Social Media Policy

Purpose and Scope

The Social Media policy provides guidance for use of Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine institutional social media accounts (“institutional accounts”) and use of Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine information or materials in personal social media accounts (“personal accounts”). This policy applies to all employees, affiliates, guests, and students at Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine.

Cummings School’s social media policy is aligned with the social media policies of Tufts University, which advises social media users/developers to abide by all Tufts University policies governing employees, student privacy and confidentiality when posting to institutional accounts or on personal accounts. This includes, but is not limited to policies regarding maintaining client confidentiality, professionalism, non-discrimination, anti-discrimination, conduct, ethics, sexual misconduct, responsible use standards, social networking site guidelines, copyright, and intellectual property.

Anyone with questions regarding social media or posts should contact the Director of Communications and Marketing at vetsocial@tufts.edu. They will be happy to advise you and help secure any necessary permissions when appropriate.

Definitions

Institutional social media account: an account representing any department, office, initiative, student organization at Cummings School, linked to a tufts.edu elist email address, and registered with the Office of Communications and Marketing.

Personal social media account: an account owned and maintained by a Cummings School employee or student for personal use, not linked to a tufts.edu email address, and/or not registered with the Office of Communications and Marketing. This includes all social media accounts whether open or considered limited to a restricted group.

Social media platform: primarily Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, but also, Discord, Nextdoor, Pinterest, Reddit, Snap Chat, TikTok, Tumblr, Vimeo, WeChat, WhatsApp, and many others. For the purposes of this policy, LinkedIn, Researchgate, and Google scholar are concerned professional social networking accounts.

Handle: the account name or title, usually begins with ‘@’.

Bio: the description or introduction to the account.

Profile icon: photo/image used to identify the account.

Cover photo: additional photo/image on Facebook and Twitter.
Images: includes still photographs, videos, or any other image format.

Social media post: the content (text, photo, video, graphic) uploaded to an account.

Tufts.edu elitist email address: a central email address specifically established for the social media account and accessible to multiple Cummings School employees and/or students for the purpose of managing an institutional social media account.

Policy Statement

Institutional Social Media Accounts

1. An institutional social media account is one that is directly linked to the business and activities of Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine and managed by an employee or a student representative of Cummings School.

2. Institutional social media accounts should use a tufts.edu elitist email address. The Director of Communications and Marketing must have access to institutional accounts for operational or academic units through this email and the relevant password.

3. Institutional social media accounts at Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine must be registered with the Office of Communications and Marketing and approved by the Director of Communications and Marketing.
   - School level institutional accounts will be managed through Cummings School Office of Communications and Marketing.
   - Hospitals, clinics, units, laboratories, departments and offices, student organizations, or other relevant users may establish an institutional social media account to further their activities.

4. Institutional accounts must follow the bio and profile icon criteria established by Cummings School.

5. The following applies to all institutional accounts:
   - Do not post derogatory comments about fellow employees, students, competitors, clients, or anyone else.
   - Do not post any school-related information that does not follow Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine and Tufts University policies.
   - Do not post any school-related information that may compromise Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine or Tufts University organizational practices, client privacy, respect for animals, or security.
   - Do not violate intellectual property, copyrighted or trademarked information. Cite and link to your sources whenever possible.
   - Do not use Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine name or social media account to promote or endorse any product, cause, political party, or candidate.
   - Do not post any pictures of Cumming School teaching or research animals (including cadavers or necropsy subjects and body parts) that are not already publicly available, unless approved by the Director of Communications and Marketing, Director of Animal Resources, or the Dean.
personal social media accounts

1. Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine faculty, staff, and students will have personal social media accounts. This policy provides guidance on posting of material related to Cummings School or Tufts University. However, it is important to recognize that other University policies may apply to postings or communications on social media accounts, especially when they relate to or affect relationships with other members of the Tufts community.

2. Do not use your Tufts email address for a personal social media account. If you have accounts related to professional social networks or communication (e.g., LinkedIn, ResearchGate, Google Scholar), you may choose to use your Tufts email address, although a personal email is still recommended for continuity. In the event you leave Cummings School, please take steps to remove your Tufts email address from your professional social networks.

3. Any account not registered with the Office of Communications and Marketing is considered a personal account.

4. Do not use Tufts or Cummings logos, trademarks, or branding identifiers in the profile icon, cover photos or handle bio of a personal account.

5. Do not include the name of Tufts University or Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine, in full or an abbreviated form, on a personal social media account in the account handle or bio.

6. Do not express any views on a personal social media account in such a way as to imply that you are representing Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine or Tufts University.

7. Do not conceal your identity or relationship to Tufts University or Cummings School for the purpose of promoting Tufts University or Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine through a personal account.

8. Do not use your association with Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine or Tufts University to promote or endorse any product, cause, political party, or candidate.

9. The following applies to personal social media accounts:
   - Do not post any school-related information that may compromise our organizational practices, client privacy, respect for animals, or security.
   - Do not use any Cummings School documents or images in such a way as to violate intellectual property, copyrighted or trademarked information. Cite and link to your sources whenever possible. Use good judgment and strive for accuracy in your communications.
   - Do not post images of research animals or subjects, client-donated cadaver or necropsy subjects, client-owned animals, wildlife in the clinic, volunteers, or cadavers.
   - Images of teaching animals owned, leased, or permanently housed by Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine may be posted provided no invasive or active restraint procedures are being performed. Images of animals visible from public roadways or
areas may be posted. Do not post images taken inside research areas and research housing facilities.

- You may, without restriction, post images of animal-related teaching activities, whether with Cummings owned teaching animals or client-owned animals, that do not directly show identifiable animals and do not show any active procedures or consequences of procedures (i.e., an image may show a student doing surgery, but may not include the visible animal and/or the surgical site or body parts removed from an animal as part of the surgery).

- Do not post images or information about client-owned animals or the clients themselves at any time. The one exception is that posting of images of clients or animal-owners (including students) with their animals (and including yourself) is permissible if you have their written permission (email is sufficient), the animals are not in a hospital/clinic treatment or hospitalization area (images in a waiting area, exam room, dedicated teaching area, or outside are acceptable), no procedures are being performed at the time, and no other parts of this policy are violated.

- If posting images of students, staff, or faculty from non-public situations, you should have their permission (verbal permission is sufficient) to do so.

- Posting or re-posting of images that are publicly available (for example, in publications, on the Cummings School website) is permissible, as long as all copyright rules are respected, and sources are acknowledged.

Non-compliance

Questions regarding compliance with this policy should be directed to the Director of Communications and Marketing.

Failure to comply with the social media policy may result in discipline, up to and including dismissal from academic programs or termination of employment, depending on the nature and severity of the violation. The relevant processes for considering violations will be followed. Employees and students are reminded that client confidentiality is a professional ethics consideration (see “Principles of veterinary medical ethics of the AVMA”) and failure to respect client confidentiality and maintain the privacy of medical records may also have legal consequences.

Whom to Contact

For questions related to the Social Media Policy, please contact the Director of Communications and Marketing at vetsocial@tufts.edu.

Approval Authority: Executive Faculty Board
Implementation Authority: Dean’s Office and Communications and Marketing

Revision Date: 12/6/21
Previous Revisions: This is a revision of a prior social media policy that was discontinued with the creation of this new policy.