall not use photographs, images, or other intellectual property that the University does not own or have a license and/or permission to use.

4.5.5. Moderating Comments. OUSMA posts may create a public forum and, as a public institution, the University must afford opportunities for constitutionally protected speech. Accordingly, constitutionally protected comments on a public post that allows commenting may not be removed or



hidden by OUSMAs. However, the University and OUSMAs shall have the right, but not the obligation, to remove comments or posts that (1) contain unprotected speech, including obscenity, harassment, illegal activity, and defamation or other falsehoods, (2) represent solicitation or promotion of a non-University event, program, or commercial enterprise, or (3) are plainly off-topic and not relevant to the OUSMA's post. Additionally, social media platforms often have community standards that may drive the platform to unilaterally remove a comment or post. Questions regarding comment moderation should be directed to CMCS and, when necessary, General Counsel.

4.5.6. Other prohibited actions. OUSMAs shall not:

- 4.5.6.1. Post content that violates city, state, or federal laws and regulations.
- 4.5.6.2. Use inappropriate, harassing, threatening, or obscene language or images.
- 4.5.6.3. Comment on or post anything related to existing or potential legal matters or litigation without University leadership approval.
- 4.5.6.4. Represent personal opinions while posting as an OUSMA. This includes, but is not limited to, creating content, sharing posts, replying to comments, and liking other posts that represent personal opinions on the OUSMA.
- 4.5.6.5. Take action that subjects the University to public embarrassment, ridicule, or scandal, with such action reflecting unfavorably upon the University's reputation, values, and/or mission.

4.6. REPRESENTATION: Employees will not portray themselves as representing Fairmont State University on their personal social media accounts without prior authorization from CMCS. If an employee's personal social media account expressly identifies the University as their employer, the employee's account should include the following disclaimer: "Views and opinions expressed are my own and have not been reviewed or approved by Fairmont State University."



SECTION 5. COMPLIANCE

- 5.1. All OUSMAs must comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws, including but not limited to:
 - 5.1.1. FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act)
 - 5.1.2. HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act)
 - 5.1.3. Copyright and trademark laws
 - 5.1.4. Accessibility standards (ADA Section 508 and WCAG guidelines)
- 5.2. NONCOMPLIANCE: OUSMAs that do not conform to this administrative policy will be restricted or terminated. Sanctions will be commensurate with the severity and/or frequency of the offense and may include disciplinary action.

SECTION 6. REVISION HISTORY

- 6.1. FREQUENCY OF REVIEW: This administrative policy shall be reviewed at least every two (2) years by CMCS in consultation with General Counsel and the Executive Leadership Team.
- 6.2. APPROVED: Approved by President Davis on January 20, 2026.