



**GRADUATE
STUDENT SOCIETY**
UBC VANCOUVER

GSS Social Media Policy

Last revision: Sept 2024

1 General

- 1.1 The Objective of the Social Media Policy is to house all policies and procedures related to the use of social media for staff, executives, committee members, and Councillors of the Society. This manual will be available online alongside the GSS Policy Manual at all times and can be accessed by anyone.
- 1.2 The Scope of the Social Media Policy covers all policies and procedures related to communication, engagement, promoting our services and values, and secure management of social media accounts. Social media can be a powerful tool, but it also carries certain risks and responsibilities. This Policy aims to protect the reputation of the Society and ensure our social media presence is professional, respectful, and consistent with our mission. This Policy applies to all social media users creating and distributing content on behalf of the Society and/or using Society social media accounts. Policies in the GSS Policy Manual shall be referred to in this Policy as “GSS Policy”.
- 1.3 All Policies and Procedures in this manual are an extension of the GSS Policies as defined by Bylaw 13. All changes must be made in accordance with the GSS Policies. Recommended changes shall be brought to the Code and Policy Committee to ensure correct wording and that no conflicts in policy will be created. Policy changes will be brought to GSS Council in the usual manner of Policy changes as per GSS Policies.

2 Abbreviations and Definitions

CPC	Code and Policy Committee
Society	Graduate Student Society of The University of British Columbia – Vancouver
Social media	The online and mobile tools people use to share opinions, information, experiences, images, and video or audio clips. This includes websites and applications used for social networking. Common sources of social media include, but are not limited to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">(a) social networking sites such as Facebook and LinkedIn,(b) blogs (personal, professional, and those published anonymously,(c) microblogs such as X (formerly known as Twitter) and Threads,(d) content-sharing websites such as YouTube and Instagram, and(e) discussion forums and message boards.

3 General Guidelines

3.1 The Five Ps of Social Media Use

3.1.1 All Society social media users shall adhere to the guidelines presented in the five Ps of Social Media:

- (a) Professional: always remain professional, and
- (b) Positive: keep posts positive and express contrary or opposing opinions without being disrespectful, and
- (b) Protect: protect the Society and the professional reputation of yourself and others, and
- (b) Privacy: keep your personal and professional life separate and respect your privacy and that of others, and
- (b) Pause: consider personal and professional implications, avoid posting in haste or anger, and consult a communications professional if you have questions about the content of your posts.

3.2 Professional Conduct

3.2.1 All Society social media users shall:

- (a) represent the Society in a professional manner, and
- (b) use appropriate language and maintain a respectful tone.

3.3 Confidentiality

3.3.1 All Society social media users shall

- (a) not share confidential or proprietary information about the Society, its members, or partners, and
- (b) adhere to all applicable laws and regulations regarding privacy and data protection.

3.4 Accuracy and Honesty

3.4.1 All Society social media users shall:

- (a) be accurate and truthful, and
- (b) correct errors or misinformation promptly and transparently, and
- (c) not include false or misleading information.

3.5 Personal Social Media Use

3.5.1 All Society social media users shall:

- (a) clearly delineate personal and professional opinions, and
- (b) Include a disclaimer stating that views expressed are their own and do not reflect those of the Society if mentioning the Society in a personal capacity.

3.6 Respect and Inclusivity

3.6.1 All Society social media users shall:

- (a) not post content that is discriminatory, harassing, or offensive, and
- (a) promote a culture of inclusivity and respect for all individuals.

3.7 Intellectual Property

3.7.1 All Society social media users shall:

- (a) respect copyright laws and intellectual property rights, and
- (b) Give credit to original sources when sharing content

3.7.2 Society logos, trademarks, and other branding elements shall not be used except when:

- (a) the content is directly related to Society business, and
- (b) the content is generated and distributed on behalf of the Society or using Society social media accounts.

3.8 Crisis Management

3.8.1 All Society social media users shall:

- (a) address negative comments and feedback professionally and constructively, and
- (b) avoid engaging in arguments or heated debates online, and
- (c) direct all inquiries to the designated communications team, and
- (d) refrain from posting on social media in the event of a crisis or sensitive situation unless authorized by the Communications Officer, and
- (d) report any social media crises or significant issues to the Communications Manager immediately.

4 Specific Guidelines

4.1 Photography

4.1.1 All Society social media users shall:

- (a) obtain consent from individuals before posting their images on social media, and
- (b) ensure that photographs taken at Society events or meetings represent the organization positively, and
- (c) not post images that may be considered inappropriate or unprofessional.

4.2 Media

4.2.1 All Society social media users shall:

- (a) if contacted by the media, inform the media that the President is the spokesperson for the Society, and
- (b) direct all media inquiries to the communications team, and
- (c) ensure that all media content aligns with the Society's mission and values before publication.

5 Procedures

5.1 Account Management

5.1.1 The Communications Team shall:

- (a) approve and manage all official Society social media accounts, and
- (b) securely store passwords and account access information and share them only with authorized personnel.

5.2 Content Approval

5.2.1 The Communications Team and/or the President shall review and approve major announcements or sensitive information before posting.

5.3 Training

5.3.1 The Communications Team shall provide training on social media best practices and this policy during onboarding and periodically thereafter.

5.4 Reporting Issues

- 5.4.1 All creators of social media pertaining to the Society shall report any concerns or breaches of this policy to the Communications Team immediately.

6 Responsibilities

6.1 The President and the Communications Team

- 6.1.1 The President and the Communications Team shall:

- (a) regularly monitor social media platforms for mentions of the Society and relevant topics, and
- (b) track engagement metrics and analyze performance to improve strategies, and
- (c) implement appropriate consequences for policy violations, which may include removal of content, suspension of social media privileges, or other disciplinary actions.
- (d) ensure adherence to all applicable laws and regulations, including privacy and data protection laws.

6.2 Staff and Executives

- 6.2.1 All Society social media users shall adhere to the guidelines and procedures outlined in this policy and represent the Society positively.

7 Review and Updates

7.1 Annual Review

- 7.2.1 The Communications Team shall ensure that this policy shall be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to ensure it remains relevant and effective.

8 Acknowledgment

8.1 Social Media Use

- 8.1.1 By engaging in social media activities on behalf of the Society, individuals acknowledge that they have read, understood, and agree to comply with this Social Media Policy.

9 Contact Information

9.1 Further Information

9.1.1 For any questions or clarifications, please contact the Communications Team at communications@gss.ubc.ca.

10 Appendix

About the Society:

The Society (Graduate Student Society of The University of British Columbia – Vancouver) serves the 10,000 graduate students at the University of British Columbia Vancouver campus, helping them have the best experience possible during their studies. We connect graduate students with campus resources, opportunities, and social events. We provide everything from individual support for students to advocacy at provincial and federal levels on the most important issues graduate students face. The Society is located at Thea Koerner House, which has been the center of graduate student life on campus since it was opened in 1962. Ensuring an inclusive and diverse workplace is a key value of the Society. We welcome people of diverse backgrounds, abilities, and perspectives, and are proud to promote a supportive work environment.

Other related guidelines/policies:

- GSS By-Laws
- GSS Privacy Policy
- GSS Employee Handbook