***Social Media Content Guidelines and Procedures***

***for College Social Media Sites***

Social media sites provide a low-cost communication method that fosters open exchanges and learning. Social media tools are changing the way we work and how we connect with each other and the public. In accordance with the ***Employee Social Media Policy***, Suffolk County Community College (“College”) has developed guidelines for posting to social media on behalf of the College.

***Process for Creating a College Social Media Presence***

To request a College social media account, fill out the ***Social Media Request Form***. Approved **Content Managers** will be responsible for posting appropriate content on departmental/office social media sites. Content Managers will be offered in-person training to review social media account procedures and best practices.

***Proper Branding***

College social media sites must adhere to the College’s [***Graphics Standards Guide***](https://www.sunysuffolk.edu/about-suffolk/administration/institutional-advancement/marketing-publications/graphics-standards-guide.jsp). For social media profile avatars, the College Director of Communications will provide a template upon request of a new page.

***Social Media Sites Must Communicate College-related Content***

Do not use the College’s name to promote or endorse any product, cause, or political party or candidate. Your posts must relate to the College’s educational mission and vision.

***Maintain College Confidentiality***

Do not post confidential or proprietary information about the College, its students, its alumni, or your fellow employees. Use good ethical judgment and follow College policies and applicable laws, such as the requirements under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ([FERPA](http://depthome.sunysuffolk.edu/LegalAffairs/Docs/F9_Student_Records_Policy.pdf)).

***Maintain Privacy***

Do not discuss named or pictured College community members - including faculty, students and staff - on a social media site without their permission. Do not post anything that you would not present in any public forum.

***Respect Your Audience***

Do not use inappropriate or offensive language of any sort. For example, you may not post any discriminatory, obscene, defamatory, insulting or threatening language. The College may remove any post that violates any College policy, law, rule, or regulation. The College revoke approval of individual Content Managers or employee social media sites upon evidence of noncompliance with the Employee Social Media Policy.

***Respect College Time and Property***

It’s appropriate to post at work if your comments are directly related to accomplishing work goals, such as seeking sources for information or working with others to resolve a problem. You may not participate in personal social media conversations on work time.

***Be Responsible***

What you write is ultimately your responsibility. Participation in social computing on behalf of your department/office is not a right but an opportunity, so please treat it seriously and with respect. What you say directly reflects on the College.

***Be Accurate***

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––that’s how you build community.

***Frequency***

The Director of Communications will have access to, and regularly monitor postings and content.

Content Managers should create a content calendar with pre-planned content for slow periods. Aim for standard times for postings and updates.

The frequency of posts and updates should reflect industry standards relative to the social media channel utilized.

***Stagnant Accounts***

The College Director of Communications reserves the right to disable or temporarily delete departmental/office social media accounts that are dormant (no posts, no activity) for more than four (4) months, as such stagnancy reflects poorly on the College.

***Substituting Content Managers***

Please contact the College Director of Communications any time an authorized Content Manager is to be replaced with another individual.

***Does It Pass the Publicity Test?***

If the content of your message would not be acceptable for face-to-face conversation, over the telephone, or in another medium, it will not be acceptable for a social networking site. Ask yourself, would I want to see this published in the newspaper or posted on a billboard tomorrow or 10 years from now?

***Think Before You Post***

There’s no such thing as a “private” social media site. Search engines can turn up posts and pictures years after the publication date. Comments can be forwarded or copied. Archival systems save information even if you delete a post. Only post pictures that you would be comfortable sharing with the general public.

***Correct Mistakes***

If you make a mistake, admit it. Be upfront and be quick with your correction. If you’re posting to a blog, you may choose to modify an earlier post—just make it clear that you have done so.

***Monitor Comments***

Most people who maintain social media sites welcome comments—it builds credibility and community. However, you may be able to set your site so that you can review and approve comments before they appear. This allows you to respond in a timely way to comments. It also allows you to delete spam comments and to block any individuals who repeatedly post offensive or frivolous comments.