



Stakeholder Communication

Contents

- I. [Purpose of Policy](#)
 - II. [Summary of Communication Channels and Audience](#)
 - III. [Communication Platforms at Valdosta State University](#)
 - IV. [Communication Types](#)
 - Official University Wide Business
 - Department Business
 - Campus Activity
 - Department Activities, Events, and News
 - V. [Social Media](#)
 - Naming a Social Media Account
 - Creating and Accessing a Social Media Account Linked to VSU
 - Standards of Conduct
 - Moderation
 - During Campus Emergency
 - Comment Policy
 - Interactions and Content
 - Restricted Content
 - VI. [Communication Standards](#)
 - VII. [Oversight of Email Distribution Groups, Digital Signage, and VSU Mobile App](#)
 - Timeline for Sending Email Communication
 - Moderated Bypass List
 - Reasons to Revise or Deny Email Communication Requests
 - Campus Signage
 - VIII. [Media Relations](#)
 - Reaching Out to the Media
 - Monitoring the VSU Brand in the Media
 - IX. [Affected Stakeholders](#)
 - X. [Policy Attributes](#)
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I. Purpose of Policy

This policy identifies the approved communication resources available to the Valdosta State University community, defines electronic communication channels such as email and portal accounts and discusses proper use of these channels and what the appropriate audience is for delivery. This policy addresses social media naming, ownership, and registration including how units should best communicate with external media/press about VSU business. The goal of this policy is to eliminate duplicative emails and the volume of emails to campus constituents. To ensure communication on campus is most effective, when able, parties sending mass communication, regardless of platform, should target it to only those populations who need to receive it.



Stakeholder Communication

II. Summary of Communication Channels and Audience

Communication Channel	Official University Wide Business	Department Business Targeting Specific Stakeholder Groups	Campus Activity (Student Organization Activities and Events)	Office Activities, Events, and News
Email				
activities@valdosta.edu distribution group ¹			X	
students@valdosta.edu distribution group	X	X		

Stakeholder Communication



Stakeholder Communication

- Firepit

The Student Government Association (SGA) is considered a departmental business entity and is allowed to send to the Student Announcements or All Students email distribution groups as deemed appropriate.

Student Activities Newsletter

The Office of Student Life will distribute a newsletter twice a week (Tuesdays and Thursdays during the semester). Organizations that want an event put in the newsletter will need to send that event to activities@valdosta.edu before the deadlines stated below:

Tuesday newsletter deadline: Monday at 9:00am

Thursday newsletter deadline: Wednesday at 9:00am

The deadlines give the Office of Student Life enough time to prepare the newsletter. The Office of Student Life will NOT send out day-of items, so plan ahead to ensure your event is marketed as you wish in the newsletter.

Format for Email

The event email to activities@valdosta.edu should contain the following:

- Graphic
- Day of event
- Time of event
- Location of event
- Any RSVP or registration deadlines

If any edits need to be made, the Office of Student Life will reject the email and send it back for those edits. Once approved, the activity will be added to the next newsletter.

d. Department Activities, Events, and News

Definition of a University Announcement

This is an email that the content of which does not meet the standards of university wide business but still needs to reach a wide audience in the campus community.

As mentioned above, the announcements distribution groups for faculty and staff is announcements@valdosta.edu and the announcement list for students is studentannouncements@valdosta.edu. Employees and students do have the option to opt out of these two email distribution groups.

Example Senders

- Campus Wellness
- Academic Department course offerings
- The Spectator



Stakeholder Communication

- Career Opportunities
- Student Support Services, such as the Academic Support Center, the Counseling Center, Odum Library, etc.
- Alumni Relations/University Advancement

V. Social Media

The Office of Strategic Communications manages the oversight of social media accounts at Valdosta State University. Social media properties involving VSU include but are not limited to Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, TikTok, Flickr, Instagram, Snapchat, and YouTube. Only the accounts named @ValdostaState and @VStateNews are permitted to post on a social media site as the official representative of Valdosta State University.

i. Naming a Social Media Account

All other social media accounts using VSU branding represent their respective areas, but do not represent the university as a whole. Therefore, the naming of those social media accounts should reflect that. Use the format below:

Incorrect Example: Valdosta State University Chess Club

Correct Example: The Chess Club at Valdosta State University

ii. Creating and Accessing a Social Media Account Linked to VSU

Any Valdosta State University entity interested in starting a new social media account on any site must first contact the Office of Strategic Communications at socialmedia@valdosta.edu. In addition to maintaining at least two (2) account administrators, all official VSU social networking site accounts must be registered with the Office of Strategic Communications. This registration will include the account credentials, in the following forms:

- the email address used to log in to the account, which in all cases should be a university email alias (example: socialmedia@valdosta.edu), not a personal account (example: @gmail.com) or an individual account (example: johnsmith@valdosta.edu); and
- the password for the account must be updated in the Office of Strategic

the account administrator or unit supervisor to notify the Office of Strategic Communications of password updates, credential updates, and administrator changes to department accounts.

**The sharing of professional passwords only has been approved by VSU IT.

Graduate assistants or student assistants cannot be the sole administrator on a university-represented social media platform. This does not include student organization accounts. For department or office social media platforms, a faculty or staff member of that office is required to be an administrator on all accounts. This ensures a smooth transition of



Stakeholder Communication

account ownership and control once the graduate assistant or student assistant has graduated from VSU.

iii. Standards of Conduct

Members of the university community are expected to adhere to the same standards of conduct online that they would exhibit on campus. Members are expected to adhere to all state laws, federal laws, and applicable university policies, procedures, and regulations, and also the conditions of use established by the social networking site platform.

iv. Moderation

Valdosta State University is committed to the protection of academic freedom. The Office of Strategic Communications will regularly review content posted to official VSU accounts, and with respect to any site maintained in the name of the University, may remove or cause the removal of any content for any lawful reason, including but not limited to, content that is threatening, obscene, a violation of intellectual property rights or privacy laws, or otherwise injurious or illegal, or which violates the terms and conditions of the social networking site.

v. During Campus Emergency

In the case of a campus emergency, all VSU social media channels must stop posting until the event is over. The @ValdostaState and @VStateNews accounts shall be the only accounts to post updates and information during a crisis. These updates will be approved by the VSU President and the Office of Strategic Communications.

vi. Comment Policy

(e.g., comments, photo tagging, wall posts, and the like). Community contributed content is the opinion of the specific author and does not represent Valdosta State. However, VSU reserves the right, but is not obligated, to remove or hide comments that:

- contain commercial solicitations;
- are factually erroneous/libelous;
- are wildly off-topic;
- that expose the private data of others;
- that consist of cut-and-paste talking points;
- that cannot be translated into English by online translation software;
- violates the site



Stakeholder Communication

- A representative from Information Technology will also be responsible for oversight of the distribution groups. This person is the Deputy Chief Information Officer.
- A representative from Student Life will monitor the Student Activities distribution group to gather content for the twice-weekly Student Activities Newsletter.
- The Office of Strategic Communications and the Office of Information Technology will jointly monitor the VSU Mobile App.

a. Timeline for Sending Email Communication

Students may not check their email daily, so you will want to consider that when preparing to inform and market your event. The email distribution groups are monitored during regular business hours for Valdosta State University (M-TH 8:00am-5:30pm and FRI 8:00am-3:00pm) and emails sent outside these hours may not be approved until the following business day. Keep in mind that emails sent on the day of the event or activity may not be approved before the event starts.

b. Moderated Bypass List

The Moderated Bypass List contains senders from the Valdosta State University campus community who are approved to send emails to email distribution groups without content approval from the Office of Strategic Communications. For those not on this list, the Director of Strategic Communications and the Communications and Media Relations Coordinator will read every email and look at every graphic and attachment before approving. This provides a second set of eyes to ensure any attachment is correct, the email is grammatically correct, and that it is accessible for all to read.



Stakeholder Communication

- The person did not clearly state what organization, department, or class they are representing.
- The email was sent to the incorrect distribution group.
- There were elements which needed to be clarified (facts, dates, contact information).
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Stakeholder Communication

Coordinator often fields requests from the media for subject matter experts. Any faculty members interested in occasionally appearing on a media platform talking about their subject should contact the Strategic Communications Office.