

Social media FAQ

What is social media?

Social media encompasses any technology that allows you to publish commentary online for a virtual community. Social media outlets include blogs, wikis, personal websites and networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace, Twitter, Flickr and YouTube.

How do I set up an account with a social media service?

Registering an account with a social media service such as Facebook or Twitter takes just a few minutes. All such services will require you to provide your name (first and last), a user name and password. Some sites require you to include a phone number, as well. After you set up an account, you may choose to add as much or as little personal information as you like. If you have questions about setting up a social media account or navigating privacy settings, please contact Franklin & Marshall's Director of Web Content.

How much information is too much?

That is entirely up to you, but the rule of thumb is to post only information that you want the world to see. There is no expectation of privacy with respect to information you post via social media. And remember that what you publish may be around for weeks, months or even years, so consider the content carefully and be wary of disclosing personal details.

Are there rules of behavior in social media?

If you have ever witnessed an overheated exchange on an online bulletin board, you may not think so. But here are some best practices:

- Do not blog or post anonymously.
- Do not use pseudonyms or false screen names.
- Do not post anything that is untrue or misleading.
- If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, point it out.
- Do not post copyrighted material unless you have been authorized to do so.

What should I do if I see a post about F&M that I know is false or potentially derogatory?

If you see a post misrepresenting Franklin & Marshall in social media, feel free to point it out, but do so with respect. Avoid arguments and do not try to goad posters into inflammatory debates. Make sure what you are posting in response to another user is factually correct. If you have any questions or concerns about appropriate

use of social media, particularly when it involves Franklin & Marshall, please contact a member of the Office of College Communications.

What should I do if I post something inaccurate or post something by mistake?

If you make an error, admit your mistake and correct it quickly. If you modify a post, make it clear that you have done so, and why, if appropriate. If someone accuses you of posting something improper—such as copyrighted material or a defamatory comment—remove it immediately (failure to do so may result in legal action).

Do I need to identify myself as an employee of the College when I post?

It depends on the subject matter. You certainly do not need to do so if you are blogging or posting about your dinner plans or your child's soccer game. But if the subject pertains to the College or higher education, we recommend you post a disclaimer stating that while you work for Franklin & Marshall, your posts are your personal opinions, and not the opinions of Franklin & Marshall.

Do you have any tips for social media users?

Here are three to keep in mind:

1. The best way to be interesting, stay out of trouble and have fun is to write about what you know. There is a good chance of being embarrassed by a real expert, or of being boring if you write about topics you are not knowledgeable about.
2. Quality matters, so use a spell-checker, and if you are not design-oriented, ask someone to look at your blog and give you advice on how to improve it.
3. The allure of social media is its immediacy, but faster isn't always better. Edit all of your posts before you publish. If you are in doubt over a post, or if something does not feel right, either let it sit and look at it again before publishing it, or ask someone else to look at it first.