

The TCU logo is rendered in a large, white, stylized, blocky font. It is centered at the top of the page, partially overlapping the top of the green, funnel-shaped structures. A registered trademark symbol (®) is located at the bottom right of the 'U'.

DIGITAL & SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT GUIDE FOR FACULTY

Roles, Precautions, Actions, Resources

Office of the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

INTRODUCTION

This guide is designed to assist TCU faculty in responding to situations in which you are targeted by individuals or groups based on the content of your scholarship, teaching, clinical care, or service. It outlines proactive measures and immediate and long-term resources to assist faculty, department chairs, and other administrators before, during, and after such incidences.

Classroom content, research, and campus events have become targets for outside interests to misrepresent information and use it to drive traffic to their sites, attract subscribers, and solicit funds to advance their causes. This can result in online harassment and harmful or destructive behavior aimed at faculty, staff, and students. While TCU cannot control these forces, the university utilizes strategies to minimize exposure, reduce harm, and provide resources for support.

This guide is not intended to limit academic freedom as outlined in the [Faculty Handbook](#), [American Association of University Professors \(AAUP\) 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure](#). This guide focuses on protecting privacy and safety by minimizing the length and severity of any incident that targets a TCU community member for ridicule or harassment.

TCU'S ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In cases where online harassment or threats have been identified, TCU's immediate goals are:

- **CONTAIN:** Limit engagement. Remove the threat to minimize risk of personal harm and reputational risk.
- **SECURE:** Ensure the privacy and safety of the TCU community regarding digital footprint, online identity, and personal safety.
- **PRESERVE:** A safe and effective learning environment.

PLANNING AND PRECAUTION

Below are options to help avoid potential online harassment.

MANAGE ONLINE REPUTATIONAL RISK (DIGITAL FOOTPRINT/ONLINE IDENTITY)

Be mindful of the impact on your and your student's digital footprint or online identity, which is a lasting digital history of a person's interests, actions, and opinions. Suggestions include:

- Refrain from posting on social media the name, image, likeness, or other personally identifiable information about faculty, staff, or students participating in classroom, co-curricular, or extra-curricular activities or discussions that could result in harassment.
- Avoid posting content aimed at generating negative responses, or tagging or engaging with controversial groups or individuals.
- Be aware that posting syllabi, class information, or assignments online outside of the TCU Learning Management System (LMS) makes the information available to the general public and therefore open to misuse by outside entities.

MANAGE ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION RISK

The immediacy and informality of email, text messages, TCU's LMS, social networks, blogs, etc., can lead to content abuse. Here are some actions you can take to mitigate that risk:

- Refrain from emailing or posting on social media any content containing personal information and images that could pose a risk to the safety or privacy of yourself, your students, or other employees. Utilize TCU's LMS for classroom communications instead of social media.
- Maintain professional etiquette and civility in all communications.
- Assume that any email, text, or social media message you send will be forwarded to someone you do not know and could be misused.
- Avoid sending emails indiscriminately to a large number of recipients.
- The University's platforms are not to be used for personal gain, disseminating political views, or in ways that could harm the university; this includes email, university-managed social media channels, and other content systems. [See complete policy here.](#)

MANAGE RISKS TO THE CLASSROOM LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

In the classroom, students engage and consider complex historical and contemporary issues and viewpoints. Faculty and students reasonably expect privacy to ensure open and robust discussions without fear that any statements will be misused or used outside of the classroom context.

Manage your learning environment to preserve the intended learning purpose of your content. Be mindful when dealing with materials or assignments that might elicit disclosure of personal information, have the potential for misuse, or expose you or your students to harassment.

Suggested Steps for Faculty

- Use this guide to consult with your department chair or dean about managing and mitigating risks.
- Follow these safety guidelines by limiting availability and exposure to course content and discussions to inside the classroom or LMS. For example, you may prohibit students from capturing or recording course content, materials, or discussions without the permission of the instructor and/or other classroom participants. For virtual classrooms, consider locking access so that only those with permissions (passwords) can participate, and prevent screenshots.
- Evaluate whether alterations to coursework or assignments may reduce or eliminate some risks without compromising learning outcomes.
- Review resources (included at the end of this guide) available to faculty and students experiencing distress.

Suggested Steps for Department Chairs and Deans

- Use this guide to support your faculty to develop and implement risk management strategies, such as:
 - ensure that any risks are addressed by regular campus, classroom, or laboratory policies and safety protocols
 - engage appropriate university resources and offices (listed at the back of this guide) in support of the academic mission.

IMMEDIATE AND LONG-TERM ACTIONS

ONLINE HARASSMENT

If you, your students, or staff experience online harassment:

- Alert your department chair and dean.
- Make your personal social media profiles private, either permanently or temporarily.
- Be cautious of reading harassing posts, emails, or feedback. Consider entrusting someone to review incoming communications with or for you.
- Do not engage. This may seem counterintuitive when your first instinct is to respond or defend, but the most effective response to most ideological or controversial issues is to practice restraint and carefully consider whether a response is necessary. ([See Kalven Report recommendations.](#))
- Do not delete the information. Screenshot information when possible.
- Contact the Office of Communications at communication@tcu.edu to ensure that digital and social media is monitored. They will work in tandem with TCU Police to determine the risk and threat level. The Office of Communications consistently monitors all social media for any mentions of the university. If TCU is mentioned in a harassing **public** post, they likely will see it and contact you to offer services to ensure your safety, provide protocols and guidance, work to minimize harm, and continue monitoring. If TCU is not mentioned in the targeted posts, notify the Office of Communications as quickly as possible to begin services. When an issue is noted, the Office of Communications will:
 - hide or remove harmful posts from TCU social media platforms;
 - suggest that you turn your personal social media platforms to private;
 - offer to temporarily remove your bio and contact information from the TCU website (with your permission only);
 - file an offensive content report with the social media platform;
 - notify TCU leadership, dean, department chair, and TCU main telephone operators;
 - partner with you to create a communications plan to mitigate harm;
 - continue to monitor digital and social media content throughout the incident and beyond.
- Consider engaging with the university's employee assistance program. TCU offers a variety of physical, emotional, and mental health support services which can be accessed by all members of the TCU community. You can discuss additional support with your supervisor if needed.
- Guide your students to contact the Counseling and Mental Health Center to ensure that they access the care they need for their mental health. The center offers in-person sessions, remote sessions, and a 24-hour counseling helpline at 817-257-7233.

NOTE: All campus resources, with contact information, are outlined at the end of this guide in the Appendix, including TCU emergency numbers.

IMMEDIATE AND LONG-TERM ACTIONS – CONT.

MEDIA COVERAGE OR REQUESTS

If you, your students, or staff are contacted by media:

TCU's media relations policy requires that employees notify TCU's Office of Communications, communication@tcu.edu if you are contacted by media for any reason. A communications expert will help you manage potential issues and develop a response strategy to help minimize ongoing risk and mitigate a resurgence of the issue that may further increase online harassment. It is the sole responsibility of university administration to determine the response strategy during an issue or crisis, with a focus on preserving personal safety and privacy.

THREATS

If you, your students, or staff receive threats:

Screenshot and send all threats and threatening language to [TCU Police](#) for immediate assessment. Download the [FrogShield app](#) to your mobile phone. You can do this at any time, preferably before an emergency occurs. FrogShield allows you to contact TCU Police quickly and directly in emergency situations, and to report safety concerns while attaching photos and videos.

On campus:

For an **immediate risk**, contact TCU Police 24-hour Emergency at **817-257-7777**.

For a **non-immediate risk**, contact TCU Police non-emergency at **817-257-8200**.

Off-campus:

For an immediate risk, contact **911**.

APPENDIX

TCU EMERGENCY NUMBERS

TCU Campus Police 24-hour Emergency
[817-257-7777](tel:817-257-7777)

Physical Plant (24-hour Emergency)
[817-257-7956](tel:817-257-7956)

TCU Campus Police (Non-Emergency)
[817-257-8400](tel:817-257-8400)

24-hour Counseling Line (students only)
[817-257-7233](tel:817-257-7233)

RELEVANT TCU POLICIES

TCU Digital and Social Media Guidelines for Official TCU Platforms

Official University platforms – including university, college, department, and program social media; email; blogs; and website – are not to be used for personal gain, for disseminating personal political views, or in ways that could harm the university. Vulgar, threatening, or abusive language and personal attacks are prohibited.

TCU’s Media Relations Policy

TCU employees must notify the Office of Communications if you are contacted by media for any reason. TCU Communications will guide and monitor the request to ensure accuracy.

[Academic Conduct Policy](#)

[Code of Conduct Policy](#)

[Firearms and Weapons Policy](#)

[Network and Computer Usage Policy](#)

[Conflict Resolution Policy for Faculty](#)

[Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, and Retaliation](#)

[Responding to Reports of Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, and Retaliation](#)

[Notice of Nondiscrimination](#)

CAMPUS RESOURCES

Public Safety/Emergency Management 817-257-8400

[Employee Assistance Program](#) 866-335-4914

Office of Communications 817-257-5064

[Office of Institutional Equity and Title IX](#) 817-257-8228

[Chief Inclusion Officer](#) 817-257-5566

[Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs](#) 817-257-7101

General Counsel 817-257-6188

Counseling and Mental Health Center (students) 817-257-7863

[Information Technology](#)

[College Diversity Advocates](#)

[Employee Resource Groups](#)

[Faculty Success Program](#)

[Professional Resource Groups](#)