INTRODUCTION

The rise of social media creates powerful new opportunities to communicate with colleagues, friends, alumni, students and the world. Social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram, Tumblr and others are the emerging core of digital reputations both for Babson and its faculty and staff. Because social media can blend personal and professional lives, it’s important to exercise caution in using social media both at work and outside work.

While new social media platforms are emerging and old platforms fading, a general definition of social media includes forms of electronic communication that create communities of users who share messages, content, videos, or other material. In addition to the platforms noted above, examples would include listserves, User Groups, blogs, microblogging, wikis, virtual social worlds, and community ratings sites (such as Yelp and TripAdvisor).

This Social Media Best Practices Summary is designed to clarify the expectations the College has for faculty and staff (including student employees) who use social media platforms, and help faculty and staff use these platforms to enhance both the College’s and their individual reputations.

As a general matter, the social media world is no different than the in-person world. The same laws, rules, policies, guidelines and best practices that govern our relationships with students, parents, alumni, the media (whether new or traditional), and the community all apply on-line. Faculty and staff are as responsible for their on-line posts as they are for their personal, verbal or written interactions.

This Social Media Best Practices Summary should be read in conjunction with the Babson College Social Media Policy (link).

SECTION 1: GENERAL POLICIES APPLICABLE TO ALL SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING PERSONAL ACTIVITIES

- **Protect Confidential and Proprietary Information.** Do not post confidential or proprietary information about students, faculty, staff, alumni, others, or the College. All employees of Babson are subject to FERPA (http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/textidx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title34/34cfr99_main_02.tpl) and other laws mandating the non-disclosure of private information about students, fellow employees, and others. Even on your personal social media sites, you must follow all College policies on privacy and confidentiality. Faculty and staff who share confidential or proprietary information are subject to disciplinary action, including termination.

- **Be Respectful of Others.** Do not post information or content that is false, misleading, defamatory, abusive, harassing, threatening, discriminatory, obscene, or harmful to others.
College policies on harassment-free workplaces and discrimination apply in the on-line community as well as the physical College community.

- **Respect Copyright and Fair Use.** When posting and commenting, honor the copyright and intellectual property rights of others and of the College. For guidelines on proper use of copyrighted materials, please see the Library’s Guide to Copyright at Babson, at http://libguides.babson.edu/copyrightbabson. When you properly use material that belongs to others, be sure to cite your source appropriately.

- **Do Not Use Babson’s Name, Trademark or Logo for Endorsements.** Do not use the College’s name, trademark or logo, or other College images on personal social media sites. Do not use the College’s name to promote non-college enterprises, products, causes or political candidates.

- **Respect College Time and Property.** The College allows minimal use of College equipment and time for personal uses (See the Employee Handbook for details), but excessive use of College equipment, resources and time for personal social media activity may result in disciplinary action, including possible termination of employment.

### SECTION 2: INSTITUTIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA

Babson College utilizes a variety of official social media sites and accounts to implement its marketing strategy and to build its reputation with alumni, employers, educators, and the wider community. The following policies apply to all Babson social media sites and accounts.

- **Permission Required.** Before establishing any social media account as an official Babson site or account, the person or office involved must obtain written permission from the College’s Chief Marketing Officer. College Marketing will maintain the list of all approved Babson social media sites or accounts, and has the right to revoke authorization for any such site or account at any time.

- **Babson College’s Style.** As part of the Social Media strategy, all Babson social media sites or accounts will adhere to the style guide and the College’s branding and marketing policies at www.babson.edu/brandguidelines. The Chief Marketing Officer will oversee the compliance of all social media sites and accounts with the larger official digital media strategy and style.

- **Content Regulation.** Although the College is not compelled to do so, it may monitor the content of all College social media accounts. College Marketing has the right to remove content that violates College policies at any time.

- **Paid Participation and Endorsements.** If anyone offers to pay a Babson employee for participating in a social media platform, or offers to pay a Babson employee for an endorsement in connection with that employee’s role at Babson, that employee must obtain the permission of the College’s Chief Marketing Officer prior to accepting that offer.

### SECTION 3: BEST PRACTICES
• **Everything Posted is Public.** Whether you are posting for College business or your own personal social media activities, you must assume that everything you post is public, and will be available to the public forever, and can be forwarded well beyond where you think your comments might land. If you wouldn’t say what you’re saying to a reporter or in a public space, then you probably shouldn’t say it.

• **Your Opinions are Yours.** If you identify yourself on a personal social media account as a Babson faculty member or employee, be sure that readers and viewers know that your views are yours, not the College’s. That is, you must clearly indicate that the content and views are not the College’s.

• **Be Thoughtful About Personal Life and Business Life.** If you use social media for professional purposes, be careful about mixing personal views and activities with your business sites. Some users have found it easier to keep separate individual accounts on specific platforms for personal and business content.

• **Be Careful and Accurate.** Before you post or comment, check your facts. Review your comments for clarity, grammar and spelling. It’s your reputation— you don’t want to look foolish.

• **Be Thoughtful.** Always take care in the way you present yourself and your relationship to the College. Even with a disclaimer in place, personal posting may be interpreted as reflecting the official positions of the College, and will reflect on the College as well as on you.

• **Know Privacy Policies.** Take the time to understand the privacy policies of the social media platforms you use. When those policies change, evaluate how those changes will affect you.

• **Protect Your Private Information.** Be careful about disclosing personal information, including birth dates, family information, and that you are away from home.

• **Protect Your Passwords.** Just as is necessary with any computer accounts, take care to choose strong passwords and keep them private.