



Policy Name: Digital Platform & Content

Custodian of Policy: Vice President for Technology/Chief Information Officer

Date of Adoption: July 2000

Date of Next Review: September 2032

POLICY

Purpose

Minnesota State University, Mankato creates, manages, and maintains digital content across multiple platforms to support its academic, operational, and outreach mission.

This policy establishes expectations for the creation, governance, and maintenance of University digital content and digital platforms, ensuring that all materials reflect institutional standards for accuracy, accessibility, security, and brand identity.

Scope

This policy applies to all who create, publish, or manage digital content on behalf of the University, including but not limited to content on web, mobile, video, email, digital signage, and social media platforms.

Only formally recognized University entities and approved partners may represent the University, use University branding, or host content or digital platforms on University-managed systems. Individuals or groups without formal recognition must request approval to do so.

Policy Statement

Official University digital platforms are owned, managed, or contractually supported by the University for delivering official content (e.g., D2L Brightspace, mnsu.edu, Maverick One Stop, The Fountain, MavLife, official social media accounts, digital signage, email communications).

All official University digital platforms and content shared on those platforms must:

- Be consistent with the University's mission, values, and brand standards.
- Comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and system policies.
- Be accurate, current, and relevant to its intended audience.
- Be hosted and managed within University-approved systems unless an approved exception exists.

Governance

University Marketing and Communications (UMC) and Information Technology Solutions (ITS) jointly act as liaisons to the University community to ensure that digital platforms reflect the University's brand, meet technical and security standards, and provide an accessible experience for all users. This group may engage others in this work through sub-committees and consultation as needed.

UMC leads brand standards, editorial style, content strategy, and the accessibility of content. ITS leads technical infrastructure, system security, and accessibility at the platform and technology level, ensuring systems and tools support compliance and inclusive access.

While academic content should align with the University's mission, vision, and values and comply with the Digital Accessibility Policy, it remains under the purview of academic freedom and instructional autonomy.

Hosting, Security, and Creation of Digital Platforms

All official University digital content and platforms must be hosted within University-supported systems or on third-party platforms that have been formally reviewed and approved for University use. Content may not be hosted outside of approved University platforms.

Use of external or vendor-managed platforms, including social media, must follow University brand, accessibility, security, and content standards. Requests for new digital platforms or tools must follow University review and approval processes administered by UMC and ITS. Units operating under established governance frameworks defined by Minnesota State Board policy or collective bargaining agreements may meet these requirements through their existing review processes, provided those processes address institutional standards for accessibility, security, and brand alignment, in coordination with ITS for data security as appropriate.

Accessibility and Compliance

All University digital content must comply with university policies and applicable federal and state laws and standards including but limited to:

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- CAN-SPAM (email communications)
- Copyright and intellectual property law
- FERPA
- HIPAA (where applicable)
- Minnesota State Board Policies 5.22 and 5.23
- Minnesota State University, Mankato Brand and Editorial Standards (Brand Hub)
- Minnesota State University, Mankato Data Security and Privacy Standards
- PCI DSS (where applicable)
- Rehabilitation Act, Section 504 and Section 508
- W3C standards
- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 AA or successor standards
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Brand and Identity

All University digital content must align with official brand, editorial, and visual identity standards. Use of the University name, logos, colors, or marks must comply with official brand and trademark guidelines.

Accuracy and Maintenance

Each University area is responsible for providing accurate and up-to-date digital content in compliance with this policy.

Prohibited Content:

The following content and code may not be published, hosted, or distributed on University-managed digital platforms. Content is prohibited when it:

- Uses copyrighted, licensed, or proprietary materials without appropriate authorization or in violation of the law
- Promotes or advertises external businesses or services without an approved partnership
- Is created for personal gain or unrelated commercial activity
- Presents unlawful, partisan, or controversial material in a manner that violates University standards or implies institutional endorsement, unless clearly used as academic material

- Misrepresents or implies unauthorized University endorsement
- Conflicts with University mission, vision, and values
- Links to external sites inconsistent with accessibility, security, accuracy, or University values
- Interferes with or degrades University systems
- Includes unsupported, outdated, or end-of-life software components
- Uses insecure development or coding practices
- Contains known vulnerabilities such as injection attacks, XSS, or insecure deserialization

Social Media Accounts

Any University social media account representing the University must:

- Use University branding and naming standards
- Be coordinated through UMC prior to launch.
- Maintain professionalism, inclusivity, accuracy, and accessibility
- Follow digital accessibility expectations for images, videos, and posts.

Accounts that do not meet policy requirements may be required to remove or adjust University branding.

Compliance and Enforcement

UMC and ITS may review University digital platforms to ensure compliance with this policy. Violations may require corrective action including but not limited to content removal, or referral to the appropriate Vice President.

The University reserves the right to suspend, migrate, or remove any externally hosted website that fails to maintain compliance, security, or accessibility standards, or poses reputational risk.

Rationale:

History of Revisions:

Effective Date of Last Review: August 1, 2026

Date of Last Review: September 2025

Revisions Made:

2025: Modernized policy language and expanded the scope to include all University digital platforms, not just websites. Clarified expectations for governance, accuracy, brand alignment, and approved hosting of digital content.

Strengthened accessibility, security, and legal compliance requirements. Updated definitions and established shared governance between University Marketing & Communications and Information Technology Solutions.

2025: Policy name was changed from Electronic Communications Publishing to Digital Platform & Content

References:

Microsoft Copilot (2025). Used to assist in updating language and refining definitions during policy revision process.