Section	2	General Administrative Polices and Services	07/07/11-Originated
Subject	2.19	Computer/Information Systems	-Reviewed w/ changes -Reviewed w/o changes
Policy	**2.19.7**	**Use of Social Media**	Human Resources -Author

USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Definitions

Social Media—any online networking service on which people publish, converse and share content from works of user-created video, audio, text or multimedia with the general public or with discreet groups of friends, colleagues or followers. Examples include but are not limited to: online posts/comments; media messaging service (MMS); Twitter®, Facebook ®, Linked-In®, YouTube ® and all other social networks; and personal and organizational websites, blogs, wikis, and similar outlets.

UTMB-sponsored social media—online content posted by or on behalf of a recognized UTMB department, program or organization.

Policy

This policy addresses use of UTMB-sponsored social media. However, faculty, staff and students should be aware that any posting of comments or images that violate UTMB policy or applicable laws may result in disciplinary and/or legal action, even if such material is posted to a non-UTMB social media account and even if the material was posted from a non-UTMB device. Disciplinary action will be in accordance with the governing policy or law which was violated by the posting.

UTMB recognizes the responsible use of social media by our university community as a way to facilitate communication about health policy, public health infrastructure, innovations and activities at UTMB. The provisions of this policy are intended to safeguard patients, students, the UTMB workforce and the university.

This policy is an extension of IHOP Policy 2.19.6, Information Resources Security. All UTMB information resource security policies and practice standards apply if accessing and/or posting to any social networking service while using UTMB-owned information resources and/or posting to UTMB-sponsored sites. All UTMB-sponsored sites will reference or link to the university's Social Media Disclaimer.

Although UTMB is not responsible for content posted by others on any university-sponsored social media outlet, the university reserves the right to monitor and moderate all posts to UTMB-sponsored sites. Any post considered inappropriate will be immediately removed by the site administrator upon his or her being notified of such content. Departments sponsoring UTMB social media accounts/pages are responsible for making the Social Media Disclaimer available to their followers, are responsible for regularly monitoring their site and are accountable for addressing complaints regarding content in a timely manner.

Before hosting, sponsoring or posting to a UTMB-sponsored social media site, faculty, staff and students should be knowledgeable about the following provisions:

Policy, continued

1. Individuals affiliated with UTMB understand that all content posted to any social networking outlet becomes immediately searchable, is immediately shared, and immediately leaves the contributing individual's control forever.

2. No confidential information will be posted to any social media outlet. Doing so could result in legal action to the individual and UTMB. This includes, but is not limited to, Protected Health Information (PHI), which will not be posted unless it has been de-identified as outlined in IHOP 6.2.29, De-Identification of PHI.

3. The individual who is posting information will ensure that no proprietary or confidential data are included in any images and that the activities depicted are consistent with UTMB's published policies. The posting of images depicting medical procedures or patients to any public forum is a violation of UTMB policy.

4. Individuals or groups within the UTMB community are not permitted to present personal opinions in ways that imply endorsement by UTMB. This includes but is not limited to product reviews/endorsements, political commentary and guest editorials not directly related to an individual's official role with UTMB.

5. Members of the UTMB community may not post University of Texas System or UTMB proprietary material that is protected by copyright, trademark or other legal standing without prior approval of the data owner.

6. Images, audio recordings or videos of laboratory animals will not be posted to any social media outlet unless such posting meets the provisions as outlined in Institutional Animal Care and Use Policy #8.

7. Members of the university community should maintain standards of professionalism by respecting the privacy of fellow UTMB faculty, staff, and students in social media postings.

8. Employees who provide health care services should avoid establishing personal social media relationships with patients. Doing so can blur professional boundaries and create confusion with regard to the provider-patient relationship. Providers who wish to use social media to promote general information on health and health care can do so by creating separate accounts for professional use that follow this and related policies.

Policy, continued

9. Faculty and staff who use social media to communicate with students must at all times maintain appropriate professional boundaries and follow established policies governing faculty/student relationships.

10. Health care professionals are usually required to maintain membership with some type of professional association or certification with a board, following guidelines promulgated by a governing body related to professional ethics. Such professional guidelines may directly or indirectly address use of social media. Each health care professional affiliated with UTMB is responsible for knowing and following any professional guidelines that apply outside of their employment with UTMB; violations of professional ethics, including but not limited to those affecting licensure to practice, could negatively impact a health care professional's employment status at UTMB.

Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination for employees; a termination of employment relationship in the case of contractors or consultants; or suspension or expulsion in the case of a student. Additionally, individuals may be subject to loss of access privileges and civil and/or criminal prosecution**.**

References

IHOP Policy 2.19.6 *Information Resources Security*
IHOP Policy 6.2.0 *General Policy on the Use and Disclosure of Protected Health Information*
IHOP Policy 6.2.29 *De-Identification of PHI*
Standards of Conduct Guide
Institutional Animal Care and Use Policy #8