



# Blogging

Policy CR001

Volume 3, Communications and External Relations

Responsible Administrator: Vice President for Communications and External Relations

Responsible Office: Communications and External Relations

Issue Date: N/A

Last Updated: September 2018

## Policy Statement

The college recognizes blogging as an important communications 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:** Refers to blogs hosted at <http://blog.fitnyc.edu> that are college-related blogs created and managed by a department, office, or organization and used to communicate on behalf of the college, and specifically approved and authorized by CER.
- **Blog Manager:** A blog manager is any faculty member 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), ensuring accuracy, and ensuring compliance with this policy.
- **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 reflect the mission, values, and strategic priorities of the college, in accordance with applicable law and FIT policies, including but not limited to, the college's Principles for the FIT Web, Web Accessibility, Internet Privacy Policy, Wireless Policy, Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment policy, Sexual Misconduct Response policy, Academic Honor Code, Code of Student Conduct, Political and Election Activity and Legislative Advocacy, Web Content policy, Computer and Network Use policy, and all other FIT policies governing employee and student conduct. CER 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.
  - **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 content that is defamatory, 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 pursuant to FIT's Political and Election Activity and Legislative Advocacy policy. The college recognizes that contractual agreements with external partners can include blogs and/or blog posts. 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 Blogs must adhere to applicable laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, those related to copyright (including fair use) and trademark, and FIT's Intellectual Property Policy. Care must be taken to properly attribute content to its original source or creator.
  - **Account Names and Use of Logo**  
The FIT brand and name, including, 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, intuitive, and must match the college's overall branding requirements. Any proposed changes to these elements must first be approved by CER.

- **Personal Blogs**

This policy does not prohibit FIT employees, students, or other members of the FIT community from identifying their relationship with FIT on their 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 post about the college on their blogs (individual 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.

- **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 purpose and plan for blog management, will be sent to CER and IT for final approval. All departments, offices, and individuals who are authorized to manage an FIT Blog under this policy should maintain their own record of contributors to ensure accounts remain active.

- **Platform**

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. Blog managers may choose a custom look from among a set of themes reviewed and/or developed by CER. Online training is available for blog managers and contributors, if needed.

- **Disclaimer**

FIT Blog footers will 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 in the footer of the blog.

- **Comments**  
All comments submitted to individual posts must be reviewed by the blog manager before appearing publicly
- **Union Activity**  
Nothing in this policy restricts, or shall be construed to restrict, any activity that is protected by the Public Employees Fair Employment Act (the Taylor Law).

## Responsibilities

- **Communications and External Relations (CER)**  
CER collaborates with IT and vice presidents or their designees to process requests for new 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 blog will have at least one designated 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, please 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 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.

## Violations

- Alleged violations will be handled through the college disciplinary procedures applicable to the offending individual. If there is a potential violation of law or regulation, FIT may refer the matter to appropriate law enforcement agencies as well. If necessary, CER may suspend, block, or restrict further use of such accounts.

## Related Policies

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

## Related Documents

- [Blogging Best Practices and Tips](#)

## Contacts

- **Vice President for Communications and External Relations**  
Business and Liberal Arts Center, B905  
(212) 217-4700
- **Manager of Digital Strategy**  
Business and Liberal Arts Center, B905  
(212) 217-4700
- **Web Content Coordinator**  
Business and Liberal Arts Center, B905  
(212) 217-4700