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University Policy Number MPR-002

Subject: Social Media Branding and Marketing Communications

Responsible Parties: Marketing and Public Relations Department

I. BACKGROUND

In the past few years, social media has evolved into a marketing tool that is an important part of William Paterson University's integrated marketing campaign. The William Paterson University Social Media Branding and Marketing Communications Policy ("Policy") was developed by the Marketing and Public Relations Department in consultation with the University's Instruction and Research Technology Department, and the University's marketing agency, Lipman Hearne, following a review of industry standards and best practices found in the social media policies of both large corporations, such as Intel, and nationally recognized colleges and universities.

II. SCOPE

The Policy applies to all academic and administrative offices, including faculty, staff, and students, who create or contribute on behalf of William Paterson University to social networks, blogs, micro blogs, wikis, virtual worlds, or other social media platforms both on and off the wpunj.edu domain. *This policy does not apply to private use of social media that is not conducted on behalf of William Paterson University.*

III. POLICY STATEMENT

In support of its academic mission, William Paterson University recognizes and promotes open discourse and public dialogue. Toward that end, the University recognizes the value of expression that stems from the professional participation of the campus community in social media activities.

The Policy is designed to ensure that any social media presence that represents any University unit, department, program, or other entity associated with William Paterson University is aligned with the University's marketing practices and conforms to the *William Paterson University Brand Strategy and Graphic Guidelines* (June 2010). The Policy governs social media activities—including but not limited to Facebook pages and groups, Twitter, and YouTube accounts—that are conducted on behalf of William Paterson University.

The creation of, or revision to, any social media identity that represents any University unit, department, program, or other entity associated with William Paterson University must be approved by the Marketing and Public Relations Department prior to implementation. Any such social media presence on behalf of the University that was created prior to the

effective date of the Policy is also subject to review and approval by Marketing and Public Relations.

Additionally, any established social media entity—including social networks, blogs, micro blogs, wikis, virtual worlds, or other social media platforms both on and off the wpunj.edu domain that represents any unit, department, program or other entity associated with William Paterson University—is subject to oversight by Marketing and Public Relations to ensure that content is in compliance with the Policy and current *William Paterson University Social Media Best Practices* (“Best Practices”).

III. RESPONSIBILITIES

Approval Process

Prior to implementing a social media presence that represents any University unit, department, program, or other entity associated with William Paterson University:

- *Academic departments* must obtain approval for the proposed activity from Marketing and Public Relations, the college dean, and the provost.
- *Administrative departments* must obtain approval for the proposed activity from Marketing and Public Relations and the divisional vice president.
- *Existing University social media sites that pre-date the Policy* must also obtain approval from Marketing and Public Relations and the college dean and provost or the divisional vice president, as appropriate.

This approval process does not pertain to individual faculty who participate in social media as members of the wider academic community beyond William Paterson University or as part of class assignments.

Social Media Content

- The Marketing and Public Relations Department is responsible for ongoing review and oversight of William Paterson University social media activities to ensure that the University’s brand image is appropriately, consistently, and accurately reflected. Refer to the *William Paterson University Brand Strategy and Graphic Guidelines* (June 2010) and the *University Print and Electronic Communications Policy* (June 15, 2011) to ensure compliance with branding and communications guidelines. Any person or department proposing a social media presence that represents any University unit, department, program, or other entity associated with William Paterson University must contact Marketing and Public Relations to obtain the appropriate logos and visual elements to ensure branding is consistent and accurate.

- Social media postings that represent William Paterson University must comply with all applicable state and federal laws, including but not limited to those pertaining to copyright and intellectual property rights; personal data protection; obscenity, libel and slander; equality of access; and liability concerns.
- Inflammatory or offensive contact or language is prohibited.
- Postings of personal opinion, as distinct from official strategies or policies of William Paterson University, must come from a personal account.
- All content should adhere to current Best Practices.

Campus Participation

William Paterson University faculty, staff, and students who participate in social networking sites via the campus computer network and/or its email service must comply with all applicable state and federal laws, including, but not limited to, those pertaining to copyright and intellectual property rights; personal data protection; obscenity, libel and slander; equality of access; and liability concerns. Please see the William Paterson University Information Technology Policies (Information Technology Plan 2007-09).

Reviewed and endorsed by the IT Advisory Committee: November 8, 2011

Adopted by William Paterson University Cabinet: November 11, 2011

William Paterson University Social Media Best Practices

William Paterson University seeks to promote an active and lively presence and a positive image for the University on the social web. The following guidelines are designed to create a clear and safe basis on which to engage in social media.

It is important to follow these practices when posting, commenting, or adding content to a social media entity on behalf of William Paterson University:

- **Be Authentic.** Have something authentic to say that furthers your audience's understanding and positive perceptions of William Paterson University. Don't use social media only to promote your agenda and to post event notifications, or your listeners will disconnect.
- **Talk About What You Know.** Provide information and share meaningful perspectives from within your area of expertise.
- **Maintain Consistency and Quality.** Don't create unfulfilled expectations – make certain you have a plan to consistently maintain your social media activities over time. This plan should include identifying at least two people who will be responsible for managing and maintaining social media activities in each other's absence. Once accounts are established, make certain content is appropriate and consistent with your area of activity. Be accurate, transparent, and timely in your posts.
- **Know the Rules.** Comply with all applicable state and federal laws, including but not limited to those pertaining to copyright and intellectual property rights; personal data protection; obscenity, libel and slander; equality of access; and liability concerns. If you are unsure how to manage something posted by a social media user that is potentially legally problematic (e.g., references to underage drinking, drug use, etc.), please notify the Marketing and Public Relations Department.
- **Be Respectful.** Do not use inflammatory or offensive language, or post offensive or inflammatory content.
- **Proofread before posting.** Be sure to check for accurate spelling and grammar before posting.
- **Know How and When to Respond.** Work with the Marketing and Public Relations Department to ensure a process and clear understanding of how to handle complaints, concerns, and security issues.

- **Maintain Privacy.** Protect your personal identity; be professionally transparent but maintain personal boundaries. Identify your professional relationship with William Paterson University clearly and explicitly. Know your privacy settings. Protect and respect the privacy of others.
- **Keep Personal Views Separate.** Postings of personal opinion, as distinct from official strategies or policies of William Paterson University, must come from a personal account.
- **No Spam.** Know your audience and always post information relevant to them.
- **Stay Current.** These guidelines will continue to evolve as new technologies evolve and new practices are put into place—so please review these guidelines periodically to ensure you remain up to date.

For further information or if you need training or assistance, please contact the social media community manager in the Marketing and Public Relations Department at social-media@wpunj.edu.