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	Policy No.HR-8.4.0-0	New Policy
	Date of Issuance August 1, 2012	Date of Effectivity August 16, 2012

**Subject: Social Media**

### **Policy Statement**

STI recognizes that social media and other electronic communications are effective means of communication that allow users to share ideas, activities, events and interests within their individual medium. Thus, as an educational institution, STI prides itself in employing faculty members and employees who are competent and responsible members of society, respecting each and every member of the STI Community.

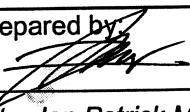
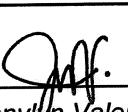
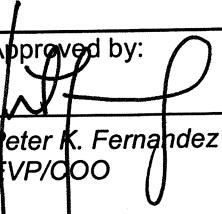
Social media and other electronic communications reach a limitless number of individuals; connecting people who may or may not share interests and activities across political, economic and geographic borders. Social media include but are not limited to social networking sites, web feed, blogs, video-sharing, photo-sharing, podcasts, forums, chat rooms, microblogs, wikis, online journals and other mode of electronic communications.

Hence, STI adopts a policy in the Use of Social Media which aims to address the following:

- The relative freedom afforded by social media and other electronic communications have caused concern regarding its misuse by individual patrons;
- Statements, images and/or videos posted to the various social media and other electronic communications may cause damage and prejudice to the company;
- Freedom of expression, as enshrined in the Constitution and the Civil Code, is not absolute;
- That there is a need to regulate statements and/or images posted in social media and other electronic communications to reflect the maturity, integrity and respect of the whole STI community

### **Coverage**

The policy defines the acceptable standards of behavior towards the use of social media of all faculty members and employees of STI.

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### **Responsibility of employee**

All faculty members and employees of STI are expected to understand the acceptable standards of behavior towards the use of social media which includes the responsible use of his/her personal or official account.

### **Responsibility of Management**

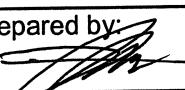
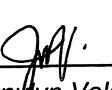
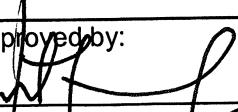
The management should disseminate and explain the provisions of this policy to all faculty members and employees to ensure that the acceptable standards of behaviour as embodied in this policy are complied with, and implement the provisions with the end in view of promoting a healthy work environment.

### **Offenses**

It shall be understood that any violation of the STI Code of Conduct through the use of social media shall likewise be penalized.

#### **Minor Offenses**

<b>Offense</b>	<b>Penalty</b>
Unauthorized use of social media during office hours	Class 2 to Class 5
Sending large number of irrelevant and/or non-work related emails	Class 2 to Class 5
Posting and/or uploading of statements, photos, videos etc. which constitute courtesy towards employees, faculty members and visitors of STI	Class 3 to Class 5

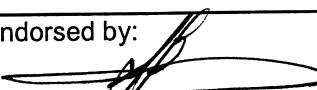
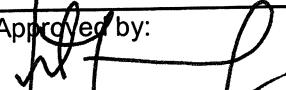
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### Major Offenses

Offense	Penalty
Posting and/or uploading of statements, photos, other graphical images and/or videos damaging and/or prejudicial to STI	Class 4
Causing intrigues tending to cast insult, dishonor and/or discredit to another employee, faculty or visitor, regardless of malice or veracity	Class 4 to Class 5
Causing intrigues tending to cast insult, dishonor and/or discredit to student, regardless of malice or veracity	Class 4 to Class 5
Posting and/or uploading statements which constitute courtesy towards any student of STI	Class 4 to Class 5
Engaging in vulgar or abusive language, personal attacks of any kind targeting individuals or groups	Class 5
Falsely representing oneself to be another person or as an officer, agent or representative of the school	Class 5
Posting of false, misleading, inaccurate data or information resulting in prejudice to STI	Class 5
Harassing, bullying, or fighting with co-employees or co-faculty members	Class 5
Dissemination of obscene materials, indecent exposures considered offensive to the employees, faculty members, and students and to STI	Class 5
Disclosing company privilege information including, but not limited to, employee violation of company rules and guidelines, client relationships, employee records, company credentials, business secrets.	Class 5
Posting of subversive and seditious statements.	Class 5
Posting disparaging remarks about employers, co-workers, students, or clients making profane, obscene, sexually explicit, racially derogatory, homophobic or other offensive comments	Class 5

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### **Corrective Action**

STI believes that only well-disciplined employees can contribute to the success of any organization. Therefore, it is imperative that appropriate disciplinary action be imposed upon erring employees not merely as punishment but as a corrective and constructive measure.

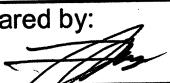
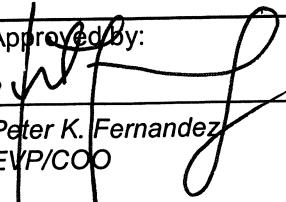
Corrective actions may be in several forms. These are:

1. Written Reprimand - a documented reprimand issued to an employee
2. Suspension - a forced, temporary absence or physical detachment from work or service. An employee under suspension does not get any compensation and benefits from the company while he/she is on such disciplinary action
3. Dismissal - the separation from the organization or termination of an employee's service to the company for a just cause such as, but not limited to, poor performance and violation of company policies, rules and regulations. A dismissed employee loses his/her right to separation pay as he/she is being discharged for cause.

### **Procedural Due Process**

STI shall at all times respect the employee's right to due process. Due process shall mean the right to be informed of the nature and cause of the violations and the right to be heard.

It is the accountability/responsibility of the Immediate Superior of the employee in question to initiate an investigation within five (5) working days upon the discovery of the violation. This investigation is primarily aimed at determining the existence of reasonable grounds to justify the imposition of charges for the commission of misconduct, untoward behavior and/or violation of company rules and regulations. It is also the accountability/responsibility of the Immediate Superior to administer any corresponding appropriate corrective or disciplinary action. Appropriate action will be determined based on factors such as severity, frequency, and degree of deviation from expectations and length of time involved.

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Whenever reasonable ground exists to justify the imposition of charges against an employee for the commission of any act of misconduct or untoward behavior or omission of organizational imperatives, the following procedures shall be observed:

- 1) Procedure for charges leveled against an employee characterized as minor offenses, or cases that may not require serious administrative proceedings, or cases that will not result in dismissal:

- a) NOTICE –The Immediate Superior must notify the employee in writing of the nature and gravity of the offense(s) charged against him/her as well as the possible penalty involved within five (5) working days from the day a reasonable ground to justify the imposition of charges for the commission of misconduct, untoward behavior and/or violation of company rules and regulations is established. Otherwise, the Immediate Superior shall be held responsible and shall be dealt with accordingly.

All employees charged with an offense may, upon the exercise by management of its discretion, be placed under preventive suspension pending investigation. Said preventive suspension may be imposed on the employee whenever his/her presence poses a serious and imminent threat to other employees and/or other persons, the company and/or the company's property. Said preventive suspension shall only be allowed for the period of one (1) month without pay. However, in the event that an extension of the preventive suspension is found necessary, the company will have to pay the corresponding salaries for the extension of the preventive suspension.

- b) EXPLANATION –The employee is given five (5) working days to explain his/her side in writing from receipt of the notice. In the event that the employee does not dispute the charges leveled against him/her, the employee may indicate countermeasures or corrective actions he/she is willing to undertake in order to avoid the commission of the same or a similar offense in the future. Failure of the employee to submit his/her written explanation within the prescribed period despite receipt of the notice shall not cease the course of the proceedings. The absence of the employee's written explanation shall mean that investigating authorities shall base their recommendations on the charges against the employee on the existing evidence available to them.
- c) DECISION – The Immediate Superior must render a decision within five (5) working days from receipt of the employee's explanation or in case no explanation is filed, from the last day to file said explanation. The decision must have the approval of the Department and Division Heads. The employee shall be informed in writing of the

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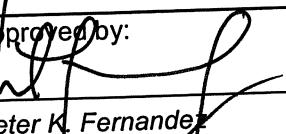
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corrective action to be enforced, if any. All disciplinary actions must have the notation of HR before actual application of sanctions.

- c.1. In cases where the decision requires the implementation of the penalty of suspension, the immediate superior is required to submit to HR the schedule for the said suspension/s within three (3) working days from the date of the release of the decision, subject to the condition that the said suspension shall commence within fifteen (15) calendar days from the date of the resolution.
  - c.2. Failure of the Immediate Superior to submit to HR the required schedule of suspension/s will give rise to the filing of appropriate administrative case/s against the concerned immediate superior without prejudice to HR's initiative of scheduling and implementing the said penalty/ies.
  - d) APPEALS – The decision of the Immediate Superior is appealable through a written appeal to the Operations Group/Committee of STI within a non-extendible period of five (5) working days from receipt of the decision by the employee. Decisions may only be appealed on the basis of the existence of errors of fact or law which warrant the reversal of the decision. The decision of the Operations Group/Committee in this instance is final and un-appealable.
- 2) Procedures for cases that call for urgency and special attention, or cases that are being contested, or offenses punishable by dismissal:

- a) NOTICE – The Immediate Superior must notify the employee in writing of the nature and gravity of the offense(s) charged against him/her as well as the possible penalty involved within five (5) working days from the day a reasonable ground to justify the imposition of charges for the commission of misconduct, untoward behavior and/or violation of company rules and regulations is established. Otherwise, the Immediate Superior shall be held responsible and shall be dealt with accordingly.

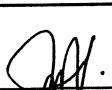
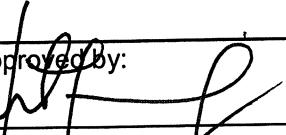
All employees charged with an offense may, upon the exercise by management of its discretion, be placed under preventive suspension pending investigation. Said preventive suspension may be imposed on the employee whenever his/her presence poses a serious and imminent threat to other employees and/or other persons, the company and/or the company's property. Said preventive suspension shall only be allowed for the period of one (1) month without pay. However, in the event that an extension of the preventive suspension is found necessary, the company will have to pay the corresponding salaries for the extension of the preventive suspension.

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- b) EXPLANATION – The employee is given five (5) working days to explain his/her side in writing from receipt of the notice. Failure of the employee to submit his/her written explanation within the prescribed period despite receipt of the notice shall not cease the course of the proceedings. The absence of the employee's written explanation shall mean that the investigating authorities shall base their recommendations on the charges against the employee on the existing evidence available to them.
- c) CONVENING OF A DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE – A thorough investigation of the facts and other circumstances regarding the offense(s) by which the employee is charged with shall be conducted by a Disciplinary Committee formed for this express purpose.
- d) INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES OF THE DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE:
  - d.1. Investigation - Within ten (10) working days from receipt of the explanation, or in case no explanation is filed, from the last day to file said explanation, the Disciplinary Committee shall commence conducting a thorough and objective investigation of the facts and evidence giving rise to the charges leveled against the employee necessary to reach a conclusion on the merits of said charges. All parties involved shall be invited to attend hearing(s) to provide them the opportunity to be heard. Said parties and their respective witnesses shall be notified of any scheduled hearing at least three (3) days before the date thereof, specifying the time, date, and place of any hearing. Failure of the employee to attend the hearing(s) shall constitute a waiver of his/her right to be heard and present his/her evidence. Thereafter, the Committee may issue a decision on the basis of the evidence and pleadings submitted, and shall submit a recommendation to the President for the imposition of the recommended sanction.
  - d.2. Decision - The Disciplinary Committee shall submit a recommendation to the President within fifteen (15) working days upon the termination of its investigation. The President shall then render a decision based on the Disciplinary Committee's recommendation and shall serve a written notice upon the employee. The decision of the President in this instance is final and un-appealable.

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- d.2.1. In cases where the decision requires the implementation of the penalty of suspension, the immediate superior is required to submit to HR the schedule for the said suspension/s within three (3) working days from the date of the release of the decision, subject to the condition that the said suspension shall commence within fifteen (15) calendar days from the date of the resolution.
- d.2.2. Failure of the Immediate Superior to submit to HR the required schedule of suspension/s will give rise to the filing of appropriate administrative case/s against the concerned immediate superior without prejudice to HR's initiative of scheduling and implementing the said penalty/ies.

#### **Administration**

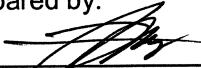
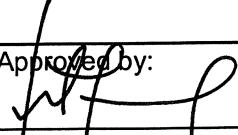
The company shall see to it that necessary reports or clearances required by law in all instances of suspension, dismissal, or termination are timely and properly filed with the Department of Labor and Employment and other relevant government agencies.

#### **Enforcement**

The following shall be responsible for acts relative to the enforcement of this policy:

##### 1. Human Resources (HR)

- a. The group is responsible in the dissemination of the rules and regulations including new policies, amendments, or revision prior to their actual implementation. A fifteen (15)-day transition period should be given to address any concern that may arise.
- b. The group ensures that all mandatory due process requirements and necessary procedures are complied with before any corresponding disciplinary action is administered. This includes, but is not limited to, the proper documentation of the administrative case and proceedings.

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## 2. Immediate Superiors

- a. In their respective sections and/or departments, members of the management are expected to administer the established rules and regulations in a consistent, impartial and timely manner.
- b. Failure of the Immediate Superior(s) to perform his/her/their responsibility shall be dealt with accordingly.
- c. If however, the magnitude of the situation calls for urgency and special attention, and/or the decision of the Immediate Superior is placed in question, the case shall be referred to the Disciplinary Committee.

## 3. Disciplinary Committee

### 3.1 For STI HQ Employees

- a. The OPS body shall select from the employees ten (10) members of the Disciplinary Committee, six (6) from JG1 - JG5 and four (4) from MA – MC. The ten (10) members of the Committee shall be referred to as pool members. The pool shall select among themselves four (4) members who will be assigned to hear a certain case. Selection shall be done in every case. This will be referred to as the Disciplinary Committee on board. Composition of which are as follow:
  - If the person charged with a violation is from JG1 - JG5
    - ❖ Three (3) members of the Committee should be from JG1 – JG5
    - ❖ One (1) member from the Managers
  - If the person charged with a violation is from MA - MC
    - ❖ All members of the Committee should be from the Managers
- b. The Disciplinary Committee on board shall be chaired by the Head of the HR, (completing the committee membership of five) who will be tasked to oversee and coordinate efforts of the other four members in the course of investigation and deliberation.
- c. The pool of members on the Disciplinary Committee shall be for a term of one (1) year. Members may be reappointed based on the discretion of the OPS body.

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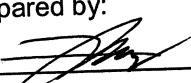
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Members who have served two (2) consecutive terms will only be eligible for selection after one (1) year from the time s/he finishes his/her second term.

- d. Any member of the Disciplinary Committee who has an ongoing professional or personal relationship with any party or who otherwise believes in good faith that his/her objectivity may be compromised shall excuse herself/himself at the earliest possible time in the investigation process. The Committee will select from the reserves (pool) or if reserves are exhausted, contact former members of the Disciplinary Committee to find a replacement member for an excused member if necessary to achieve a quorum for Disciplinary Committee meetings.

### 3.2 For School employees and faculty members

- a. Each committee shall be composed of three (3) members that may include the following:
  - School Administrator or Deputy School Administrator (as Chair of the Committee)
  - Concerned Department Head or representative
  - Department Head or representative of a neutral department
- b. If the person charged with a violation is the School Administrator, Deputy School Administrator, including other special cases which Management may deem necessary, the Committee shall be composed of at least five (5) members that may include the following:
  - The President of the School (as the Chair of the Committee)
  - A member of the Board of Directors of the school
  - Executives of the School
  - STI-HQ representative upon request with the School Operations Manager concerned
- c. Training seminars, which shall be attended by all members of the respective Committees of each STI School and College, will be scheduled and conducted by the School Legal Affairs of STI-HQ in order to educate the Committees regarding their duties and responsibilities and the skills needed to fulfill the same.

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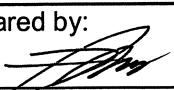
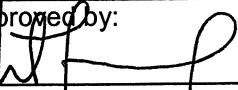
3.3 The Committee shall make recommendations resulting in the affirmation, setting aside, change or modification of the decision of the immediate superior based on its findings after investigation.

3.4 In case of a dispute in the interpretation of any provision in the Manual, the interpretation of the Committee shall prevail, shall be binding on all parties, and shall be final and un-appealable.

#### **Repealing Clause**

Any existing orders, circulars, memoranda, policies, or any part thereof, which are contrary to, or inconsistent with any provision of this policy, shall be deemed repealed or modified accordingly.

Any other practices which are not mentioned in this policy and which do not form part of any existing policies shall be considered invalid or repealed.

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