**STUDENT MEDIA: Social Media Policy**

***Student journalists and professional journalists should treat social media as a publication. In other words, you’re a journalist while sharing, posting and interacting with users. It may be possible to create a separate social media page directed for personal use, but understand its potential impact as readers/viewers may attach your personal views to your stories.***

*GUIDELINES:*

* Be aware of your actions on social media. It not only reflects on the journalists, but the organization you represent.
* DO NOT post images that contain nudity or explicit content or inappropriate images/text that go against the policy of the journalistic media you are representing.
* When posting on social media, ask yourself the following questions:
	+ Is this something you would write in a publication?
	+ If not, how could this hurt your credibility as a journalist?
		- Why are you sharing this?
		- Are you sharing credible information or simply leaving it for the viewer to decide?
			* If not, how could this be harmful or discredit your credibility?

* Be honest, transparent and respectful to others as you would while working as a journalist.
* If you come across reports of an incident on social media, it is crucial to confirm the information before spreading the information as fact.
	+ Before posting or sharing information, confirm the legitimacy of the information you’re sharing.
		- Check timestamps, contact the person behind the account and confirm the information with multiple source.
* It is your responsibility to be transparent. Use social media as a platform to keep up with the community through verification and thorough understanding of specific events.
* Treat online sources as you normally would. The information should be confirmed and anonymous sources should rarely, if at all, be used as a single source representing fact.
* Remain skeptical. Not everything you read on social media is true.
	+ Is there a way you can alert the community about information surfacing on the web without directly sharing the reports?
		- For example: “We are looking in reports related to the cancellation of campus events. At this point we have not verified the information but are speaking to multiple sources to confirm.”
	+ Here’s an example of how NPR states they would handle a breaking news story that is reported on social media:
		- “This is a breaking news story. As often happens in situations like these, some information reported earlier may turn out to be inaccurate. We’ll move quickly to correct the record and we’ll only point to the best information we have at the time.”
* Journalists on social media platforms should not use the sites to express or share opinions. It should be used as a communication device to share and report accurate and verified information and stories.
* When promoting stories, social media posts should include a headline or a brief caption to include with the link to the article.
* Breaking news posts must be verified and approved by editors before publication.While students may use their own social media accounts to share stories/information, social media staff, editors and the editor-in-chief will be responsible for promoting stories on the publication's social media accounts.
* Spelling and grammar must be checked on each post before publication.
* To keep in line with transparency, DO NOT delete posts. If a correction is needed, make a correction via another post or comment. If a post is edited, make an editor’s note as you would in print and online formats.
* Monitor vulgar or inappropriate comments online.

ADDITIONAL SOURCES:

**Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication (Social Media Guidelines)**

* <https://cronkite.asu.edu/degree-programs/admissions/student-resources/social-media-guidelines>

**Social Media: The NPR Way**

* <http://ethics.npr.org/tag/social-media/>