SOCIAL MEDIA BEST PRACTICES

These guidelines outline standards and best practices for faculty, students, and staff to use in the creation and administration of official Rockefeller University social media accounts across various platforms (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Google+, YouTube, Instagram, Tumblr, Wiki, blog, etc.).

The primary university social media accounts include:

- http://www.facebook.com/rockefelleruniversity
- https://twitter.com/rockefelleruniv
- http://www.youtube.com/user/RockefellerUniv
- http://www.linkedin.com/company/rockefeller-university

Prior to setting up a new account, contact Communications and Public Affairs (CPA) to confirm that an account does not already exist for that specific department, area or organization. With CPA, determine if a new, separate account is necessary. Please note that departments, areas or organizations without a social media account can promote items via the existing Rockefeller University social media platforms by contacting Jessica Rothschild, Web Communications Specialist (jessica@rockefeller.edu or x7125).

If it is determined that a new account will be created, provide CPA with a main contact for the new account and a list of account administrators. An itemized checklist for setting up a new account can be found at the end of this document.

Accountability

- Administrators of Rockefeller’s social media accounts represent the university when posting content. As such, all communications are subject to the university’s Code of Conduct and Policy on Responsible Use of University Computing Resources. In addition, as users of social media, administrators and those who post individually are tying their personal profiles to the university at large, so it is important to be mindful of post content at all times. Mistakes can be easily made and have the potential for serious repercussions.

- As a representative of the university, it is the administrator’s responsibility to adhere to Rockefeller’s visual identity.

- All accounts should follow the Terms of Service associated with the social media platform being used. Posts by individuals are also subject to the Terms of Service for each platform, so it’s good practice to be aware of what the terms are and check them occasionally to see if anything has been changed.
There is no truly “private” information via social media. Despite privacy and security settings, search engines can find posts made years after initial publication. The messages conveyed should reflect Rockefeller’s values and be able to stand the test of time. It’s also good practice for individuals who post to be aware of the privacy settings for all of the social media accounts to which they are tied and check the settings regularly to make sure that the platform hasn’t altered default settings.

Confidentiality

Administrators may have exposure to confidential, proprietary or sensitive information about Rockefeller, its employees, studies, patients and/or its partners. It is imperative that existing confidentiality, privacy and security policies are followed when generating content.

Transparency

• The description of the account should disclose the official presence of a department, area or organization.

• If the platform provides for an “About” section, the administrator is responsible for filling this out based upon relevant university information. University information is updated periodically; thus, account administrators should review the information on their accounts several times a year to make sure that the information is current. If a primary Rockefeller account already exists on the specific social media platform, this section should indicate how the new account differs.

• Accounts or profiles should not be created for other departments, areas or organizations without prior authorization.

Other

• All accounts should designate a back-up administrator for if/when the main administrator is sick or on vacation, or if there is an emergency.

• When an account administrator leaves his or her position at the university, that user’s access to the account should be terminated immediately. A replacement should be found in advance of the administrator’s departure. In addition, the password connected with the account should be changed (reminder: use a sophisticated password to provide a higher level of security, as recommended by Information Technology).

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1 General information about the university on social media accounts should reflect the information on Rockefeller’s Web site. Rockefeller’s “About” page (http://www.rockefeller.edu/about/) has the official number of HOLs, major prizes awarded, etc. This information should remain constant across all Rockefeller resources.
• All press inquiries received via a social media account should be forwarded to Zach Veilleux of CPA (veillez@rockefeller.edu or x8982).

RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES

Strategy
Accounts should demonstrate a clearly defined strategy with objectives and a message that is articulate and meaningful (see attached Social Media Account Creation Checklist). It is the administrator’s responsibility to coordinate strategy and execution with any other administrators on that same account.

Coordination
After creating an account, it is recommended to link to other Rockefeller social media accounts as well as www.rockefeller.edu. Links help drive traffic to all of the university’s communications channels and enhances a cohesive communications strategy.

Audience Building and Engagement
Social media accounts should strive towards developing a highly engaged audience (having a personality in posts helps this process). This can be done through meaningful interactions with the audience and a consistent presence.

Responsiveness to audiences increases credibility and engagement. Some people might contact the university through social media instead of using more traditional channels. Therefore, administrators should field any questions or comments as soon as possible (within one business day).

Content Management
Social media accounts should generate and/or relate content of interest to the audience and not just derive content from existing Rockefeller University social media accounts.

Social media is very time intensive. To ensure both responsiveness and consistent content generation, multiple administrators should monitor the account to ensure regular content posting and audience engagement. Also, once an account is established, it is unacceptable to desert it (i.e., leave the account online without any activity) as this would reflect poorly on Rockefeller. If there is the potential for a social media account to be deserted, please contact Jessica Rothschild.

Post Frequency
The frequency of posts on the account is dependent upon the type of social media platform and the type of content. (Tip: Posts can be scheduled in advance through an editorial calendar—like Hootsuite—and dispersed evenly through a publishing schedule.)

It is inadvisable to overwhelm audiences with content. As engaging as the account may be, excessive posts can drive people away. While there is no exact formula for the appropriate
frequency of posts, some general guidelines can be followed until such time that post frequency can be dictated by audience feedback:

- Facebook – 1-3 posts/day
- Twitter – 4+ Tweets/day (Twitter users are familiar with frequent updates)
- YouTube/Flickr – Frequency depends on content generation. These platforms do not promote content in the same manner as Facebook or Twitter, so adding content (e.g., new images or videos) when it becomes available is appropriate.
SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT CREATION CHECKLIST

☐ Contact Communications and Public Affairs (CPA) to ensure that an account doesn’t already exist.

☐ Determine the main contact for the account and other account administrators (must have at least two people for the account) and provide this information to CPA.

☐ Outline account strategy.
   a. Identify the target audience/s
   b. Set clear account goals
   c. Determine tactics to achieve the goals
   d. Identify content types to be posted
   e. Determine content sources
   f. Determine initial posting frequency
   g. Identify who will post

☐ Ensure all account administrators read this document.

☐ Set up account.

☐ Subscribe to Rockefeller’s official account on the platform being used (e.g., @RockefellerUniv on Twitter and The Rockefeller University on Facebook).