

GOUCHER | college

Frequently Asked Questions

POLICY ON STUDENT SOCIAL MEDIA PRIVACY

1. What is the purpose of the policy?

The policy has been adopted to ensure that Goucher is in compliance with recent Maryland legislation that addresses privacy in a student's use of social media. Many departments use social media to connect with students, including in academic, athletic, career-based and other college activities. The purpose of this policy is to protect student privacy interests while permitting the use of social media for these purposes.

2. What kinds of social media activity does this policy apply to?

The policy applies to any social media that enables users to participate in social networking by exchanging content with other users, such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, YouTube, Flickr, Instagram, Tumblr, and Vine.

3. What kinds of actions does the policy prohibit?

The policy prohibits faculty and staff from requiring a student or prospective student to grant the college employee access to the student's social media accounts. Specifically, you may not ask a student:

- to change privacy settings on their account so that you can see it;
- to friend you on their social media account;
- to give you the password to their account;
- to log into the account in your presence;
- to identify the social media accounts that the student uses.

In addition the policy prohibits you from taking any adverse action against a student or prospective student for refusing to grant you access to their account.

4. How can I properly use social media accounts in my work with students?

You may require a student to provide access to a social media account if:

- The student has the option, at his or her own election, to complete the assignment or activity by using an existing personal account, by creating a

generic social media account, or by using a social media account that you set up;

- You restrict access to the account that you create to others involved in the academic, athletic, career-based or other college activity;
- The student is not required to provide any log in information for their personal social media account.

5. *Can I set up a Facebook page for athletic teams, classes, clubs or admitted students?*

Yes, provided that you set up the account and restrict it to others in the team, class or club, and follow the guidance above by allowing the student to create a generic Facebook account to log in to that account.

Questions about this policy should be directed to the General Counsel.