

SOUTHWESTERN

LAW SCHOOL Los Angeles, CA

Social Media Policy for Student Organizations

Administrative policy approved July 8, 2024. Effective immediately.

Revision history: None; new policy.

Related policies: Policy to Prevent Harassment, Discrimination, and Retaliation; Website & Digital Accessibility Policy; Policy on Alcohol and Other Drugs; Information Security Policy; Peer-to-Peer File Sharing Policy; Political Activities Policy; Student Records Policy—FERPA; Student Honor Code; Code of Student Professionalism and Conduct; Southwestern core values

Scheduled Review Date: March 2026 (Student Affairs Office)

A. Monitoring Social Media Accounts

Social media accounts (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, X) and third-party websites maintained by recognized student organizations at Southwestern Law School are not official Southwestern accounts or publications. Southwestern does not administer or oversee these accounts. However, student organizations are reminded that their accounts are subject to this policy and other Southwestern policies. Student organizations should understand that their social media accounts may impact Southwestern's reputation, including among members of the legal professional, legal employers, and prospective students. The content of these accounts also may have long-term implications for Southwestern students, employees, alums, and other stakeholders.

B. Southwestern Logos and Seals

Student organizations may not use Southwestern logos or seals on the landing or home pages of their social media accounts. Unauthorized use of Southwestern logos or seals is prohibited. If a student organization wishes to use a Southwestern logo or seal as part of a specific post, the student organization must receive prior written approval from Southwestern's Chief Communication & Marketing Officer via co-mark@swlaw.edu.

C. Disclaimers for Social Media Accounts and Websites

Student organizations that maintain their own websites or social media accounts must prominently display the following disclaimer on the homepage or landing site: "This is not an official Southwestern Law School website [or social media account], and Southwestern Law School does not endorse any posts, reposts, statements, opinions, representations, or other content and is not responsible for system availability." Platforms that do not allow for such a long disclaimer in their bio sections (Instagram, TikTok, etc.) can include: "Not an official Southwestern Law School account. Content not endorsed or verified by Southwestern."

D. Representation and Views

Student organizations should use social media accounts and websites for content within the scope of the organization's mission and purpose. They should exercise discretion when posting, reposting, or "liking" content. Individuals should not use student organization accounts to make personal commentary; instead, they should use their personal accounts for those purposes. If any post expresses an opinion on political topics, legal verdicts, or similar matters, the individual posting must include a separate disclaimer clearly stating that the views expressed in the post do not reflect or represent those of Southwestern Law School.

E. Photographs and Other Images

Student organizations should carefully consider photos, videos, music, and images they post and evaluate whether they meet Southwestern's core values, are consistent with the student organization's mission and purpose, comply with Southwestern's Policy to Prevent Harassment, Discrimination, and Retaliation, and do not violate individuals' privacy or intellectual property rights.

F. Inclusivity and Accessibility

Southwestern's core values include diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. Southwestern encourages student organizations to use inclusive language and a respectful, professional tone in all posts. Southwestern also encourages student organizations to use accessibility features, such as alt-text for images and video captions, whenever possible.

G. Private and Confidential Material

Student organizations must avoid posting confidential or private student information, including phone numbers, email addresses, home addresses, and student ID numbers, without explicit student permission. Student organizations must also avoid posting other confidential information.

H. Endorsements and Fundraising

Student organizations must not use their accounts to endorse vendors or products or engage in fundraising activity.

I. Security and Breaches

Student organizations should require strong passwords for their accounts and, where possible, use multi-factor authentication to enhance security. They should also set standards for changing passwords on a regular basis and consider limiting access to a few authorized individuals within the organization. In addition, the student organization should consider the privacy and security levels for its account and review those settings at least annually.

If a student organization's account is hacked, the officers should report that breach to the Student Affairs Office. Similarly, the officers should report to the Student Affairs Office any inappropriate or harmful content that is posted by third parties to the student organization's account.

J. Compliance and Accountability

If a student organization violates or disregards Southwestern's policies, or if Southwestern receives a complaint concerning material on a student organization's account, Southwestern reserves the right to act in the best interest of the school and its faculty, staff, and students. Failing to adhere to this policy may result in disciplinary action.

K. Policy Revisions

Southwestern expressly reserves the right to revise any aspect of this policy at any time, with or without notice.