

## Social media guidelines

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*The Executive Board of the University of Bern,*

based on Article 3 Paragraph 3 of the Law of September 5, 1996 Governing the University (UniG) and Article 24 Paragraph 2 Letter i of the University Statute of June 7, 2011 (UniSt),

*has decided on the following guidelines:*

### **1. Social media and the University of Bern**

- (1) Social media are new online communication channels, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Google Plus and YouTube, which enable information to be shared and exchanged.
- (2) The University of Bern currently uses three main social media channels: Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/unibern>), Twitter (<http://www.twitter.com/unibern>) and YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/unibeweboffice>).
- (3) The University of Bern supports open dialog between the university and reference groups via these communication channels.

### **2. Area of application and purpose of these guidelines**

- (1) These guidelines apply to all employees of the University of Bern.
- (2) The aim of the guidelines is to ensure professional, high-quality and secure use of social media.

### **3. General principles**

#### **3.1. Responsibility and continuity**

- (1) All published content is the personal responsibility of the author concerned.
- (2) A continuous dialog is to be maintained with fans, followers or subscribers. The particular unit using the social media is responsible for this. In the event of staff changes, it must be ensured that the relevant authorizations are handed over.

#### **3.2. Legal framework conditions**

- (1) The rights of third parties and the University of Bern – particularly with regard to confidentiality and data protection, copyright and official secrecy – must be respected.
- (2) The general principles of the University of Bern must be complied with, particularly the following:
  - Racist, sexist and pornographic content is not permitted and constitutes an abuse of IT resources.
  - It is forbidden to make damaging statements about the University of Bern or conduct other activities that could have a negative impact.
- (3) The general terms and conditions of the social media channels in question must be observed.
- (4) General advice and information on social media can be obtained from the Communication Office ([smedia@kommunikation.unibe.ch](mailto:smedia@kommunikation.unibe.ch)).

### **3.3. Communication via social media**

- (1) The following principles in particular apply to communication via social media:
  - Responses to questions, criticism or suggestions are to be provided within a reasonable time (first response usually within one working day).
  - The tone of the communication should be appropriate and polite.
  - Communicated content should be restricted to facts.
- (2) Questions that could potentially jeopardize the confidentiality and data protection rights of the user are to be answered by e-mail or in the form of a personal or direct message.

### **3.4. Use of the logo**

- (1) To use material (e.g. the logo) belonging to the University of Bern, consent must be obtained from the Communication Office.
- (2) Only organizational units of the University of Bern are permitted to use the university logo. It may not be used for private or commercial purposes.

### **3.5. Separation of private and professional interests**

- (1) In principle, users are allowed to give their personal opinion, but this must be done with caution and clearly indicated as such (e.g. "This is the private (micro)blog of Mr./Ms. (Name)").

### **3.6. Media inquiries and crisis situations**

- (1) Media inquiries via social media that concern the university as a whole are to be forwarded directly to the Communication Office ([kommunikation@unibe.ch](mailto:kommunikation@unibe.ch)).
- (2) Problematic posts and articles of any kind that could potentially develop into a crisis must be monitored.
- (3) The Communication Office is the point of contact in crisis situations.

## **4. Code of conduct for organizational units and administrators**

### **4.1. Planning websites and web pages**

- (1) An editorial concept or at least a content concept must be drawn up for websites and web pages.
- (2) Topics that are relevant to the university as a whole and have a wider target group can also be communicated via the main channels: <http://www.facebook.com/unibern>, <http://www.twitter.com/unibern> or <http://www.youtube.com/unibeweboffice>.
- (3) The Communication Office is on hand to provide any advice needed.

### **4.2. Netiquette and publication details**

- (1) Rules of "netiquette" (online etiquette) must be provided for websites or web pages, setting out how users should behave toward one another when using the portal concerned. They should also contain criteria for deleting articles or posts from fans, followers or subscribers.
- (2) Rules of netiquette can be combined with the publication details, which usually contain at least the address, e-mail address and telephone number of the person responsible for the communication channel.

### 4.3. Naming

- (1) University websites and web pages must be designated as such using a suitable naming system. The following principles apply to website/web page designations:
- "...University of Bern" is to be added to the names of websites or web pages belonging to the University of Bern (e.g. "Science Slam University of Bern": <http://www.facebook.com/scienceslam.unibern>).
  - "...unibern" or "...unibe" is to be added to the name of the "Uniform Resource Locator" (URL).
  - When choosing a URL, it is advisable to opt for a combination of an abbreviation of the name of the institute or organizational unit concerned and the addition of ".unibe" or ".unibern" (e.g.: <http://www.facebook.com/iop.unibe>). If the social media platform in question (e.g. YouTube) does not allow a period to be included in the URL, the following suffixes without a period can be used: "unibe" or "unibern" (e.g.: <http://www.youtube.com/ilubunibe>).
  - The names to be used for the University of Bern in foreign languages are those specified in the CD mini-manual (original German: Universität Bern, English: University of Bern, French: Université de Berne).
  - It must be noted in the information section of the social media channel that the institute or organizational unit concerned is part of the University of Bern.
  - On portals with character limits (e.g. the microblogging site Twitter), the name of the University of Bern should always be shortened to "unibern" or "unibe." The same applies to the hashtags #unibe or #unibern (e.g. #dalaiunibern), but not to references that are always made on Twitter with "@unibern" and on Facebook with "@Universität Bern" and thus link to official channels.

### 4.4. Monitoring

- (1) The university's online reputation is to be monitored using suitable tools (Google Alerts, <http://www.google.ch/alerts>). The monitoring tool provided by the Web Office can be used to monitor key words on social media ([webmaster@unibe.ch](mailto:webmaster@unibe.ch)).

### 5. Private use

- (1) Private use of social media in the workplace is subject to the same rules as general use of the Internet for private purposes:
- As a basic principle, the IT resources may only be used to fulfill university-related tasks.
  - Employees of the University of Bern may only use IT resources for private purposes outside working hours.
- (2) The use of the name of the University of Bern for private social media channels is prohibited. This also applies to variations of the name (e.g. "unibe," "unibern") and use of the logo.

### 6. Entry into force

These guidelines enter into force with immediate effect.

Bern, October 29, 2012

On behalf of the Executive Board of the  
University of Bern The Rector:



Prof. Dr. M. Täuber



## Checklist

- You are in contact with the person responsible for social media at the University of Bern.
- You know which channels you want to use, how often you intend to use them and with what content.
- The responsibility for the channels is clearly defined.
- There are regulations in place for transferring responsibility for the channels in the event of staff changes.
- You only use images you have produced yourself or for which you own the rights.
- You abide by the applicable legal regulations (official secrecy, copyright, confidentiality and data protection).
- It is clearly stipulated who should check through posts or articles in accordance with the four-eyes principle.
- Private opinions are clearly indicated as such.
- You have obtained the necessary permissions to use material belonging to the University of Bern (e.g. the logo).
- There is a clear responsibility for monitoring social media channels.
- You address fans, followers and subscribers formally and use language that is appropriate to the university.
- The name of the website or web page in question contains the suffix "... University of Bern" (e.g. "Science Slam University of Bern").
- The URL for your website or web page has "...unibern" or "...unibe" added to its name (e.g. "www.facebook.com/iop.unibe" or "www.youtube.com/ilubunibe").
- In the information section, you refer to both the publication details and to the fact that the site or page is about an organizational unit of the University of Bern.
- You have drawn up rules of netiquette and publication details.
- You are aware that you, as a private individual, are responsible for your behavior and any statements you make.
- You do not use any logos and social media channels featuring the name of the University of Bern or any variations of that name for private purposes.
- You only use the University of Bern's IT resources for private purposes outside working hours.