



Social Media Guidelines

Columbus State encourages a decentralized approach to social media management, while at the same time upholding brand standards and the college's mission. Social media can take many forms, including but not limited to blogs, online forums, and networking sites. To help faculty, staff, and student groups with creating and maintaining a presence for a group, event or department, the college has assembled a list of guidelines and best practices.

These guidelines will be updated as technology and communication channels continue to evolve.

Guidelines for Posting as a Representative of Columbus State

Report Accounts & Media Attention

The college encourages faculty, staff, and student groups to enhance communication with all of our stakeholders through the use of social media. Please report all accounts that are used on behalf of the college to Marketing & Communications (M&C) for documentation at socialmedia@csc.edu. All of Columbus State's "official" pages are managed by M&C and the department is also responsible for monitoring all college activity in order to remain knowledgeable and respond to the public. Should any post go "viral" or receive media attention, please contact M&C immediately so a consistent message can be crafted and communication can be distributed by an official spokesperson of the college, as outlined in Policy No. 11-03, College Representations.

Uphold Brand Standards

All Columbus State titled sites must follow college brand standards to maintain consistent messaging and visual representation. Visit the Marketing & Communication website at www.csc.edu/mc for the official logo, approved images, and brand standards. Do not use the Columbus State logo or any other college images to promote a product, cause or candidate, or on *personal* social media sites.

Appoint Back-up Administrators

All Columbus State social sites should have more than one page administrator/manger assigned to serve as a back-up in case someone is out of the office, does not have internet connection, etc. If another administrator cannot be identified, please contact socialmedia@csc.edu to have an M&C representative added.

Maintain Confidentiality

Never post confidential or proprietary information about Columbus State, its students, alumni, faculty/staff members, vendors or affiliated partners. Always follow federal FERPA and copyright or fair use requirements. Be mindful of College Policies and Procedures with respect to ethics, solicitation, public records, and standards of conduct.

Monitor Feedback

Comments and conversation should be encouraged, but settings should be adjusted so posts can be reviewed and approved before they appear. That does not mean all negative comments should be deleted—that will only destroy credibility—but the college should be ready to respond and control the message. Accounts should be monitored regularly so spam can be deleted, so individuals who repeatedly post offensive comments can be blocked, and so followers feel valued by receiving timely responses to their concerns and questions. Contact socialmedia@csc.edu for help with adjusting page settings.

Separate Personal Sites from Columbus State Sites

Content published on personal sites should never be attributed to, or appear to be endorsed by the college. Employees may identify themselves as a faculty or staff member and post as it relates to their professional role with the college.

Be Respectful and Professional

As a Columbus State employee, it is necessary to maintain professionalism while posting on behalf of the college. While social media tends to be a little more informal in terms of voice, College Policies and Procedures must be followed regarding: Policy No. 3-43, Non-Discrimination/Anti-Harassment, Policy No. 3-44, Sexual harassment/Misconduct, and Policy No. 7-10, Student Code of Conduct.

Remember that you are legally liable for what you post on your own or others' sites. Keep in mind the following:

- Speak respectfully about the college, its employees and students, and others' opinions.
- Provide factual, accurate information and credit sources if necessary.
- Do not post obscenities, threats, libelous comments, or personal attacks.
- Do not infringe on copyrights or trademarks.
- Maintain personal sites on your own time using non-college computers.

Best Practices

- **Understand Social Media Platforms, Communities and Common Usage:** Fully understand the purpose and common usage of any social media site or tool that will be used. Before developing a college account, create a personal account to sit back and “listen” to the conversation before jumping in. If you would like to learn more, sign up for a training session by emailing socialmedia@csc.edu.
- **Know Your Audience:** Tailor messages that will add value and increase engagement. It’s a conversation—talk to your readers as you would talk to people in professional settings.
- **Post regularly/consistently:** While the number of times per day or per week a department chooses to post may vary, it is important to regularly update social sites in order to stay relevant. If there is no longer a need for a page/profile, please delete the account.
- **Think Twice and Re-read Before Posting:** All social media is public—and permanent. Make sure any content shared is accurate, grammatically correct, and necessary. As always, any questions can be directed to M&C.
- **Be Transparent:** Be honest about your identity and your association with Columbus State when posting about the college—or education in general. When posting on external (non-CSCC) sites, never hide your identity to promote Columbus State and consider using a disclaimer such as “The opinions expressed here are my own and do not necessarily represent the views of Columbus State.”
- **Encourage Cross-Promotion:** All Columbus State social media sites should be working together to share news, events and other relevant information. Employees are also welcome to include a link to the Columbus State website (csc.edu) on personal social media sites.
- **Be Aware of Legal Liability:** When blogging or posting opinions on a social media sites, individuals are legally responsible for their own comments. Others can pursue legal action for posts or comments that may be defamatory or libelous. Be civil and respectful.
- **Protect Your Identity:** Be cautious of sharing too much personal information online to avoid identity attacks.
- **Contact Marketing & Communications:** We are here to provide direction in using and/or creating social sites. If you need help developing cover images, getting an approved logo, writing content for a profile bio, etc. please contact socialmedia@csc.edu for assistance.