



Blogging

Policy CR001

Volume 3, Communications and External Relations

Responsible Administrator: Vice President for Communications and External Relations

Responsible Office: Communications and External Relations

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Policy Statement

The college recognizes blogging as an important communication tool. The purpose of this policy is to define and govern the use of official FIT blogs for communication and promotion of FIT-related information in support of its educational mission and strategic goals.

This policy applies to those blogs that are managed by administrative personnel who produce and promote information in support of the college. This policy does not apply to blogs developed as a component of academic coursework (including as part of a project or other course-related assignment), through industry-sponsored contests/research, by student clubs or student organizations, or by individuals associated with other college-recognized partnerships or affiliations. Such blogs, however, are subject to copyright and intellectual property laws as well as other FIT policies.

Reason for the Policy

This policy delineates the appropriate use of blogs by individuals on behalf of FIT, its divisions, schools, departments, and other units. This policy ensures the accuracy, consistency, integrity, and protection of the identity and image of the college by providing a set of standards that all FIT Blog Managers and Contributors must follow.

Who is Responsible for this Policy

- Vice President for Communications and External Relations
- Individuals who are designated by Communications and External Relations (“CER”) as Managers and contributors to FIT Blogs

Who is Affected by this Policy

- The entire FIT community
- FIT community members (e.g., employees, students) managing and contributing to FIT Blogs

Definitions

- **Blogs:** Blogs are websites with time-sensitive content displayed in reverse chronological order that remains fixed after publishing. One or more authors create and manage content, organized as posts. Visitors may be allowed to leave comments on specific posts. The most recent posts show first; older posts fall below, eventually becoming archived.

- **FIT Blogs:** [FIT-hosted blogs](#) (blogs hosted on the “fitnyc.edu” domain) that are college-related blogs that are created and managed by a department, office, or organization, and which are used to communicate on behalf of the college, and which are specifically approved and authorized by CER.
- **FIT Blog Manager:** A Blog Manager is any faculty or staff member who is designated to be responsible for managing any FIT Blog. This individual is responsible for posting content, ensuring quality control (links, spelling, grammar, accessibility), ensuring accuracy, and ensuring compliance with this policy.
- **FIT Blog Contributor:** A Blog Contributor is any individual who writes posts on behalf of FIT, but isn’t directly responsible for the management or oversight of a particular FIT Blog.

Principles

- **Principles for the Use of FIT Blogs**
 - **Compliance with FIT Policies**
FIT Blogs should reflect the mission, values, and strategic priorities of the college, with applicable law and FIT policies, including but not limited to the following: Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment, Sexual Misconduct Response, Academic Honor Code, Code of Student Conduct, Political and Election Activity and Legislative Advocacy, Web Content, Acceptable Use for FIT IT Systems, and all other FIT policies governing employee and student conduct. FIT reserves the right, but assumes no obligation, to remove and/or report any content on FIT Blogs that violates any FIT policy, law, or regulation, or any terms of use of the blog platform used. (See Related Policies below for more information.)
 - **Privacy, Confidentiality, and Defamation**
FIT Blogs may not post confidential or proprietary information about FIT, its faculty, employees, trustees, donors, students, alumni, third parties, and other related affiliations or matters. Note that certain federal and state statutes and regulations, such as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and health privacy laws, protect against the disclosure of certain information and apply to all uses of FIT Blogs. FIT Blogs may not contain defamatory content (for example, libel, slander), as defined by law, against any individual or entity.
 - **Promotion of Business or Political Agenda**
FIT Blogs may not be used to engage in unaffiliated commercial activities and must comply with restrictions on political posts under FIT’s Political and Election Activity and Legislative Advocacy policy (see Related Policies). The college recognizes that contractual agreements with external partners can include blogs and/or blog postings either on FIT Blogs or those of the external vendor. Such agreements must be submitted to CER for review and approval. Under no circumstances may an FIT employee guarantee content to be featured on FIT Blogs without CER approval.

- **Use of Copyrighted or Proprietary Materials**
FIT is financially liable if copyrighted images and other kinds of copyrighted content are posted on an FIT Blog. Unless express written permission has been provided or usage rights have legitimately been purchased, photos and/or other copyrighted content may not be posted. FIT blogs must adhere to applicable laws and regulations, including but not limited to those related to copyright and trademark, and FIT's Intellectual Property Policy. Attribution is not enough, nor is linking back to the original source. (See Related Policies below for more information)

- **Account Names and Use of Logo**
The FIT brand, name, iconography, inclusive of the Museum at FIT and FIT Athletics, consisting of, but not limited to, its logo, tagline, visual identity, and other distinctive graphic elements, are proprietary to FIT and protected by intellectual property laws. Therefore, any unlawful or improper use of these names and logos on FIT Blogs is prohibited. FIT's brand includes the names and visual identities of FIT Athletics and The Museum at FIT. In addition, members of the FIT community are not permitted to alter FIT's name, logo, and associated legally protected elements without express, written permission by CER.

To ensure that the use of FIT's name, logo, and other protected elements is correct, CER must approve the creation of new FIT Blogs. CER will work with account administrators to develop account names, profile images, and additional graphic branding. These elements will be logical, and intuitive, and must match the college's overall branding requirements. Any proposed changes to these elements must first be approved by CER (See FIT's Resource and Usage Guides in Related Documents for more information).

- **Personal Blogs**
This policy does not prohibit FIT employees, students, or other members of the FIT community from identifying their relationship with FIT on personal blogs (e.g. as an employee, a student, etc.). However, it is a violation of this policy to state or imply that any personal views expressed in any way represent the views of, or are endorsed by, the college.

To avoid doubt, FIT community members (students, and employees) who identify FIT and post about the college on their blogs (personal blog, club blog, etc.) also may consider including a disclaimer on their profile, such as, *"These are my personal opinions, and do not reflect the views of the Fashion Institute of Technology."*

Additionally, FIT reserves the right, consistent with its conduct policies, to address conduct occurring on personal blogs, regardless of the location or time of the action, where the behavior violates FIT policy.

- **Creation and Use of FIT Blogs**

- **Registration and Maintenance of FIT Blogs**

- **Blog Requests**

Any request to create FIT Blogs must first be approved by the appropriate vice president or designee. With approval, the request, containing an explanation of the purpose and plan for blog management, will be sent to CER for final

approval. All departments, offices, and individuals who are authorized to manage an FIT Blog under this policy must maintain their own record of contributors to ensure accounts remain active and must notify CER if a contributor will no longer be posting on the FIT Blog.

- **Software and Training**

FIT Blogs are created using WordPress, an open-source content management system. FIT Blogs use WordPress “out of the box,” taking advantage of the software’s built-in capabilities without installation of plugins. FIT Blog Managers may choose a custom look from among a set of themes reviewed and/or developed by CER. All FIT bloggers must complete an online orientation and accessibility training before blogging. Online WordPress training is available for Blog Managers and contributors through CER if needed.

- **Disclaimer**

FIT Blog footers must include the following disclaimer: *“The opinions expressed by FIT bloggers and commenters are theirs alone, and do not necessarily represent the views or policies of the Fashion Institute of Technology or its employees. The Fashion Institute of Technology makes no representations about the accuracy of the information presented in its blogs.”*

- **Contact Information**

FIT Blogs should include the name, title, and contact information of the Blog Manager in either a designated “About” or “Contact” link in the main navigation, in the side column, or the footer of the blog.

- **Comments**

All comments submitted to individual posts must be reviewed by the FIT Blog Manager before appearing publicly.

Responsibilities

- **Communications and External Relations (CER)**

CER collaborates with IT and vice presidents or their designees to process requests for new FIT Blogs and WordPress accounts and to ensure compliance with this policy. Although CER is not responsible for monitoring or pre-approving content posted to FIT Blogs, the division reserves the right and maintains responsibility to review content, remove content, or terminate FIT Blogs deemed in violation of this or any other FIT policy. CER will take appropriate and collaborative actions with vice presidents or designees.

- **Vice Presidents**

Each vice president is responsible for collaborating with CER to review requests for new FIT Blogs, implementing control procedures, and monitoring adherence to this policy within their respective division. They may appoint a designee to assume these responsibilities.

- **Blog Managers**

Each FIT Blog will have at least one designated Blog Manager who is responsible for ensuring quality control (links, spelling, grammar) and accuracy. Blog Managers are responsible for

reviewing submitted comments before publishing these comments. Blog Managers are responsible for requesting account creation for any contributors to their blog and informing CER of any administrative changes, such as adding/removing contributors, reassignment of blog management, or discontinuing the blog.

- **Blog Contributors**
Blog Contributors write posts on behalf of individual blogs.

Procedures

For guidelines on the use of FIT Blogs, refer to Blogging Best Practices and Tips in the Related Documents section.

- **Emergency Communications**
During a crisis, emergency, (as defined by the Emergency Management Plan), or college closing, CER maintains sole responsibility for posting information on the college's main websites and social media channels. Under no circumstances should emergency-related information be posted to FIT Blogs without the explicit permission of CER.
- **Advertising**
Monetized advertising on FIT Blogs remains the sole responsibility of CER, and all requests for such advertising must first be submitted to CER for consideration, approval, and implementation. All advertising and its related processes must adhere to the college's policy on Advertising Purchasing and Placement (see Related Policies).

Violations

Violations of this policy may put FIT's brand identity, image, or reputation at risk and compromise the compliance and integrity of the college. In the event of a violation, CER may suspend, block, or restrict further use of such blogs or accounts managed by FIT.

In the event a violation also infringes upon principles set forth by other FIT policies), additional disciplinary procedures may be followed by the subject-specific policy.

Related Policies

- [Academic Honor Code](#)
- [Acceptable Use for FIT IT Systems](#)
- [Advertisement Purchasing and Placement](#)
- [Code of Student Conduct](#)
- [Employee Code of Ethical Conduct](#)
- [Intellectual Property](#)
- [Internet Privacy](#)
- [Media Relations](#)
- [Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment](#)
- [Political and Election Activity and Legislative Advocacy](#)
- [Sexual Misconduct Response](#)
- [Social Media](#)
- [Web Content](#)

Related Documents

- [Blogging Best Practices and Tips](#)
- [Resource and Usage Guides](#)

Contacts

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