

Social Media Policy

University of Missouri School of Law

Student Bar Association

Carefully. Thoughtfully. Professionally. With Tiger spirit.

Before you post content to any social-media outlet affiliated, or reasonably possible to be associated with; yourself, the School of Law, the student organizations here at the school, the Missouri Bar Association, the American Bar Association, or any other legal association, and the University of Missouri, please take a moment to review our official guidelines.

If you are a member of the University of Missouri School of Law - Student Bar Association (i.e. a person enrolled in classes at the University of Missouri School of Law), then these rules apply to you. We expect everyone who participates in social media to understand and to follow these guidelines. They will evolve as new technologies and tools emerge, so please check them regularly.

Interacting with others

- Provide positive and insightful commentary to help create a bond and **build a rapport with users**.
- If leaving a comment, post something meaningful, encouraging, informative or respectful. Comments should always follow the **established posting policy**.
- Before posting, re-read your comment to make sure it can't be misconstrued as negative or inappropriate. If you have **any doubt, ask someone else** to read it before you post it.
- Respond to questions or inquiries in a **timely fashion**. Since timestamps often are published with posts, other users will know just how quickly you respond to them with accurate and relevant information.
- Disagreement should not be squelched. **If you respond to a disagreement, do so in a professional and respectful manner**. Respect proprietary information, content and confidentiality.

Participation protocol

- **Be transparent**. If you're discussing an MU-related topic, use your real name and title. Keep in mind that what you say represents your university, your school, your classmates, and should be absolutely accurate.
- **Respect peoples privacy**. Avoid speaking about, or mentioning, others in your posts whenever you can. Seek that person's informed consent when needed.
- In online social networks, the lines between public and private, personal and professional, are blurred. **Be sure that content is consistent with your professional role and with the standards of our profession**.

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- Make sure your efforts to be transparent **don't violate the university's privacy, confidentiality or legal guidelines** for external communications. All statements must be true, accurate and not misleading. Never comment on any legal matters, litigation or parties with whom the university is in litigation without appropriate approval.
- **Do not comment despairingly on others**.
- Do your homework, and get help. If a different person or department is better suited than you to post a reply or comment, invite that representative to participate. Your classmates come from a wide number of backgrounds and fields of study. Find them.
- **Engage in conversation**. Talk to your users like you would talk to people face to face in professional situations. Avoid composed, stilted and institutional language. Be friendly.
- Provide **quality**, provide interesting, accurate and up-to-date information.

- Be responsible. **Participation in social media is an opportunity, not a right.** Treat it as seriously and professionally as you would any other aspect of your career. If you make a mistake, admit it. People will notice if earlier posts change, so if you decide to make an edit, make it clear to all users.
- Lead the discussion. Point users in the right direction, and **provide them with an example of how a professional operates.** Show your Tiger pride.
- **Respect protected material.** Follow all policies and guidelines regarding the use of official MU marks. Follow all appropriate practices for use of copyrighted and trademarked material.

Moderation guidelines

In most social media, we, SBA, are unable to pre-approve public posts to its pages or sites. The following steps should be taken to ensure the best experience for users.

- Clearly state in your site's posting policy that you are **unable to pre-approve content.** Assure users that the site is regularly monitored (and actually monitor the site) and that content violating the posting policy will be removed.
- If a user posts a constructive criticism or a negative comment that does not violate the posting policy, don't delete it. Instead, engage the user in conversation. Perhaps you can help solve a problem, winning over a disgruntled member of your audience. Always use facts in supporting your statements, and, when possible, include links. **Not every barb warrants a response.**
- Correct misinformation. If a user posts a false accusation or an inaccurate statement, don't delete it. Instead, respond — **in a respectful and friendly manner** — with the accurate information. If a user posts an ignorant and/or offensive remark, you can use the opportunity to help educate the person without being condescending, pointing him or her to reliable resources and correcting false impressions. After all, Mizzou is in the business of public education. Educate the public.
- Where warranted, when removing a post, **leave a reminder of your policies so users will better understand why the post was removed.** Contact the individual who posted the deleted item, and remind him or her about the policies. Also thank the user for their involvement in the community, and encourage future appropriate participation.
- One of the most important things to remember when moderating social media is that these conversations take place somewhere on the Internet. Providing a forum for them gives the

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SBA a chance to monitor what is being said, to correct any misconceptions and to provide accurate information to all users. **Removing a discussion from your site doesn't eliminate the discussion.** If you allow it to take place, users will stick around.

Failure to Comply

- It is the responsibility of each member of SBA to conduct their behavior in accordance with this policy.
- It is the duty of each member of the SBA to report instances of possible non-compliance with this policy to the Vice-President of the SBA—all reports will be kept anonymous and in confidence.
- The Vice-President of the SBA will give a report on instances of possible non-compliance to the Board of Governors. It will be the Board of Governors that decide if a reported instance is, in fact, a violation of this policy—and the appropriate remedies to the situation