

**6th Draft, 4/29/14**

**University of Iowa Department of Intercollegiate Athletics  
Guiding Principles  
For Iowa Student Athletes in Their Use of  
Social Media Sites**

**Social Media Sites:**

Social media sites (such as Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Tumblr, Twitter, Vine and similar sites and blogs) enable individuals to interact with an expansive universe of new people and to connect with friends and family. Postings by student athletes of personal profiles, and comments in chat rooms and blogs are in the public domain, however, and are easily accessible by anyone including reporters, parents, coaches, recruits, fans, groupies, predators, potential employers, and graduate school admissions officials. Even after it has been deleted, information once posted on a social media site can often be retrieved.

**Athletics Department Policy:**

Participation in intercollegiate athletics at the University of Iowa is a privilege that imposes certain obligations on student athletes, including the responsibility of being a positive representative of the University to the public. Student athletes therefore are expected to conduct themselves at all times with honesty, dignity and good sportsmanship. The Athletics Department believes in protecting the rights of student athletes to freedom of speech, association and privacy, including their right to participate in social media. Neither coaches nor team rules may require student athletes preemptively to disclose private social media information to anyone. Student athletes, however, may agree to team rules that authorize a coach to impose temporary social media restrictions to address specific concerns related to the observance of these guiding principles. The Athletics Department does not intend to monitor student athletes' social media sites on a systematic basis, but Athletics Department administrators may periodically conduct random checks of student athletes' social media sites. Student athletes are expected to monitor their own social media sites and post only information and images that conform to these guiding principles and appropriately represent themselves and the University to the public.

The Athletics Department reserves the right, under the Student Athlete Code of Conduct (Category II Misconduct) to investigate and take action against any student athlete who is posting material on a social media site that violates, or appears to violate, NCAA, University, or Athletics Department rules. Postings that violate these Guiding Principles are postings of information, images or language that inappropriately represent the student athlete or the University to the public, including but not limited to, partial or total nudity, sexual misconduct, underage alcohol consumption, use of illegal drugs or controlled substances, hazing activities, tobacco use, and obscene gestures.

**Recommended Actions:**

It is recommended that student-athletes immediately review and then regularly monitor any social media sites on which they may have posted material to ensure that the postings are consistent with NCAA, University, and Athletics Department rules, and that they present the student athlete in the way s/he wants to be portrayed. To better achieve the purposes of these Guiding Principles, student athletes are also encouraged to monitor the social media sites of their teammates.

For reasons of safety and privacy, it is recommended that student athletes refrain from posting on social media sites, and if posted promptly remove, any personally identifiable information such as telephone number, address, and class schedule and places frequented. Student athletes should regularly check tagged photos and monitor electronic photo albums, social media sites and blogs to avoid posted photos or messages that would be considered inappropriate.

Student athletes should be cautious in joining groups on social media to be sure they want to be publicly associated with each specific group. Student athletes should particularly refrain from creating or joining a group that is obviously inappropriate for student athletes or is malicious. Student athletes should also understand that, once they become a group member, they are linked to the on-line discussion that takes place within that group, and only the group's administrator will be able to delete them from group membership or remove postings made to a group site.

Student athletes should alert the Student Academic Services Office if they discover the existence of any social media site created by others that falsely appears to be their site. The creation of such bogus sites may constitute identity theft, and the University will assist in their efforts to have the offensive sites removed.

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By my signature below, I hereby affirm that I have read and understand the University of Iowa Athletics Department's "Guiding Principles for Iowa Student Athletes In Their Use of Social Media Sites." Furthermore, I understand that failure to abide by these Guiding Principles by posting materials on social media sites that violate Athletics Department policy may result in sanctions under Category II Misconduct, as outlined in the Student- Athlete Code of Conduct.

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Signature

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Date

Reviewed by:

ISAAC – 4/27/14

SAW – 4/29/14

Approved by:

PCA—