

PROCEDURES MEMORANDUM

TO: MCC Staff

FROM: Office of Marketing, Brand and Communication

SUBJECT: College Social Media Use Policy and Guidelines

DATE: August 3, 2023

PURPOSE: To establish general procedures for the use of social media by Metropolitan Community College (MCC) employees and for the monitoring of conversations on official College social media channels with a strong focus on protecting the College brand and reputation, while adhering to student consumer protection best practices. For the purposes of this document “channel” is a term used to describe a specific social media online platform. Currently, the College’s official social media channels include: Facebook, Instagram, X, YouTube, and LinkedIn.

1. General Principles

Social media allows the College’s audiences to interact with branded content using social networks. MCC can derive value from social media not only from the primary distribution of branded content, but also from the additional interactions that result as students and other audiences share, participate with and propagate content.

Social media allows the College to:

- A. Communicate current news, events, promotions and communications
- B. Build a follower base for the brand
- C. Encourage student activity and support of the MCC brand through their own networks
- D. Gain insight into what drives social media followers to the brand and the conversations and topics they’re engaged with

The direction and management of the College’s social media channels is considered a marketing tactic and is the responsibility of the Office of Marketing, Brand and Communication. As such, social media accounts outside of those officially established by this Office are forbidden. Content created for distribution via social channels aims to achieve the following objectives:

- E. Protect and manage the College’s brand and risk in the social media space by monitoring social media conversations and sentiment to gain insights.
- F. Enhance the student experience leading to retention through engagement by:
  - 1. Integrating social media with other student and community communications, online properties and touch points.
  - 2. Encouraging student interaction with the College.
  - 3. Promoting community involvement with the College.
  - 4. Delivering unique, interesting and valuable content to audiences.
  - 5. Preempting any questions or concerns by sharing public announcements about known issues, service interruptions, learning opportunities or upcoming enhancements.
  - 6. Connecting our audience with education and support resources, such as knowledge bases, tutorials, etc.

G. Improve marketing efficiency and integration by:

- 1. Increasing the reach of student-facing messaging and promotions to yield higher enrollment.
- 2. Leveraging social media mentions and inbound links to aid in Search Engine Optimization.

Social media channels promoting MCC departments or programs are not official social media channels and are not permitted without the approval of the Office of Marketing, Brand and Communication.

H. Unofficial channels can gain approval by completing the following steps and adhering to the guidelines of this PM:

- 1. Unofficial social media pages must give the marketing content strategist full admin rights or all login information to access, edit, or delete any content on the page.
- 2. Departments need to submit a social media plan for three months of content that includes approximately three posts per week, a plan to grow a following for that page, and a plan to maintain brand guidelines on the page.

3. The Office of Marketing, Brand and Communications is not responsible for posting content to unofficial social media pages.
4. Departments that currently have unofficial social media pages as of August 31, 2023, must maintain social media good practices, adhere to brand guidelines and post on a regular basis (a minimum of five times a month). Failure to comply with any of the guidelines will result in the deactivation of the social media page and the loss of admin rights to that page.
5. Unofficial social media pages that have been deactivated must submit a social media plan for three months of content that includes approximately three posts per week, a plan to grow a following for that page and a plan to maintain brand guidelines on the page to regain access and reactivate the page. Pages will only be able to reactivate once. If a page is out of compliance a second time, it will not be reactivated.
6. The office of Marketing Brand and Communication reserves the right to deactivate any unofficial social media page at any time.

## 2. Brand character and voice in the social space

Regardless of social media channel, MCC social content should always be relevant. The following attributes determine whether content is truly useful to our audiences:

- A. Unique to MCC
  - B. Timely and relevant
  - C. Suitable for discussion and sharing
  - D. Representative of the brand's particular expertise
  - E. In line with the core tenets set by MCC's brand voice
  - F. Consistent with Marketing, Brand and Communication directives
  - G. Compliant with legal and regulatory requirements
1. The College's brand voice in the social space helps us connect to our audiences in a personal way. To this end, our content will be:
    - i. Conversational: personable, genuine, conveying that we are knowledgeable and here to help.
    - ii. Simple: providing the right amount of information for the topic and audience.

- iii. Open: with a sincere, honest tone that shows we are trustworthy.
  - iv. Direct: showing we respect reader’s time by communicating exactly what they want to know with a tone that is about as formal as a job interview.
  - v. Candid: establishing trust by being open and transparent in the way we share information.
  - vi. Factual: content will feature factual information and be error-free.
2. All social media actions will align with the established, agreed-upon education goals of brand engagement, student experience and marketing integration. To this end, College social media content will focus on:
- i. Recruitment and branding campaign support and promotion
  - ii. Sponsorship and supported cause content
  - iii. Community building content
  - iv. College- and program-driven content
  - v. Building an alumni base

3. Measurement and tracking

The College’s involvement with social media is a long-term commitment. Likes and followers are a positive outcome, but the real measure of success in social media is audience engagement. To effectively track engagement, the following metrics will be measured monthly:

- A. Engagement rate – the number of interactions a post receives (likes, follows, shares, retweets, etc.)
- B. Content reach – the number of individuals having the opportunity to see a post
- C. Audience growth by channel – number of individuals following or subscribing to an individual social media channel

4. Content intake process

The intake process for all social content begins with:

A. Presenting content for planning via an email to: Alejandra Cortes, [afcortes@mccneb.edu](mailto:afcortes@mccneb.edu) .

1. All content submitted will be reviewed. Not all content will be published.

5. Content monitoring and response

The primary role of social media monitoring team is to assess and manage risk to brand reputation resulting from social media activity. The College's monitoring agents are the first line in listening. The social media monitoring team consists of:

A. Alejandra Cortes, marketing content strategist

B. Emma Frazier, public and media relations manager

1. MCC social channels are monitored within each individual social media platform as well as using online social listening tools such as Hootsuite and Serenova to allow appropriate routing of inquiries and concerns or complaints.
2. Inquiries, concerns or complaints posted to an official College social media platform will be handled by a social media response team member that will: 1) reach out to the individual and ask them offline via direct message or email and 2) will route the concern to the appropriate department to resolve.
3. The team will continuously and proactively monitor social media posts and conversation threads that mention MCC. While much of social media commentary is transient and anonymous, some posts may require further handling or attention. These posts may include complaints or comments from students, current or former employees or agents, or members of the general public who may be critical of the College or its activities.

C. The following process triage is activated for handling the vast majority of such commentary:

1. Social media response team member or admin will acknowledge the negative post or comment and request that the conversation be moved offline in the form of an email or direct message.
2. Appropriate acknowledgment and response will be provided offline, gathering pertinent information and reassuring the concern will be routed and/or researched.
3. Applicable personnel will be contacted if assistance is needed for a resolution.
4. When the sender receives necessary information or has been contacted by College staff, admin will return to the original online content to reply publicly to sender,

indicating that a solution has been provided. This allows for the transparency required to protect and build the College brand on a public forum.

5. Occasionally, commentary reaches a point that requires a higher level of attention due to the subject matter, and as official College communications, MCC reserves the right to remove content that is found to be spam, commercial, obscene, harassing or derogatory. In these instances, appropriate members from the team will convene to review the facts, assess the potential risk to our reputation and determine a course of action. Senior management will be advised as appropriate.
6. All College official accounts will post a disclaimer within the account's profile information as a usage guideline statement.

#### 6. College posting guidelines for social channels

Official College social media channels will display the following posting guideline statement for users to follow:

- A. Metropolitan Community College affirms a policy of equal education, employment opportunities and nondiscrimination in providing services to the public. To read our full policy statement, visit [mccneb.edu/nondiscrimination](http://mccneb.edu/nondiscrimination)
- B. Social media channels are considered an extension of the communication vehicles used by our brand. To this end, MCC reserves the right to delete posted content that contains vulgar language, personal attacks of any kind, or comments deemed to be offensive that target or disparage any individual or group of individuals.
  1. Furthermore, we reserve the right to delete comments that: are spam, include links to inappropriate sites, are explicitly off topic, advocate illegal activity, promote particular services or products, support or oppose political organizations or candidates, promote positions on matters of public policy, or infringe on copyrights or trademarks.
  2. Individuals who do not follow these guidelines may be banned from the page.
  3. All other content shared that relates to MCC, and subjects covered on this page will remain published. Comments posted on this page do not represent the opinions of Metropolitan Community College.

#### 7. Social media policy actions log

Posted content that does not adhere to the College's posting guidelines will be deleted and the following information captured and kept as record:

- A. Screen capture of the content

B. Date, time, channel featuring the posting

C. If user is banned, a statement detailing the rationale to support the action

1. This information will be recorded and the log will reside on a determined shared drive on the College's network. The social media monitoring team and general counsel to the College will have access to this document.

8. Social media as a College information asset

The College's official social media channels and established pages are considered College information assets. As such, members of the social media response team, as well as all employees posting content to the channels are expected to abide by applicable laws, their employment contractual agreement and the College policies regarding securing College information assets. These policies are outlined in Procedures Memorandum X-15: Acceptable Use of Information Technology and Resources.

Adopted 02/17/2021; revised 08/03/2023