

KATHMANDU UNIVERSITY

POLICY ON INFORMATION DISCLOSURE AND SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Social media technologies, despite their communicative merits and high productive potentials, bear the possibility of a number of unintended consequences. Therefore, various platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Google plus, which allow us to interact with others online, equally require us to be wary of disruptive/damaging consequences.

Considering a potential risk of misinterpreting a relationship or shared information, online social interactions between faculty and student, supervisor and subordinate, staff and student, and employee and business partner demand close disciplining, especially in terms of the nature and implications of such interactions.

To help Kathmandu University (KU) faculties, staffs, students and others identify and avoid serious encounters, the following guidelines have been developed by drawing from the best practices in reputed institutions abroad (especially University of Michigan and Emerson College, USA) and are intended to help all of us understand, from a wide range of perspectives, the implications of participating in social media.

SECTION I

PRELIMINARY

1. SHORT TITLE AND COMMENCEMENT

- i. These guidelines are named “KU Social Media Guidelines 2018”.
- ii. The guidelines will be effective from the day of approval by the Executive Council.
- iii. This policy is mandatory in nature and applies to all the employees, students and business partners of the University.

2. DEFINITIONS

Unless the subject or context otherwise requires, in this Guidelines:

- i) “University” refers to Kathmandu University.
- ii) “Executive Council” refers to the Executive Council of the University.
- iii) “Registrar” refers to the registrar of the University.
- iv) “Dean” refers to the Dean of a School in Kathmandu University.
- v) “Protected information” refers to the documents listed in section 4.
- vi) “School” refers to the seven Schools of the University and other schools that may be established in future.



- vii) “Department” refers to any one of the academic units of the University.
- viii) “Employee” refers to a teaching faculty (permanent, contract, part-time) as well as a non-teaching staff (permanent, contract, daily-wage).
- ix) “Student” refers to any student registered in the constituent, extended or affiliated programs of the University (Intermediate, Undergraduate, Graduate, Postgraduate).
- x) “Business Partner” refers to contractors, grantees, sub-grantees and their employees, and others who carry out businesses with KU.
- xi) “Code of Conduct” refers to the standard codes of conduct for employees and students issued by the University and the amendments made thereto.
- xii) “Social Media” refers to popular networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Academia.edu, Researchgate.net, YouTube, etc. (page/group or handle)
- xiii) “Platform” refers to any user-generated online site that allows networking.
- xiv) “Posting” refers to writing, commenting, responding or publishing on a platform or the social media.

SECTION II

POSTING ON BEHALF OF KATHMANDU UNIVERSITY

3. **Appointment of spokespersons and focal persons for information disclosure :**
 - (1) Executive Council for the entire matter of the University and Dean for the matter of the School shall appoint a spokesperson for release of the official information in their respective areas.
 - (2) Executive Council and Dean may authorize an employee or employees as a focal person(s), who shall operate social media accounts and shall network or publish or post officially in their respective areas.
 - (3) The appointment of spokesperson or focal person(s) under sub-section (1) and (2) is not of the permanent nature and can be removed by Executive Council and Dean upon their wish.
4. **Protected information:** (1) The following types of information are considered protected information:
 - i. Examination record and assessment papers, i.e. internal or external assessment examination papers, any unpublished examination records;



- ii. Agendas and minutes of meetings, proceedings of the meetings, policy decisions being considered by the Executive Council, the Schools, the Departments and other subordinate bodies thereto;
- iii. Draft policy papers, directives, circulars and discussion notes;
- iv. Information related to any disputes under mediation or investigation;
- v. Personal information of employees provided to the University, including salary details and medical reports;
- vi. Information protected by the right to privacy law and other matters to be protected as confidential by the prevailing law (such as information of victim of a sexual offence etc.); and
- vii. Other information marked as protected information by the Registrar.

(2) Information listed in sub-section (1) can only be disclosed by the spokesperson or focal persons upon getting the written approval of the Executive Council.

(3) The Executive Council may remove any document from the list of protected information with a written decision. Such information can be made public.

5. **Not to violate others' rights and damage their credibility:** (1) Spokesperson(s) or focal person(s) in particular and all the employees in general shall not violate any information protected by the right to privacy law (the two Articles related to the right to information and the right to privacy of the Constitution of Nepal 2015 are in Annex I);

(2) Spokesperson(s) or focal person(s) in particular and all the employees in general shall not disclose confidential or proprietary information about any employees, students, alumni, business and partnering institutions.

(3) Spokesperson(s) or focal person(s) in particular and all the employees in general shall not publish any information that defames, abuses or be prejudiced to any individual or organization or damages their credibility.

(4) Every employee is required to follow the University's policies and Codes of Conduct. (The code of conduct is attached in Annex II and III).

(5) Sub section (3) and (4) do not prohibit employees to exercise their freedom of speech, freedom of expression and engage in healthy criticism.

6. **Personal liability on defamation:** (1) If any employee is found to be guilty of defaming any other persons or institutions and the court of law made him or her liable for compensation, the University will not take any liability of such compensation.

(2) Disciplining measures will be taken by the University for employees who are found guilty of defaming others by the court of law.



7. Creation or/and alignment of social media accounts:

- (a) Official KU social media accounts shall be created by the Information Systems Management Section (ISMS) or for the accounts that have already been in operation shall be aligned to the ISMS system.
- (b) The ISMS shall grant the spokesperson or focal person(s) administrative access to those accounts.
- (c) Any official posting or communication should only be carried out by a KU ID. For backup or system failure, the ISMS shall also provide permission to one personal ID of the spokesperson or the focal point.
- (d) The ISMS shall review unused social media accounts and shall inform spokesperson or focal person. Upon agreement with such persons, the ISMS may disable or remove the dormant (no posts, no activity for more than six months) accounts.
- (e) The ISMS may reserve the right to freeze the account or temporarily suspend it for security reasons.

8. Rules on posting:

- (1) Posting photographs:** (a) KU maintains the copyright of the photographs made by its official photographers or any employee during official events organized or co-organized by KU.
- (b) Spokesperson(s) or focal person(s) can publish photographs obtained under clause (a) without taking a prior permission.
- (c) For any other photographs which are not covered under clause (a) spokesperson(s) or focal person(s) should take verbal or written permission of the persons in the picture.
- (d) The University requires its employees to take written permission of children if their photographs are being posted in social media or other platforms.
- (e) The University doesn't allow the posting of pictures which are considered indecent by a reasonable person's standard and which may infringe upon the person's right to privacy.
- (f) The University discourages uses of photographs where people are shown from open source.
- (2) Respecting intellectual property rights:** The University should always respect intellectual property rights of individuals and organizations while posting.
- (3) Representing the University:** (a) The spokesperson or focal persons should discuss the content with the Dean or the Registrar before composing a message that might act as the "voice" or "position" of the University or a School or a Department if s/he feels that a message may not be seen as appropriate to post.



(b) If an employee is officially participating in network meetings or any other virtual networks (such as webinars, discussion forums etc.), such employee should keep in mind that their posting/presence shall be considered the official voice of the University. They can express their opinions to the extent it is delegated to them. If they have to speak on the matter which is not clearly delegated to them, they should clearly state that they should consult the University before speaking up in the public.

(4) Respect for time and property: It is appropriate for employees to post at work if the posts/comments are directly related to accomplishing work goals, such as seeking sources for information or working with others to resolve a crisis. Employees should participate in personal social media conversations in their own private time, and not use office time and resources for personal media engagement.

(5) Using the University ID: If employees or students are participating on their own, they should use disclaimer. It is because other users may take a University ID (i.e. @ku.edu.np; @kusom.edu.np; @student.ku.edu.np; @kusoed.edu.np) as official representation.

(6) Accuracy: The employees/students should ensure that they have all the facts and information before they post. It is better to verify information with a source first than to have to post a correction or retraction later. They should cite and/or create links to their sources whenever possible.

SECTION III

POSTING AS AN INDIVIDUAL

- 1. Using disclaimer:** (a) Posting with a University username: People outside the University view what KU employees/students post represents the University. Hence, any employee or student posting a content to any website outside of the University about any work or subject related to the University should use a disclaimer. The text could be: “The postings on this site are my own and do not represent the Kathmandu University’s positions, strategies, or opinions.”

(b) The University requires the employees and individuals to include a disclaimer on their site, usually on their “About Me” page. If any employee or student is discussing higher education on their own personal webpage or blog or social media site, they are suggested to include a sentence like this: “The views expressed on this [blog, website] are mine alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of Kathmandu University.” This is particularly important if they are in a leadership role at the University.
- 2. Use of logo or endorsements:** The employees or students are not supposed to use the University logo or any other University marks or images on their personal online sites. They are restricted from using University’s name to promote or endorse any product, cause, or political party or political candidate.



3. **Doing no harm:** Any social networking activity on the internet should cause no harm to the University and to any employee or student no matter whether such activity is done on the job or off.
4. **Passing the publicity test:** If the content of a message would not be acceptable for any face-to-face conversation, over the telephone, or in another medium, it will not be acceptable for a social networking site. So, employees or students are well-advised to ask themselves: “Would I want to see this message published in the newspaper or posted on a billboard tomorrow or 10 years from now?”
5. **Awareness of liability:** (a) Employees or students are personally responsible for the posting they put on social media as well as blogs, wikis, or any other form of user-generated content. They will be held liable for commentary deemed to be intellectual property infringement, and for defamatory, proprietary, libelous, or obscene (as defined by the laws and courts) comments or opinions.

(b) Employees or students should take permission of people who are in photographs before posting/sharing them online.

(c) Employees or students should not breach anyone’s right to privacy and should be aware of their duties to hold some information confidential (such as not disclosing who is HIV AIDs infected even if you know).

(d) What users have published will be public for a long time. They should be sure that what they post today will not come back to bother them any time in the future. It might affect the prospect of future employment and social networking.
6. **Transparency:** The line between professional and personal business is sometimes blurred: Employees or students should be thoughtful about the content and potential audiences of their posts. In personal posts, they may identify themselves as the University employees or students, however they should clarify that they are sharing their views as individuals, not as representatives of the University. If they identify themselves as members of the University community, they should ensure that their profiles and the related contents are consistent with how they wish to present themselves to colleagues or classmates.
7. **Valued membership:** If employees or students join a social network, they should make sure they are contributing valuable insights. They are discouraged from hijacking the discussion and redirecting it by posting self- or organization-promoting information. Self-promoting behavior is viewed negatively and can lead one to being banned from websites or groups.
8. **Thoughtfulness:** Social media sites are not “private” domains. Search platforms can turn up posts and pictures years after the publication date; comments can be forwarded or copied. Archival systems save information even after a post is deleted. It is wise to delay



posting, especially when one is feeling angry or passionate about a subject, until one is calm and clear-headed. Employees or students are advised to post only those pictures that they would be comfortable sharing with the general public.

9. **Assuming a high ground:** If employees or students identify their affiliation with the University in their comments, readers can associate them with the University. Even with the disclaimer, the views are their own. They should, therefore, remember that they are most likely to build a high-quality following if they discuss ideas and situations civilly, and not pick fights online.
10. **Respect for the audience:** Employees or students are restricted from using ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity, or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable in the University community. They should also show proper consideration for others' privacy and for topics that may be considered sensitive, such as politics and religion. They are more likely to achieve their academic or professional goals if they are constructive and respectful while discussing a bad experience or disagreeing with a concept or a person.
11. **Monitoring comments:** Social media users can welcome comments from their audiences because comments build credibility and community. However, they should customize their sites in such a way that they can review and approve comments before they appear. Customization allows them to respond comments in a timely way. It also allows them to delete spam comments and to block any individuals who repeatedly post offensive or frivolous comments.
12. **Protecting identity:** While employees or students should be honest about what they post, they should not provide personal information, which scam-artists or identity-thieves (hackers) could use. They are, therefore, advised not to supply their home address or personal telephone number, and banking or other personal information. It is a good idea to create a separate email address to be used only with social media platforms.
13. **Avoiding pseudonyms:** Employees or students are advised not to pretend to be someone else. Tracking tools enable supposedly anonymous posts to be traced back to their authors.

SECTION IV

SAFETY AND PRIVACY TIPS FOR NETWORKING

The whole world has access to the Internet today. When using a social media platform/channel, each employee or student is advised to make sure he or she has reflected upon the following questions:

1. Have I checked my Privacy Settings? Who can look at my profile, personal information, and photos? Have I checked who can share what information to what extent from my social media page?



2. What information is available about me on the Internet? For example, phone numbers, addresses, emails, class schedules, possessions? How will the audience take that information? Can the information be misused? Will they respect me for giving that information?
3. What if I want to change what I had posted in the past? Will I be able to delete or change that? What are the social media platform's privacy and caching statements? Have I ever thought of the possibility that the posts I have already deleted are available in the network cache of search engines?
4. When I posted or shared someone else's image or information, did I ever ask for their permission? Am I intruding not on their privacy? Am I not hurting someone and/or their image? Whether am I violating any privacy rules?
5. Are antivirus and spyware installed on my computer or laptop or tablet or mobile phone? There are some sites that collect profile information to spam us; some infect our devices and destroy our data; and some even infect other devices with which we communicate. Have I backed up my data to an external source in case my data is lost on my device?



ANNEX I

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS: RIGHT TO INFORMATION AND RIGHT TO PRIVACY

b) The relevant provisions of the Constitution of Nepal, 2074 B.S. (2015 A.D.).

Article 27. Right to information: Every citizen shall have the right to demand and receive information on any matter of his or her interest or of public interest.

Provided that no one shall be compelled to provide information on any matter of which confidentiality must be maintained in accordance with law.

Article 28. Right to privacy: The privacy of any person, his or her residence, property, document, data, correspondence and matters relating to his or her character shall, except in accordance with law be inviolable.

(b) The relevant provisions of the Right to Information Act, 2064 B.S. (2007 A.D.).

Sec. 2 : Definition –(e) "Right to Information" means the right to ask for and obtain information of public importance held in the Public Bodies and this term shall also include the right to study or observation of any written document, material held in Public Body or proceedings of such Public Body; to obtain a verified copy of such document, to visit or observe the place where any construction of public importance is going on and to obtain verified sample of any material or to obtain information held in any type of machine through such machine.

3. Right to Information: (1) Every citizen shall, subject to this Act have the right to information.

(2) Every citizen shall have access to the information held in the public Bodies.

(3) Notwithstanding anything provided in Sections (1) and (2), the information held by a Public Body on the following subject matters shall not be disseminated:

- (a) which seriously jeopardizes the sovereignty, integrity, national security, public peace, stability and international relations of Nepal.
- (b) which directly affects the investigation, inquiry and prosecution of a crime.
- (c) Which seriously affects on the protection of economic, trade or monetary interest or intellectual property or banking or trade privacy.
- (d) Which directly jeopardizes the harmonious relationship subsisted among various cast



or communities.

(e) Which interferes on individual privacy and security of body, life, property or health of a person.

Provided that, a public Body shall not refrain from the responsibility of dissemination of information without appropriate and adequate reason not to flow the information.

(4) If a Public Body has both the information in its record that can be made public and that cannot be made public in accordance with this Act, the Information Officer shall have to provide information to the applicant after separating the information which can be made public.



ANNEX II

KATHMANDU UNIVERSITY STUDENTS CODE OF CONDUCT

Students of Kathmandu University central campus and constituent centers are required to abide by the following codes of conduct:

1. Ensure optimum academic dignity by respecting and obeying the teachers;
2. Always keep the value of the rules and disciplines;
3. Behave gently and politely;
4. Maintain dignified conducts towards fellow students;
5. Avoid indulgence in unethical acts like abusing, teasing, deceiving one another, and cheating in the examinations;
6. Do not use any kind of graffiti or debasing scriptures against teachers and fellow students within and outside the University or campus premises;
7. Treat one another with dignity and politeness inside the hostels;
8. Respect the hostel rules;
9. Make timely payment of University fees;
10. Always work towards becoming studious, well-mannered, honest and hardworking;
11. Obey the University Act, Articles, Directives and Regulations;
12. Consistently help in the development, promotion and welfare of the University;
13. Participate actively in programs organized by the University;
14. Work towards guaranteeing genuine academic environment in the University, Schools and constituent centers or colleges;
15. Behave well with both juniors and seniors, and develop dignified conducts towards becoming competent citizens;
16. Keep the dignity of University exams by obeying the directives of the exam superintendent and invigilators;
17. Keep the habit of visiting to and studying in the University or college library, and obey library rules and regulations.



ANNEX III

KATHMANDU UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEE CODE OF CONDUCT

- ८.१ **समय परिपालन र नियमितता :**
विश्वविद्यालयमा पूरा समय काम गर्ने शिक्षक तथा कर्मचारी विश्वविद्यालयद्वारा समय समयमा तोकिएको समयसम्म नियमित रूपले दैनिक रुजु हाजिर रहनु पर्नेछ । विश्वविद्यालयमा रही काम गर्नुपर्ने तोकिएको समयभित्र अन्यत्र गई पूरा वा आंशिक समय काम गर्न पाइने छैन ।
- ८.२ **अनुशासन र मर्यादा :**
विश्वविद्यालयका शिक्षक तथा कर्मचारीहरु आफू स्वयं अनुशासित एवं मर्यादित रहनुका साथै छात्रछात्राहरुलाई पनि मर्यादित, शिष्ट, अनुशासित र चरित्रवान् बनाउन सदा प्रयत्नशील रहनु पर्नेछ ।
- ८.३ **सेवाप्रति निष्ठा र आदर :**
विश्वविद्यालयका शिक्षक तथा कर्मचारीले विश्वविद्यालयको सेवाप्रति आस्था, विश्वास र भरोसाको भावना राख्नुका साथै अध्यापन, अनुसन्धान र सृजनात्मक क्रियाकलापलाई मुख्य लक्ष्य बनाई त्यसैमा संलग्न रहनु पर्नेछ ।
- ८.४ **राजनीतिक क्रियाकलापमा असंलग्नता :**
(क) विश्वविद्यालयका शिक्षक तथा कर्मचारीले प्रत्यक्ष वा अप्रत्यक्ष रूपमा कुनै राजनैतिक क्रियाकलाप संचालन गर्न वा राजनीतिक अभिप्रायले अभिप्रेरित संघ, संस्था आदि स्थापना गर्न पाउने छैन ।
स्पष्टीकरण: “प्रत्यक्ष वा अप्रत्यक्ष” भन्नाले कुनै राजनीतिक दलको सदस्य वा पदाधिकारी वा दलको प्रतिनिधि भई राजनीतिक सभा एवं सम्मेलनमा भाग लिएको अवस्थालाई जनाउनेछ ।
- ८.५ **प्रचार-प्रसारमा प्रतिबन्ध :**
(१) विश्वविद्यालय सेवामा कार्यरत कुनै शिक्षक वा कर्मचारीले विश्वविद्यालयको मर्यादा एवं प्रतिष्ठामा प्रतिकूल प्रभाव पर्ने कुनै कुरा प्रचार प्रसार गर्न र विश्वविद्यालयको नीति र उद्देश्य विरुद्ध कुनै कुरा लेखी प्रकाशन गर्नु गराउनु हुँदैन ।
(२) विश्वविद्यालयको कुनै शिक्षक वा कर्मचारीले आफ्नो कर्तव्य पालन गर्दा विश्वविद्यालयसँग सम्बन्धित गोपनीयता भंग गर्न नहुने खालको आफूले पाएको, लेखेको वा संकलन गरेको कुनै कागज वा कुनै समाचार अनधिकृत कुनै व्यक्ति वा सञ्चार माध्यम आदिलाई सम्बन्धित निकायको पूर्व स्वीकृति विना सूचना गर्नु हुँदैन ।
- ८.६ **विवाह सम्बन्धी प्रतिबन्ध :**
विश्वविद्यालयको कुनै शिक्षक वा कर्मचारीले मुलुकी ऐन विहावारीको महल विपरीत हुने गरी बहुविवाह, बालविवाह र अनमेल विवाह गर्नु गराउनु हुने छैन ।
- ८.७ **बुझबुझारथ :**
कुनै पनि शिक्षक वा कर्मचारीले आफूले बुझाउनु पर्ने नगदी, जिन्सी कागत जे जति छ, सबै म्यादभित्र बुझाई दिनु पर्नेछ र बुझनुपर्नेले पनि म्यादभित्र बुझी लिनु पर्नेछ ।

८.७.१ चौधौँ संशोधनद्वारा थप ।

