

Social Media Guidelines

Social media applications, web sites, accounts, and services provide a powerful new tool set in educational technology. They also pose challenges to the protection of student privacy; to the ability to maintain respectful and professional associations with students; to the right of faculty and staff members to maintain personal privacy outside their employment; and to how the College measures its impact in the world of social media. They spawn a series of difficult to answer questions. Who exactly has responsibility when things go wrong? Who is protected by the College, ConnSCU, or the State when there are problems? How should the tools be used to present a message consistent with the College mission?

In creating these guidelines, Three Rivers Community College provides a framework that will assist us in our decision-making processes and that will enable us to continue to use social media as desired and required for our academic and administrative needs. These guidelines do not require faculty or staff to use social media or abrogate program, division, or department guidelines to use or to refrain from using social media. Students, faculty members, and staff members who use social media as a part of the normal conduct of their classes or duties at Three Rivers Community College should be familiar with these guidelines.

Definitions

Distance learning courses – courses that are taught online or mostly online. Such courses include Fully Online (ONLN), Online with Campus Requirements (OLCR), or hybrid (HYBR).

Social media – forms of electronic communication and information sharing through which the users create online communities, networks, or collaborations.

Sources of Information/Communications - the college's web site, Blackboard, student and faculty email, Banner notifications if used, college-provide student email/Office 365, ConnSCU Commons, and myCommNet are the official electronic means for communication. Although they may contain social media components or plugins, they are not considered to be social media accounts.

Web-enhanced courses – on-campus courses that use online technology (LMS, publisher sites, or other web material) without replacing on-campus seat time. Most Three Rivers courses are web-enhanced to some degree but all may be web-enhanced.

Official Social Media Accounts

Although they may be officially recognized and duplicate official sources of communications, social media accounts are considered secondary resources and are NOT to be used for urgent, emergency, lockdown, and important weather information.

Social media information should not contradict each other or any primary communications tools. Marketing and student support information should be echoed in all administrative social media accounts.

Official Recognition of Social Media Accounts

Only officially recognized social media accounts have the support of college support personnel. Only officially recognized accounts that have been properly handled in accordance with these guidelines offer are protected. In order to be officially recognized, social media sites must meet all of the conditions below.

- *Requests for official recognition should be forwarded to the dean of information technology.*
 1. The dean will review each request and forward it to the appropriate committee for endorsement.
 2. If the committees are not in session, as is the case during intersessions, summers, and breaks, review for official recognition will be postponed until they meet again.
 3. Only one of the three committees following will review the request.

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- *The site must be endorsed by one of the following committees.*
 1. Public Relations/Marketing Committee
 2. Educational Technology Committee (Ed Tech)
Note: If the social media site is being used to teach the majority of a faculty member's course or to teach the course in its entirety, the site must also be approved by the Curriculum Committee.
 3. Information Technology Advisory Committee (ITAC)

- *The site must meet the college branding requirements.*
 1. The current college logo as provided by the PR/Marketing Department must appear somewhere near the top of the main page.
 2. As much as is possible the color combinations used by the college web site should be echoed in the account.
 3. The organizational unit responsible for the account will be displayed on the social media home page or first page near the top.

- *The site must have a stated institutional or academic purpose.*
 1. The account should support the college mission/vision and/or contribute to departmental/divisional goals or outcomes.
 2. Official accounts that are used for the classroom should be consistent with the program or certificate goals.
 3. It is recommended that accounts that are used for communication purposes are updated at a minimum each week during the spring and fall semesters.

- *The site must have a professional administrator (Site Administrator).*
 1. Each account must have at least one full-time faculty or staff administrator.
 2. Usernames and passwords to access the account must be maintained at all times by the administrator.
 3. User names and passwords also must be maintained by the IT Division/Educational Technology Department.
 4. Current students can be given administrative access in addition to the full-time faculty or staff administrator but all activities must still be monitored on a weekly basis by the full-time administrator, who is ultimately accountable to the College.
 5. Current part-time faculty and staff can be given administrative access in addition to the full-time faculty or staff administrator but all activities must still be monitored on a weekly basis by the full-time administrator, who is ultimately accountable to the College.
- *Official social media accounts are shown at the end of these guidelines and on the College's website.*

Unofficial Social Media Accounts

- Faculty, staff members, and students are free to create and use personal unofficial social media accounts to augment classroom pedagogy.
 1. Unofficial classroom social media sites cannot contain college logos, the college name, or otherwise look like official college sites.
 2. If the class is to be taught wholly or primarily within a social media platform or wholly on multiple media platforms, the social media platforms must be officially recognized. The faculty member is required to take the necessary steps to make the site official in advance of the start of classes through approval by the Educational Technology committee and the Curriculum Committee.

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- Faculty may use personal social media accounts for class activities but they must be mindful of the following.
 1. Social media sites used for class are not official unless they meet the conditions described in these guidelines.
 2. FERPA indicates that student grades and graded assignments should not be available to others. Newer social media sites may be weaker on privacy and security so it is best to avoid the inclusion and display of feedback, grades, personally identifiable records, and information.
 3. If a student feels that participation in the social media account violates his privacy, the faculty member may be required to explain in detail to the Academic Dean how student privacy is being protected. Per federal, State, or law enforcement requirements, the dean may be required to ask you to discontinue the use for this class. You may be able to preempt this action by having alternative and equivalent participation, exercises, or assignments ready for such a student.
 4. Distance learning classes cannot be wholly taught in social media accounts without the instructor completing the First-Run process expressly for the purpose of using the social media technology, which will require the director of educational technology, department chair, curriculum committee, and academic dean to have cognizance of the usage.

- Students may create personal sites but they are by definition unofficial and cannot have the college name or logo or in any way be set up to look like an official site. The College reserves the right to report and ask for the removal of any personal student account that falsely represents itself as official.

- Groups of students may collaborate on personal sites that are unofficial for classwork but they must not represent the site as official. They must also adhere to academic integrity policies and classroom and program code of conduct and standards.

- Student clubs or other student groups can create official social media sites but they must comply with the requirements of these guidelines.

- Unofficial sites, having no endorsement from the College, do NOT have the benefit of the support of the College, ConnSCU, or the State of Connecticut against liability.

Student Privacy, FERPA, Academic Records

The *Family Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)* govern the handling of “education records” by educational institutions. Education Records include any documents or files, paper or electronic, that contain personally identifiable records that are maintained by the College.

Examples of education records include but are not limited to:

1. Class lists
2. Student course schedules
3. Grades and assignments or assessments that contain grades
4. Assignments or assessments that contain feedback which are viewed as grades

Peer graded or collaborative work and other individual work do not fit the definition of FERPA until grades or grade feedback are assigned. Therefore, grades and the feedback associated should be neither maintained nor conducted in the social media platform.

It is also a best practice to inform students at the start of classes of the use of social media and to have alternative arrangements prepared for students who have valid reasons to be excluded from social media usage, as determined by the college administration.

Social Media Guidelines

Refer to The US Department of Education site for more information:

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>.

Copyright/Intellectual Property

Copyright law states that the owners of printed and other kinds of work have the right to reproduce, produce derivative works, distribute copies, publicly perform, and display it.

Intellectual property refers to creative items that are the product of a particular person's mind or the collaborative efforts of a group.

Official social media sites and their content, i.e. sites and content that have completed the requirements to become official, are considered to be owned by the College.

Student works are considered to be owned by the student including those works produced in social media.

Refer to the Three Rivers Copyright Guidelines for additional information:

http://www.threerivers.edu/Div_IT/EducationalTechnology/PDF/Three_Rivers_Copyright_Fair_Use_Guidelines.pdf

Professional Organization Guidelines

Three Rivers guidelines are intended to cover the College as a whole. You or your department may be a member of an organization that has additional recommendations for the use of social media. If you are a member of a professional organization, Three Rivers advises that you consult your organization for additional social media information and recommendations.

Official Social Media Accounts at TRCC

Facebook

- *Official Facebook* - <http://www.facebook.com/ThreeRiversCC>
- *Student Programs* - <http://www.facebook.com/studentprograms.trcc>
- *Nursing Department Alumni Group* - <http://www.facebook.com/groups/3RNursing/>

Foursquare – Three Rivers Community College account and locations, <http://foursquare.com/>

LinkedIn - <http://www.linkedin.com/>

- *Three Rivers Community College Group*
- *Adult & Non Traditional Learners Subgroup*

Twitter - <http://twitter.com/3RiversCC>

iTunes U - <http://itunes.apple.com/us/institution/trcc/id481649391>

Blogger

- *Tributary* - <http://www.trconlinetributary.blogspot.com/>
- *Channels* - <http://channels-3.blogspot.com/>

YouTube

- *3FT & Rising Channel* - <http://www.youtube.com/user/3ftrising>
- *Nursing Channel* - <http://www.youtube.com/user/trccnurse>

WordPress

- *Adjunct Faculty Blog* – <http://trccad.wordpress.com/>
- *The Writing Center* – <http://trccwritingcenter.wordpress.com/>