

## **Social Media Policy & Guidelines for Phillips Academy**

Internet and social networking technologies present evolving, open, and rich opportunities to interact with and learn about others. Phillips Academy embraces these opportunities. At the same time, the Academy is cognizant that there are risks involved in the use of social media, as online, personal and professional boundaries can become blurred. When interacting both in person and online, it is important that all members of the Academy engage in thoughtful and respectful dialogue, demonstrating Academy standards of integrity, respect, and collegiality. Phillips Academy provides training for employees, as well as the following guidelines and best practices for social media usage.

### Guidelines

1. Faculty who use social media for course work and assignments related to required courses must also ensure that students who choose not to engage in social media have alternative means of access. The Office of Information Technology and the Dean of Studies Office can provide support to faculty members interested in utilizing social media in their classes.
2. Because of the uneven power dynamics between employees and students, as well as the potential for miscommunication, adults in the community should not accept or initiate networking linkages that are social in nature or friend requests from/to current students. Setting and maintaining appropriate boundaries with students ensures a safe school environment.
3. Faculty and staff should take particular care to maintain a distinction between their personal and professional on line communications. Linkages and communications which are professional in nature, such as accepting Linked In invitations to professional profiles or following members of the community on professional networks, are acceptable.
4. Members of the community may not post confidential or proprietary information about the Academy, its students, alumni, or fellow employees. Exercise good judgment and follow Academy policies in this regard.
5. Note that official Phillips Academy sites may only be created with the approval of the Office of Communication. Academy trademarks (logo, seal, etc.) may only be used for official school communications. (Note that this does not prohibit the development of sites related to Phillips Academy coursework.)
6. The Academy maintains an official presence in social media. We strive to apply minimal moderation to social media activity, and expect that employees will post content responsibly, as representatives of Phillips Academy. Each channel/site has its own guidelines for appropriate use, and these guidelines are subject to change. Contact the Office of Communication if you have any questions regarding the Academy's social media activity.

### Best Practices

In addition to adhering to the guidelines above, it is strongly recommended that you apply the following standards when engaging in social media:

1. Use care and caution in establishing privacy settings and profile content, and stay aware of changes in social networking privacy options. Never expect absolute privacy in your online activities.
2. Assume everything you post online is public information. Remain cognizant that social networking activities may be visible to past, current, or prospective students, parents, colleagues, and community members--and thus reflect positively or negatively on the Academy community.
3. Exercise appropriate discretion and good judgment when using social media tools for personal communication. Recognize that many alumni have online connections with current students, and that information shared between Academy adults and alumni is likely to be seen by current students as well. When you choose to identify yourself as a member of the Phillips Academy community via your personal account, please remember that your postings may reflect on the Academy. Be thoughtful in your postings, keeping a clear line between personal and professional activity, and immediately remove any material that may be inappropriate, whether posted by you or someone else.

4. Before accepting social networking linkages from individuals affiliated with the Academy, consider the dynamics of particular relationships and the line between personal and professional. For example, while inter-employee linkages are common, consider the potential implications of linkages between managers and employees, or employees and prospective or current parents or Trustees.
5. Realize that social networking websites maintain terms of service that specifically ban the creation of "fake" or "alias" accounts; many of these restrictions are based in Federal Legislation. Such actions are also violations of the Academy's Acceptable Use Policy.
6. Do not contact, access, share information with, or extract information from any Internet site that you believe is illegal, regardless of that site's physical location or legal jurisdiction. Be aware that downloading unlicensed or illegal content is also violation of the Academy's Acceptable Use Policy.

Because these technologies are changing so rapidly, we recommend that members of the community apply the spirit of these guidelines to all online activity regardless of whether they have been identified by this policy. This policy will be updated periodically to reflect the changing environment.