

Policy Approval/Review Form

This form is used for the approval, amendment, removal or review of a Gordon State College policy. Once authorized with the President's Signature, the policy will be posted to the Gordon State Website. This approval form will be filed in the Office of the President with Cabinet minutes noting approval.

Policy Title *	Social Media Policy
Department	Advancement External Relations and Marketing
Policy Editor	Montrese Adger Fuller
Request Type	New ☐ Amended ☒ Removed ☐ Reviewed ☐

OBJECTIVE (Briefly state your purpose.)

The Social Media Policy provides guidelines designed for Gordon State College employees participating in social media usage as an official job function on behalf of Gordon State College as well as personal social media usage. The guidelines help ensure that everyone remains good stewards of Gordon State College.

RESOURCES AND CONSULTATION (Briefly describe the resources (i.e. website, link) used in developing, amending, removing, or reviewing the policy. Include names of other individuals who assisted with this change.)

The VPAERM made very few revisions, and she removed the Public Information Office and added in Advancement External Relations and Marketing in the place of the Public Information Office content. The VPAERM viewed other policies across the USG to see how their policies were structured. The amended policy was reviewed by all Cabinet members, and there were no suggestions for any further edits.

COMMUNICATION PLAN (Identify how information about how the policy will be communicated to the college as well as training plans if applicable.)

The Social Media Policy will be communicated with the campus community during training work shops and listed on the College website for further reference.

Authorizations

Dean or Supervisor Signature and Date: _____

Montrese Adger

Digitally signed by Montrese Adger
Fuller
Date: 2021.04.07 16:08:43 -04'00'

Cabinet Sponsor (VP) Signature and Date: _____

Kirk A. Nooks

Digitally signed by Kirk A. Nooks
Date: 2021.04.16 14:04:49 -04'00'

President Signature and Date: _____

***Policy Template must be submitted with this form.**

GORDON STATE COLLEGE SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

Social media is an integral part of the way in which we communicate today. As with everything that we do, it serves a greater purpose. It is another way in which we build and maintain relationships with our stakeholders.

Because of its very nature, there are risks involved. As good stewards of the State's resources, in all of its forms, we are responsible for the way in which we present information and interact with faculty, students, staff, and the greater community. What affects the reputation of Gordon State College affects the reputation of all of us.

These guidelines are designed for Gordon State College employees participating in social media usage as an official job function on behalf of Gordon State College as well as personal social media usage. The guidelines help ensure that we remain good stewards.

Procedures

- **Determine the purpose** for the Social Media account. Be consistent with all forms of communication with your audience. A social media account is useful in the following instances:
 - Publicize events/activities;
 - Generally promote your department;
 - Communicate with constituents.
- **Define your goals.** Before you establish a social media account for your department, program or office, you should determine what you want to accomplish. Understanding this will help you choose the appropriate tools, create relevant content and understand the best way to reach your target audience.
- **Request approval.** For a group to be recognized by Gordon State College as an official social media account, the group administrators must seek approval from the Office of Advancement, External Relations, and Marketing in writing and provide the purpose and goals.
- **Let the Office of Advancement, External Relations, and Marketing know of any new efforts on stagnant accounts.** This is crucial so that tracking information can be updated, and the Office of Advancement, External Relations, and Marketing can best support you.

Once an Account is Approved

- **Name your account and notify the** Office of Advancement, External Relations, and Marketing. Create a profile name that clearly and concisely identifies your program and its Gordon State College affiliation. Do not identify yourself simply

as "Gordon State College" or "Gordon" as that implies you are speaking for the entire organization.

- **Identify the person** who will have primary responsibility for populating, maintaining and monitoring your site. **Ensure they have the time and enthusiasm** to devote to this project.
- **Send the name** of the administrator to the Office of Advancement, External Relations, and Marketing. Update that list at the beginning of each semester.
- All social media accounts recognized by Gordon State College **must have a staff member as an administrator at all times.**
- Where possible, social media pages shall **clearly indicate they are maintained by the department** and shall have department contact information (email address) prominently displayed.
- **A member of the Office of Advancement, External Relations, and Marketing team will be included as an administrator** on any social networking site that is moderated and maintained by an official presence of Gordon State College. This ensures that these networks are managed when staff members leave and allows us to communicate efficiently during an emergency, and it allows us to track usage and quickly remove content that violates these guidelines or any applicable laws. Site administrators are still responsible for their social media networks, and the Office of Advancement, External Relations, and Marketing typically serves only as a monitor.
- **The Office of Advancement, External Relations, and Marketing reserves the right to restrict or remove any content** that is deemed in violation of these social media guidelines or any applicable laws.
- **Have a backup system.** Make sure you have a social media backup system in place. If the person who handles social media is out of the office, someone else on the team should have login access and be trained on how to monitor and update the pages.
- **Post a disclaimer**, such as: "Users are fully responsible for any content they place on any of Gordon State College's social media sites. Comments posted here do not represent the opinions of Gordon State College."
- **Familiarize yourself with copyright and fair use laws.** They also apply to social media. For information on the use of copyrighted text or media (i.e., video, images), refer to <http://www.gordonstate.edu/copyright>.

For The Account Administrator/Employees

- **Keep personal and professional accounts separate.**
- If you identify yourself as an employee, faculty, or staff member, please **clearly state that the content shared is your personal view and does not represent the official views of Gordon State College.**

- **Do not use any Gordon State College marks or images on your online accounts.** Do not use Gordon's name to promote or endorse any product, cause, political party or political candidate.
- **Reporting violations:** Any employee becoming aware of or having knowledge of a posting or any website or web page in violation of the provision of these guidelines shall notify his or her supervisor immediately for follow-up action.
- **Problems or concerns regarding the use of a social media site or page should be reported immediately to the Office of Advancement, External Relations, and Marketing.**
- You are responsible for what you post on your site and the sites of others. **Be sure that what you post will not expose Gordon State College, the University System of Georgia or you to legal liability.**
- **Protect important information.** This includes passwords, but also anything that could conflict with HIPPA, FERPA, NCAA, or other regulations.

Being Social

- **Post regularly and consistently.** Posting too much can cause your audience to leave the community. So can posting too little.
- **Be Accurate.** Be sure that **content is relevant, credible and consistent** with your professional role and with Gordon State College's standards.
- Make sure **all of the details and facts are accurate and grammatically correct** before posting or responding to inquiries.
- It's better to **verify information** with a source first than to have to post a correction or retraction later.
- **Cite and link to sources whenever possible.**
- **If you make an error, correct it quickly and visibly.** Deleting inaccurate data is discouraged on social media because of the amount of emphasis put on transparency, so it is important to get things right in the first post.
- **Regularly monitor** official social media sites. **Remove** posts and comments that are inappropriate, offensive in nature, violate policies or that create a threatening environment.
- **Be prepared to accept and respond to comments.** Social media is, by design, a conversation and not a one-way broadcast.
- **Have a comment response plan.** Both positive and negative comments require a response from the organization promptly. Identify the person that will respond to comments. Determine an acceptable time frame to respond to comments.
- **Engage** in the conversation. **Respond** to questions or inquiries promptly.

- **Be a valued member of the social media community.** If you join a social network, make sure you are contributing valuable insights and posting quality content regularly.
- **Be responsible and judicious.** Please keep in mind that comments may be made that aren't favorable or may not coincide with our personal views. Take the high ground and be civil in your postings and responses.
- **Stay away** from statements involving sensitive language, including but not limited to obscene language, profanity, or ethnic slurs.
- **Do not engage** in a back-and-forth argument. We allow freedom of speech as long as it does not violate any guidelines, laws, etc.
- **Correct misinformation.** If a user posts a false accusation or an inaccurate statement, don't delete it. Instead, respond in a respectful and friendly manner with the accurate information. If a user posts an ignorant and offensive remark, you can use the opportunity to help educate the person without being condescending, pointing him or her to reliable resources and correcting false impressions.

What to Leave to the Office of Advancement, External Relations, and Marketing

- **In a crisis situation refrain from posting on social media accounts until official statements have been released** from the Office of Advancement, External Relations, and Marketing. Refer all social media activity around the crisis to the Office of Advancement, External Relations, and Marketing.
- **Refer ALL news media inquiries** to the Office of Advancement, External Relations, and Marketing.
- **The Office of Advancement, External Relations, and Marketing is responsible for posting and publishing official online information on behalf of Gordon State College.**
- The Office of Advancement, External Relations, and Marketing **may immediately remove the page and its content** if any policies are violated. Other disciplinary action may follow if the action violates any policy of the Gordon State College.

What Not to Do

- In particular, department personnel are **prohibited from the following**:
 - Speech containing obscene or sexually explicit language, images, or acts and statements or other forms of speech that ridicule, malign, disparage, or otherwise express bias against any race, any religion, or any protected classes of individuals.

- Speech involving themselves or other department personnel reflecting behavior that would reasonably be considered reckless or irresponsible.
- **Do not divulge information gained because of authority;** make any statements, speeches, appearances, and endorsements; or publish materials that could reasonably be considered to represent the views or positions of the department without express authorization.
- To not be **subject to civil litigation:**
 - Do not publish or post false information that harms the reputation of another person, group, or organization (defamation);
 - Do not publish or post private facts and personal information about someone without their permission that has not been previously revealed to the public, is not of legitimate public concern, and would be offensive to a reasonable person;
 - Do not use someone else's name, likeness, or other personal attributes without that person's permission for an exploitative purpose; or
 - Do not publish the creative work of another, trademarks, or certain confidential business information without the written permission of the owner.
- Generally speaking, do not post images without obtaining **prior permission from individuals whose images are identifiable.**
- **Do not use social media pages to post detailed policy or procedure information** (for example, program admission criteria.) Rather, provide links and direct users to official Gordon State College publications for such information.
- **Do not include sensitive personal information in a post** unless the subject of the information has given express consent for the disclosure of that information.

Branding/Logo Usage

- **Follow branding guidelines** in the Graphics Identity Program.
- **Use the official logos, taglines, mottos, etc.**
- **The name or logo should not be used to promote or endorse** any activity, event, product, cause, political party or political candidate, without approval from the Office of Advancement, External Relations, and Marketing.
- The Gordon State College logo **should not be altered** in any manner. For reproductions, seek approval from the Office of Advancement, External Relations, and Marketing.
- The Gordon State College logo is trademarked. The Office of Advancement, External Relations, and Marketing **must approve the use of the logo and branding.**

Assessing Your Social Media Accounts

- **Measure results.** To evaluate post activity and interaction with a community, make use of analytics and tracking tools, which can help to refine your strategy and better understand your audience's preferences and behaviors.
- **Adjust.** Be prepared to re-align your strategy in response to who is viewing your site and how they are doing so.
- If you realize that social media is not meeting your needs or the needs of your audience or public, it is best to **close the account rather than leave it inactive.**