

Social Media Guidelines

Purpose

This document outlines the publication policy for Central Texas College page(s) on social media, including Facebook Twitter, Youtube, LinkedIn, Flickr and any other social media site. Social media sites are online social utilities that allow individuals or group of individuals to create a place for a group of people to come together online to post information, news and events. Central Texas College pages on Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, LinkedIn, Flickr and any other social media site are intended to provide the College community with a venue to share thoughts, ideas, and experiences through discussions, postings, photos, and videos. Publication guidelines will be similar to any other media.

The information contained on a sanctioned Central Texas College social media site does not take the place of the College's website or any other marketing communications. The information presented on those sites is considered secondary information and should reflect any event information, organization descriptions that appear on a department's website.

The Central Texas College pages will provide students and other constituents with up-to-date College information and the opportunity to communicate with page administrators and other page users. This policy is intended to outline proper use guidelines in order to ensure the most effective use of the pages.

This policy addresses the College's official presence on social media sites. In general, individual faculty or student pages are not included in this policy; however, if an employee or student group at the College creates a page that could be affiliated with the College, the Community Relations & Marketing office should be notified. The College does not take any responsibility for pages developed by others.

Contributors to the CTC pages will follow the generally established employee and student guidelines. Oversight of all CTC-affiliated pages is the responsibility of the Office of Community Relations & Marketing, who will periodically review pages to ensure College policies are followed and that the pages are being produced in accordance with the best interests of the College.

Because the technology that drives Web communication changes rapidly, this policy may be adjusted to reflect issues that may arise in the management and implementation of the page or for any other reason that supports the College's priorities for the page.

Responsible parties

Community Relations & Marketing, College Development, and the Student Life Office are administrators for the College's social media accounts. Community Relations & Marketing and the Student Life Office will jointly manage pages for current and prospective students. College Development will manage pages, with assistance from Community Relations & Marketing as needed, for College Alumni, donors and

other Friends of the College.

Those who wish to contribute information or make suggestions for the CTC pages should email webmaster@ctcd.edu.

Student organizations are encouraged to develop a presence on social media sites. When associated with the college, these pages should adhere to College policies. Developing “friendships” with the official College Facebook pages and other student group pages is encouraged!

Content development

All content must relate directly to College business, programs, and/or services. Content placed by administrators cannot promote individual opinions or causes which are not directly related to College purposes.

Content should be short and written in active voice. Remember to consider the audience; the style and tone of content should be direct and student-oriented.

Photos and videos

Uploaded photos and videos must relate directly to the College and/or student life and should not be used as a promotional tool for programs, products, or services outside the College.

All photos and videos must adhere to existing College policies.

Updating and adding content

The page should be maintained and as up-to-date as possible. In general, the more frequent the content is updated, the more users will access the page. Dated material needs to be removed as soon as reasonably possible.

Fans

The term “Fan” refers to a member of Facebook that decides to “become a fan” of a particular page. This means that the person is a recognized fan on the page, is able to interact on the page, and receives updates sent out about events.

Fans of the page cannot be censored by administrators, and are only censored by the terms and conditions of Facebook*. Facebook does establish many guidelines in regards to language, posting pictures and videos, and various other topics. Be sure to read the guidelines carefully and report fans that violate any terms or conditions.

Existing policies governing student and employee behavior apply to the College’s Facebook page. The College takes no responsibility for content developed by non-employees.

Other

Because the CTC pages on Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, etc..., are interactive tools, administrators should monitor pages closely and frequently to supervise user conduct.

Any questionable conduct should be reported to College Communications or Student Life.

Facebook terms and conditions, found at <http://www.facebook.com/terms.php>, must also be followed strictly.

General Guidelines

Be transparent

Be honest about your identity. If you are authorized by your supervisor to represent Central Texas College in social media, say so. In personal posts, if you identify yourself as a Central Texas College faculty or staff member; you must place a disclaimer stating that your views do not represent those of the college.

Just the Facts

Make sure that you have all the facts before you post. It's better to verify information with a source first than to have to post a correction or retraction later. Cite and link to your sources whenever possible; after all, that's how you build community.

If you make an error, correct it quickly and visibly. This will earn you respect in the online community.

Be respectful

You are more likely to achieve your goals or sway others to your beliefs if you are constructive and respectful while discussing a bad experience or disagreeing with a concept or person. Please refrain from using any social media site as a means to attack or slander someone's character.

Be a valued member

If you join a social network or comment on someone's blog make sure you are contributing valuable insights. Don't post information that can be considered libelous or harms the image of the college. Refrain from being overly self-promoting, this is viewed negatively and can lead to you being banned from websites or groups. If you don't plan to frequently update or post information, you may need to reconsider the need for an organization page.

Who's your audience?

Social media often span traditional boundaries between professional and personal relationships. Use privacy settings to restrict personal information on otherwise public sites. Choose profile photos and avatars carefully. Be thoughtful about the type of photos you upload.

Your posts aren't deleted

There's no such thing as a "private" social media site. Search engines can turn up posts years after the publication date. Comments can be forwarded or copied. Archival systems save information even if you delete a post. If you feel angry or passionate about a subject, it's wise to delay posting until you are calm and clear-headed.

Maintain confidentiality

Do not post confidential or proprietary information about Central Texas College, its students, its alumni or your fellow employees. Use good ethical judgment and follow university policies and federal requirements, such as FERPA and HIPAA.

If you discuss a situation involving individuals on a social media site, be sure that they cannot be identified.

Respect college time and property

Review the Computer Usage policy regarding use of social media during work hours.

Get Approved

Any messages that act as the “voice” or position of the college must be approved by the Office of Community Relations and Technical Publications, Office of Student Affairs, department head or supervisor.

Timely Maintenance

Assigned administrators should regularly monitor postings, content and viewer comments. The recommended minimum schedule maintenance and monitoring of the social site should be once to twice a week. Be sure to avoid overload your updates. Space your post throughout the day at least one to two hours apart.

Remember to keep it simple--post only the key points when applicable.

Know the Law

Each social media site will provided its own rights and responsibilities/code of conduct that users must follow. It is your responsibility to know those governing laws.

For example:

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/terms.php>

Twitter: <http://twitter.zendesk.com/entries/18311-the-twitter-rules>

Don't use the Central Texas College logo or make endorsements. Do not use the Central Texas College logo or any other Central Texas College marks or images on your personal online sites. Do not use Central Texas College name to promote or endorse any product, cause or political party or candidate.

Monitor comments. Be mindful of what information is being posted unto your page. Use your better judgment regarding post that slander, discriminate or inflict harm, those types of post should be immediately deleted from your page. However, if an offensive behavior persists you may wish to block or delete that individual from accessing your pages.

There are numerous codes of ethics that have been created to help you participate responsibly in online communications.

THIS POLICY MAY BE UPDATED AT ANY TIME WITHOUT NOTICE AND EACH TIME A USER ACCESSES A CENTRAL TEXAS COLLEGE SOCIAL MEDIA SITE THE NEW POLICY WILL GOVERN, USAGE, EFFECTIVE UPON POSTING.

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