



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

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DEFINITION OF TERMS

Social media:	A variety of internet applications that allow users to create content and interact with each other
Social media account:	Social media sites allow visitors to create their own accounts that they can log into after which users share information or interact with others online
Social media account managers:	Members of staff and students assigned to manage official University of Nairobi social media pages
Customer service:	The assistance and advice provided by a company to those people who buy or use its products or services.
Hashtag:	A tag used on a variety of social networks as a way to annotate a message. A hashtag is a word or phrase preceded by “# (i.e. #universityofnairobi). Social networks use hashtags to categorize information and make it easily searchable for users.
Social media platforms:	A web-based technology that enables the development, deployment and management of social media solutions and services. It provides the ability to create social media websites and services with complete social media network functionality.

Stakeholder:	Individuals, institutions or organizations that share or have potential to share benefits and liabilities – students, the students' parents, lecturers, alumni, employer, government and professional bodies.
Verification:	Is the process of verifying that a new or existing social media account is owned and operated by a specified real individual or organization. Verified accounts are often visually distinguished by check mark icons or badges next to the names of individuals or organizations.
Bio:	A short bit of explainer text that explains who the user is.
Contentious conversations:	Causing, involving, or likely to cause disagreement and argument.
Profile pages:	It includes information about the individual user, like a profile photo, bio, website, feed of recent posts, recommendations, recent activity and more.
Profile photo:	The image that represents a social media account in all its interactions across a platform. Profile pictures are displayed as an avatar next to the account name on posts, comments and mentions (depending on the platform).

Cover photo:

The larger photo at the top of the profile, above the profile picture. Like the profile picture, cover photos are public.

Empathy:

The feeling that you understand and share another person's experiences and emotions; the ability to share someone else's feelings.

Official Use:

Official use is defined as a member of staff or student using social media as a representative of the University.

Executive summary

Social media has evolved into a powerful communications and public relations (PR) tool. It is generally expected that if you are on social media, then you must keep it 'social'. Maintaining the 'social' on social media means sustaining the conversations and engagements with the audience.

The current uniRank (June 2018) analysis indicates that an impressive 86% of universities in the world are on one or more social media platforms. Social media may have its risks but the greatest risk of all is not to embrace it. Therefore, universities need to set aside that cap and tassel and get into the depths of social media where conversation is king and produce the right content at the right time, on the right platform.

Given the organizational structure of the University of Nairobi, streamlining the social media activities poses a big challenge. However, operating various social media platforms for the different departments in the institution is an appropriate strategy as it will give the departments the luxury to focus on their areas of specialization. It is good practice for the different departments to sell the same key messages to its publics. To achieve this, this Social Media Policy will be of great importance to the University of Nairobi as it will offer proper guidance.

John A. O. Orindi

Director, Corporate Affairs

1. Introduction

1.0 About the University of Nairobi

The University of Nairobi (UoN) has many social media accounts - some successful while others outdated. The officers charged to handle the accounts operate without set policies and guidelines that have been agreed upon. There is need to enhance UoN's collective social media presence in the creation of a university-wide social media policy and guidelines.

1.2 Vision, Mission and Core Values

1.2.1 Vision

"A world-class University committed to scholarly excellence"

1.2.2 Mission

To provide quality University education and training and to embody the aspirations of the Kenyan people and the global community through creation, preservation, integration, transmission and utilization of knowledge.

1.2.3 Core values

Freedom of thought and expression: We shall promote and defend freedom of thought and expression in all our academic inquiry and activities.

Excellence: Our actions and interactions shall be guided by high standards and sustained endurance for excellence.

Care: We foster a leadership culture that cares, is people-focused, that connects to and is responsive to the needs of internal and external customers, and promotes stewardship over University resources on behalf of beneficiaries.

Good governance: We shall be guided by the national values and principles of governance specified under Articles 10 and 232 of the Constitution. These include integrity; transparency; accountability; inclusiveness; high standards of professional ethics; efficient, effective and economic use of resources; and responsive, prompt, effective, impartial and equitable provision of services.

Innovativeness and creativity: Innovation and creativity shall be our hallmark in delivering value to our customers.

Partnership and teamwork: We foster work culture characterized by teamwork and partnership with both internal and external stakeholders.

2. The rationale

The creation of a social media policy and guidelines is important because it will align the use of social media for communications and provide guidance for listening, participating, engaging and encouraging interaction. The policy will be applicable to all audiences including prospective students, current students, staff, faculty, alumni and the broader community.

Social media is important to the university as it will enhance the brand online. It is also a good platform for marketing ourselves to potential students, partners and donors and to reach alumni. Because of its speed of feedback, low costs and wide reach, UoN can use social media as news channels for announcements and advertisements. Social media is also an effective customer service tool in which the universities can engage the community by responding to queries and driving discussions based on the current trends and insights.

It is therefore important for UoN to consider the strategic aspects of reaching certain communication goals through social media platforms.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that high quality messaging and content is circulated through social media, consistent with the University's brand. The policy will assist with the generation of positive social media coverage and protect and enhance the organization's reputation.

4. Objectives

1. To positively engage internal and external stakeholders through the University of Nairobi's social media platforms.
2. To strengthen the University of Nairobi's brand and improve its reputation by securing an increase on the number of positive mentions about the University of Nairobi on social media.
3. To support the University's marketing and communication strategies.
4. To provide frequent updates about campus news and events.
5. To establish social media as an official emergency and crisis communication channel.

5. The scope

This social media policy applies to social media account managers and the University community.

6. Policy statement

The University of Nairobi is committed to enhancing its brand and reputation by positively engaging its stakeholders through various social media platforms.

7. Guiding principles

This Social Media Policy shall be guided by principles of effectiveness, clarity, accountability and responsibility and integrity.

7.1 Effectiveness

The university shall ensure that all communication is effective and appropriate and shall convey information and respond to requests by stakeholders through social media.

7.2 Clarity

The university undertakes to transmit clear, uniform and easily understood information, to reinforce, clarify or authenticate communication.

7.3 Accountability and responsibility

The university shall endeavour to ensure that editorial operations and marketing of the University's products, which constitute an integral part of the institution's communication process, reflect a high level of accountability and responsibility.

7.4 Integrity

Internal and external communication, like all other university activities shall continue to be guided by high levels of integrity.

8. Policy issues

The University has identified the following policy issues that form the basis of this Social Media Policy.

8.1 Creating official accounts

All social media accounts must be registered with the Director, Corporate Affairs.

8.2 Procedure of creating a new account

Before creating a social media account write a formal request to the Director, Corporate Affairs. This will be done by the College Principal or Central Head of Department.

The letter should:-

- a. Explain the need of creating the specific account
- b. Indicate proposed username. It should have the abbreviation 'uon'

Upon approval, the Web Communication Officer/ Support Officer in the said college/department will create and manage the account.

- a. During the creation of the social media account, an official University email e.g. smcae@uonbi.ac.ke, smcbps@uonbi.ac.ke, smvc@uonbi.ac.ke, will be used.
- b. All UoN affiliated social media accounts should be verified.
- c. The holder of the credentials will surrender them upon request

8.3 Naming an account

Any University social media account must have the abbreviation 'uon' in their username e.g. @uoncees.

8.4 Deleting an account

Social media accounts will be deleted when:

- a. They have been inactive for one year, however they can be retained upon request by the account managers.
- b. Account managers request Director, Corporate Affairs to do so.

Once an account has been identified as inactive, the Director, Corporate Affairs will write a notification to the relevant account manager informing him/her the account risks to be deleted. If no response to retain the account is received within 14 (fourteen) working days from the date of notification, the account will be deleted.

8.5 Page Layout/outlook

8.5.1 Profile photo/ cover photo

They should:

- a. humanize the institution
- b. represent the college/ department's unique selling point
- c. be relevant to the current activity in the University/college/department.

8.5.2 Colour

The official University of Nairobi colour is cyan blue 70%. This will be adhered to when branding the social media pages.

8.6 Bio

The bio should include:

- a. include the name of the college / department/ unit
- b. Mention that it is affiliated to the University of Nairobi
- c. An overview of the purpose of the account
- d. A Webpage address, contact e-mail and/or phone number

9. Best Practices

9.1 Posting Guidelines for social media managers

1. Use simple language - be professional.
2. Be active- Post regular updates, fresh and engaging content.
3. Be honest- strive for accuracy, check your facts before posting on social media.
4. Be respectful and positive.

5. Avoid any content that can be deemed racist or demeaning to any particular group/individual.
6. Avoid contentious conversations and hashtags on social media e.g political, religious, etc.
7. Acknowledge mistakes.
8. As a University/college/department, the social media accounts should not follow individuals, politicians and controversial personalities. They should follow reputable institutions, relevant organizations, professional bodies, etc.
9. Be original.
10. All UoN affiliated social media accounts should follow each other.

9.2 Client Service

- a. When responding to questions, add a signature, that is, initials of the person responding e.g Jane Doe should be ^JD.
- b. Respond to clients' queries promptly and appropriately.

9.2.1. Tone

- a. Use empathy in your responses and offer assistance.
- b. Complaints Handling System- In case of an issue beyond the account manager's control, it should be escalated to the Director, Corporate Affairs.

a. Use of Videos and Photos

1. Images and videos should:
 - Be of good quality.
 - Original
2. Only upload share worthy content; avoid graphic content and disturbing images, caution viewers before posting such photos.
3. Caption all images and videos
4. Acknowledge the source of the image and video if it is not from the University.
5. Videos should be at most 2 minutes long
6. Video format should be *.gifs*

9.2.2. The social media content plan

The social media team will develop a social media content plan quarterly.

The plan will incorporate the university's calendar of activities and relevant United Nations International Days. In addition, the team will create engaging content capturing the mandate of the University.

10. Legal guidelines

These guidelines apply to all types of use of social media on behalf of UoN.

- 10.1 Trademarks and use of images copyright laws that apply to printed material also apply to online publishing. Photographs, graphics, video, audio, or text created by another person may not be placed on a page without permission of the artist or author. Any violation of copyright, trademark or any other law is the responsibility of the Web Communication Officer/ Support Officer and not the University. Permission is granted to download information from the social media pages, so long as such information is not used for commercial purposes. All material posted to an official University of Nairobi Website social media page is copyrighted by virtue of its posting.
- 10.2 Do not use UoN's identity, such as name, colour, and emblems, except as permitted by the existing guidelines and policies.
- 10.3 Additionally, do not create or develop social media accounts, profiles or initiatives bearing the University of Nairobi's name without prior approval from the Department Corporate Affairs.
- 10.4 Avoid engaging in behavior that could raise actual or apparent conflicts of interests and conflicts of commitment on social networks.
- 10.5 Do not endorse commercial partners.
- 10.6 Maintain the confidentiality of proprietary or protected information.
- 10.7 Be respectful of intellectual property rights and laws. Use of third-party copyrighted or trademarked material or use of a person's likeness without permission in digital content may be illegal and may expose UoN to significant financial liability and reputational risk.

- 10.8 Minimize security risks to social media accounts and profiles that have the ability to affect UoN's reputation.

11. Enforcement

- 11.1 By using the University's social media pages, the user agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless, the University of Nairobi, its agencies, officers, employees, representatives, and agents from and against all claims and expenses, arising out of the user's use of the University site or materials and information contained on it.
- 11.2 Any apparent violation of this policy should be reported to the appropriate administrative authority.
- 11.3 To ensure compliance with these expectations, the University requires its authorized users to follow the policies outlined.
- 11.4 Disciplinary action may be applicable under other University policies and guidelines.

12. Implementation and responsibility

- 12.1 The Vice-Chancellor is responsible for the existence and review of the Social Media Policy.
- 12.2 The Vice-Chancellor may delegate authority to any person as it deems appropriate and may reassign delegations referred to in this document.
- 12.3 The Director of Corporate Affairs is the custodian of the policy and shall perform his/her duties as prescribed in this policy.
- 12.4 Social media account managers of University shall be responsible for implementation of this policy in their respective units.

13. References and complementary policies

a. References

- i. The Constitution of Kenya, 2010
- ii. Universities Regulations, 2014
- iii. University of Nairobi Charter, 2013
- iv. University of Nairobi Statutes 2013

v. Universities Act 2016

b. Complementary policies

- i. Communications Policy
- ii. Marketing Policy
- iii. Branding Policy

14. Communication and dissemination

- a. Staff and students shall be trained and sensitized on this policy.
- b. The policy shall be posted in the university intranet for ease of reference.
- c. There shall be periodic reminders on this policy.

15. Monitoring and evaluation

This policy shall be monitored regularly and evaluated periodically for continued applicability, effectiveness and relevance.

16. Compliance

Social media managers must comply with the laid down guidelines in the University of Nairobi Social Media Policy, Communication Policy and any other relevant policies.

17. Review

The policy shall be reviewed periodically for continued relevance and applicability.

18. Approval

<u>Organ</u>	<u>Signature</u>	<u>Date</u>
18.1 University Executive Board		
18.2 Senate		
18.3 Council		

Appendix

Social media policy committee members

Mr. John Orindi	-Director, Corporate Affairs (Chairman)
Ms. Mariam Maina	- Web Communication Officer
Mr. Abook Brian	- Web Executive Officer
Ms. Florida Keru	- Executive Secretary
Mr. Peter Oluoch	- Web Administrative Officer
Ms. Eunah Njoroge	- Web Communication Officer
Mr. Omido Dennis	- Web Communication Officer
Ms. Teresia Mbugua	- Web Communication Officer
Ms. Winnie Codawa	- Web Communication Officer
Mr. Festus Kirui	- Web Support Officer
Mr. Gabriel Ambuko	- Web Support Officer
Mr. Joseph Muita	- Web Support Officer
Mr. Martin Kinuthia	- Web Support Officer
Mr. Timothy Miringu	- Web Support Officer
Mr. Frankline Sewe	- Web Support Officer
Mr. Dennis Waema	-Web Support Officer
Mr. Alex Munyole	- Web Support Officer
Ms. Esther Nekesa	- Web Support Officer
Mr. Wamola Kevin	- Photographer