

# LUTHER COLLEGE DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS

## POLICY ON STUDENT-ATHLETE SOCIAL NETWORKING AND MEDIA USE

The Luther College Department of Athletics recognizes and supports student-athletes' rights to freedom of speech, expression, and association, including the use of online social networks. With freedom comes responsibility and student-athletes are expected to portray themselves, their team, and the school in a positive manner at all times. It is important to exercise good judgment when using social media and all online postings should comply with Federal and State laws, and institutional, ARC, and NCAA rules, regulations and policies. If you use social media, you should keep the following guidelines in mind:

- Everything you post is public information—any text or photo placed online is completely out of your control the moment it is placed online—even if you limit access to your site. Information (including pictures, videos, comments) may be accessible even after you remove it.
- Use caution when adding someone or inviting someone to become a friend. Many individuals attempt to take advantage of students-athletes, get close to student-athletes to give themselves a sense of membership, or to gain information about you, your teammates, or your team for the purpose of negative publicity.
- Limit information about your whereabouts or plans to minimize the potential of being stalked, assaulted, or becoming the victim of other criminal activity.
- What you post may affect your future. Many employers and graduate schools review social networking sites as part of their overall evaluation of an applicant. Carefully consider how you want people to perceive you before you give them a chance to misinterpret your information (including pictures, videos, comments).
- Does it pass the “Publicity Test”? If the content of your message would not be acceptable for a face-to-face or telephone conversation, it probably would not be acceptable for a social networking site. Ask yourself, would I want to see this published in the newspaper or posted on a billboard tomorrow or ten years from now?
- THINK TWICE, POST ONCE!!!! Student-athletes are urged not to post in haste or during a highly charged emotional state. If you are angry, WAIT before posting.
- The Luther College Department of Athletics will not tolerate disrespectful comments or behavior made in person or posted online including, but not limited to:
  - Derogatory or defamatory language, photos, or videos;
  - Postings that create a serious danger to the safety of another person or that constitute a credible threat of serious physical or emotional injury to another person;
  - Comments or photos that describe or depict unlawful assault, abuse, hazing, harassment, or discrimination; selling, possessing, or using controlled substances; or any other illegal or prohibited conduct, including violation of any Luther College Student Life or Athletic Department policies.

Any derogatory, defamatory, or illegal online content or postings violating ARC, NCAA, or Luther College rules, regulations, or policies, is subject to investigation and corrective action by Luther College, NCAA, ARC, and/or law enforcement agencies. These are minimum guidelines established by the athletic department. Any program or head coach may develop stricter guidelines. Any concerns about a student-athlete's posting or other online activity should be reported immediately to your head coach and a member of the Luther Athletics Administration.