

Advisory on Responsible Use of Social Media and Prohibition of Digital Misconduct

It has been observed that the use of social media platforms has increased manifold in recent years, providing individuals with greater opportunities for communication, interaction and expression. However, the misuse of such digital platforms may also have serious consequences, including the unauthorized use of the name, acronym, logo or identity of an institution or organisation, dissemination of obscene, abusive, defamatory or otherwise objectionable content, and posting or circulation of inappropriate comments, allegations or communications concerning members of the community.

In order to maintain a safe, respectful and dignified academic environment, all students, research scholars, members of the faculty, officers, employees and other stakeholders of the University are hereby advised to exercise utmost responsibility, restraint and caution in their use of social media and digital communication platforms.

Therefore, all concerned are advised to strictly adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Responsible Use of the Identity of the University/Organization:

No individual shall create, operate, promote or participate in any unauthorized social media account, page, group or digital platform using the name, acronym, logo or identity of the University/Organization in a manner that may falsely suggest official association or authorization. All stakeholders are strongly advised to immediately unfollow, exit and disassociate themselves from any such unauthorized handles, pages, groups or informal messaging platforms. Active participation, engagement, promotion or submission of content to such platforms may be treated as facilitating or contributing to cyberbullying, misuse of institutional identity and misconduct, as applicable.

2. Respect for dignity and reputation:

No person shall post, circulate, share, forward or publish any material containing obscene, filthy, abusive, derogatory, threatening, defamatory or otherwise objectionable language against any student, particularly girl students, faculty member, employee or any other member of the University community.

3. Protection against character assassination:

Circulation of unverified allegations, insinuations, rumours, manipulated content, personal remarks or material intended to malign, humiliate or damage the dignity, reputation or character of any individual is strongly discouraged and may attract appropriate action under applicable rules and law.

4. No participation in objectionable content:

Merely creating or administering such accounts or groups is not the only concern. Posting, forwarding, sharing, endorsing, commenting upon or otherwise actively participating in objectionable content may also lead to fixing of responsibility, attracting penal action depending upon the facts and circumstances of the matter.

5. Privacy and personal information:

Members of the University community shall respect the privacy of others and shall not publish or circulate personal photographs, videos, telephone numbers, messages, personal information or other private material of any individual without lawful authority or consent.

6. Verification before sharing:

Students and other stakeholders are advised to verify the authenticity of information before forwarding or sharing it on social media or messaging platforms. Information obtained

through unofficial accounts or groups should not be treated as an official communication of the University.

7. Official University communication:

Authentic University notifications, circulars, notices and announcements shall be relied upon only when issued through the official University website, authorized social media channels or other officially recognized public relations mechanisms.

8. Consequences of misuse:

Any misuse of social media that violates the dignity, privacy, reputation or rights of an individual, misrepresents the University, or otherwise constitutes misconduct may result in appropriate disciplinary proceedings under the applicable rules and regulations of the University / Organization, in addition to action under applicable laws, wherever warranted.

9. Legal and Disciplinary Consequences:

Any misuse of social media involving obscene, abusive, defamatory, threatening or unlawful content shall be viewed seriously. Where prima facie evidence of a legal violation exists, the matter may be referred to the Cyber Crime Police Station/District Police Authorities for appropriate action under the Information Technology Act, 2000 and other applicable laws. Such conduct shall also attract appropriate disciplinary action under the applicable University rules, including suspension or expulsion, depending on the nature and gravity of the misconduct.

10. Responsibility of every stakeholder:

All members of the University community are expected to conduct themselves responsibly in both physical and digital spaces and to contribute towards maintaining a safe, inclusive, respectful and harassment-free environment within the University / Organization.

The University reiterates that freedom of expression carries with it a corresponding responsibility to respect the dignity, privacy and rights of others. No individual should use social media as a means of harassment, intimidation, humiliation, character assassination or dissemination of objectionable content.

All concerned are therefore advised to exercise due caution and restraint and to strictly comply with the above-mentioned directions in the larger interest of the University community.

This circular is issued as a general advisory and preventive measure for information, guidance and strict compliance by all concerned.


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