Social Media/Personal Web Sites and Web Logs—Guidelines for Students

Mount Mary College recognizes that social media sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, etc., and personal Web sites, Web logs, or blogs, can be effective tools for exchanging information. Mount Mary College does not prohibit students from joining and participating in online communities as individuals. However, any online behavior that violates the College’s Student Code of Conduct which is brought to the attention of a College official will be treated as any other violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

Please contact the Academic Dean of Student of Student Affairs if you have questions about the interpretation of the “Student Code of Conduct.”

Social Media/Personal Web Sites and Web Logs—Guidelines for Employees

Mount Mary College recognizes that social media sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, etc., and personal Web sites, Web logs, or blogs, can be effective tools for exchanging information and raising the visibility of the college. Therefore, employees are permitted to contribute content about Mount Mary College and their work; however, there are guidelines employees are asked to follow when maintaining college-sponsored blogs or when posting information about the college on personal social media sites, blogs, or other forms of user-generated media. We ask that you keep in mind the mission of Mount Mary College when you are unsure of what or how to post.

1. Participation may be part of your job. Mount Mary may request that employees maintain work-related, supervisor-approved social media accounts or blogs, which can be managed and updated during work hours (e.g., admission, alumnae, marketing and communications). It is expected that employees will use their real name rather than writing anonymously or under a pseudonym, and disclose or explain their role at the college.

2. Official groups or pages must be supervisor-approved. Groups and fan pages on social media sites are easy to create and promote, making it difficult for users to identify “official” pages. However, these pages require input and maintenance to be effective. If you feel there’s a need and value to generating a group or page for Mount Mary, ask your supervisor before allocating time or resources on the endeavor.

3. Social sites are public, permanent, and retrievable. Your messages on the social Web can be read by anyone. You are searchable and what you say can spread and stays online forever. Use common sense. Presume that even if you don’t identify yourself as a Mount Mary employee on a particular site, the vast and growing repository of data on the Web will make you identifiable to outside parties as such. Similar to college email, employees should have no expectation of privacy when using or posting on social media Web sites.

4. Be transparent; identify yourself, be professional. If you choose to include Mount Mary in your profile on a social site, conduct yourself professionally there. Be transparent and identify yourself clearly as an employee of Mount Mary in any business-related discussions. Be yourself and feel free to say what is on your mind, but do so respectfully. Your opinions should be apparent as yours and not represent the views and opinions of Mount Mary.
5. **Write in the first person.** Where your connection to Mount Mary is apparent, make it clear that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of the college. Consider using this disclaimer: “The views expressed on this [blog; website] are my own and do not reflect the views of my employer.” Consider adding this language in an “About me” section of your blog or social networking profile.

6. **Use a personal email address (not your @mtmary.edu address) as your primary means of identification.** Just as you would not use Mount Mary stationery for a letter to the editor with your personal views, do not use your Mount Mary College email address for personal views.

7. **Be nice.** Don’t vent, bash, or poke fun at people, businesses, companies, brands, competitors, or geographical locations. Do feel free to ask questions and share your opinion in a respectful manner. Think before posting and when in doubt, don’t press “Send.”

8. **Be respectful and of good moral character.** Don’t post any content that is contrary to the Mission of the college. This includes content that is threatening, derogatory or defames Mount Mary College, its services, employees, students, alumnae, constituents, or competitors. Similarly, employees should not post any material that is obscene, defamatory, profane, libelous, threatening, harassing, abusive, hateful, or embarrassing to another person employed by the college, or the college itself. Think before posting and when in doubt, don’t press “Send.”

9. **Avoid controversial issues.** When acting as a representative of Mount Mary, refrain from posting personal views about political issues, candidates or contentious topics.

10. **Be the first to respond to your own mistakes.** If you make an error, be up front about your mistake and correct it quickly.

11. **Protect confidential and proprietary information.** Social computing blurs many of the traditional boundaries between internal and external communications. Be mindful of the difference. Use good judgment and strive for accuracy in your communications; errors and omissions reflect poorly on the college, and may result in liability for you or Mount Mary.

12. **Don’t forget your day job.** Make sure that your online activities do not interfere with your job. Personal blogging generally should be done on personal computers and on personal time, as to not interfere with work performance.

13. **Be aware of liability.** You are legally liable for what you post on your own site and on others. Consider such issues as copyright infringement, plagiarism, and comments that might be viewed as discriminatory, libel or slander.

If social media and/or blogging activity, whether it be college-sponsored use or personal use, is interpreted to be detrimental or damaging to the college, its reputation, or the community, disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment may be enforced.

For any questions about these guidelines or any matter related to the College’s policy on social media, personal Web sites, Web logs, and other user-generated Web content contact the vice president of external relations at 414-256-1646 or gastevid@mtmary.edu.

**Guidelines for Official Mount Mary College Participation**

Some Mount Mary employees may be interested in engaging in internet conversation for work-related purposes, or may be asked by supervisors or leadership to participate, in support of Mount Mary’s organizational objectives. Such engagement on behalf of Mount Mary, including establishments of official external sites representing Mount Mary, must be approved and coordinated through the External Relations Department.
Code of Ethics

- As Mount Mary College engages in conversations on the Internet the following code of ethics applies, both in Mount Mary-sponsored sites and in comments on other sites.
- Mount Mary blog posts and comments will be accurate and factual.
- Mount Mary will acknowledge and correct mistakes promptly.
- When corrections are made, Mount Mary will preserve the original post, showing by strikethrough what corrections have been made, to maintain integrity.
- Mount Mary will delete spam and/or comments that are off-topic.
- Mount Mary will reply to emails and comments when appropriate.
- Mount Mary will link directly to online references and original source materials.
- Mount Mary employees will disclose conflicts of interest and will not attempt to conceal their identity or that they work for Mount Mary.