

Social Media Concerns Policy

1. **Purpose.** The purpose of the social media concerns policy is to provide a process for the investigation, evaluation, and adjudication of any contested removal of content on Sam Houston State University (SHSU) social media sites.
2. **Moderation and Monitoring.** SHSU social media sites are regularly monitored by site account managers and/or appropriate site administrators to ensure that content and activity is in compliance with laws and policies.

Posts deemed in violation of applicable laws, regulations, policies or terms of service including but not limited to FERPA, HIPPA, NCAA Regulations and Non-Discrimination Policies are subject to removal by the site account manager, site administrator and/or University Social Media Administrator, Assistant Director – Marketing. Contested complaints regarding the removal of postings will be investigated and referred to the Social Media Concerns Committee for evaluation and adjudication.

3. **Social Media Concerns Committee.** The Social Media Concerns Committee is comprised of representatives appointed from faculty senate, Dean of Students, student government, human resources and staff council for a term of one year from appointment. The Committee will meet as needed to evaluate any contested removal of content posted on SHSU social media platforms by employees or students. Upon investigation, the Committee will make a recommendation regarding the final dispensation of the contested material.
4. **Contested Content Procedure.** If the removal of content from an official SHSU social media site is contested by the content's author, the following procedure shall apply:
 - A.) The University Social Media Administrator must be alerted to any removal of content from site account managers or administrators. Upon review, the Administrator will provide the author of the content a formal written notice of the content's suspension and actions available to the author should he/she chose to pursue further review.
 - B.) The author of the content in question will have an opportunity to respond to the alert by agreeing to withdrawal of the post, requesting a review by the Social Media Concerns Committee, or requesting reinstatement of the post with appropriate edits. The Administrator may approve or deny edited post reinstatements subject to committee review. The response must be made within 48 hours or author is assumed to have agreed to suspension and removal of post.

C.) If the author of the contested content requests a review, the University Social Media Administrator will schedule a Social Media Concerns Committee hearing within 14 days of the request, giving the individual opportunity to explain the nature of the material and to defend the appropriateness of the post in question.

D.) Following the hearing, the Committee will prepare and forward a written recommendation to the Vice President of University Advancement endorsing: i) the reinstatement of content; ii) the permanent removal of content; or iii) the removal of content with disciplinary review. The Vice President of University Advancement will make a final decision regarding the reinstatement or removal of content. All cases with recommendations for further disciplinary review will be referred to the appropriate authority for consideration and application of disciplinary sanctions.

5. **Student Rights.** Students enrolled at SHSU, who elect to appear before the Social Media Concerns Committee, will retain the following rights in all deliberations:

- The right to be informed in writing of all concerns before any hearing may proceed;
- The right to reasonable access to the hearing files which shall be maintained by the Social Media Concerns Committee chairperson;
- The right to present evidence, respond to questions, and make statements to the Committee;
- For cases referred to discipline, students are advised to consult the Code of Student Conduct and the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Regents, Texas State University System for an unabridged enumeration of rights.