

Social Media Guidelines

Why Washington College

Students choose Washington College because of its unique opportunities tied to the history, the location and the personalized education. As representatives of the College, it is our duty to express our vision through varied outlets, including social media. We encourage offices and departments to facilitate conversations about Washington College that emphasize its distinctive personality as an institution. This document outlines suggested guidelines for those departments who want to join the dialogue through social media.

Getting Started with Social Media

It is vital that the College's social media presence reflects a united brand and supports the mission and vision. The guidelines outlined in this document are to help Washington College faculty and staff create and manage social media sites in a consistent and ethical manner that supports the marketing strategy of the College.

Through its website and social media sites, Washington College interacts directly with students, prospective students, faculty, staff, alumni, families, donors and the community at large. Thus, it is important to note that administrators of social media sites—including student workers and alumni volunteers—are representatives of Washington College and are responsible for acting professionally in all of their communications, including digital interactions.

Official Social Media Sites

The Office of College Relations and Marketing maintains Washington College's official social networking sites. We work with Admissions and Alumni Relations on their official accounts.

Our office also maintains a list of College social media sites. Sites that adhere to these guidelines are eligible for listing. Please fill out the form at <https://washcoll.edu/news/social-media-directory-form.php> or contact crm_help@washcoll.edu with your social media sites' information to become part of our comprehensive list.

What these Guidelines Mean for You

The following sections provide a basic overview for effective creation and management of social media sites as a representative of Washington College. If at any time you have any questions or would like assistance in choosing what platform is best for your purposes, please contact Lindsay Bergman-Debes, Digital Strategist, at crm_help@washcoll.edu.

Definitions and Descriptions

Administrator – The person who maintains the social media site. Social media sites can have multiple administrators.

Blog – Short for Weblog, a blog is a collection of posts and stories, most of which are considered “long” when compared to Facebook status updates or “microblog” posts.

Facebook – Social networking site with profiles for individual users and pages for entities or public figures. Focus is on conversation and sharing through posts, photo galleries, videos and links.

Flickr – An online photo gallery site that allows for storage and sharing of digital images.

Instagram – A mobile application that allows users to edit and share photos and short videos.

LinkedIn – Networking for business on social media. User profiles include a résumé. This site includes networking groups based on school, job, brand, etc.

Pinterest – A social medium in which users create virtual pinboards by linking to outside sites via images. Socially, users can comment on, like or “repin” other users’ links.

Platform – The term “platform” refers to the vehicle through which users communicate. For example, Facebook is a platform for social networking and YouTube is a platform for video sharing.

Social Medium – Type of service, such as Facebook, Twitter or other social media platform.

Snapchat – A mobile-to-mobile picture- and video-sharing app with storytelling features.

Terms of Use / Terms of Service – Most social media sites require agreement to certain terms during the signing up process. Violating the terms of service can result in having an account deactivated.

Tumblr – Short form blogging (microblogging) platform that focuses on ease of incorporating mixed media (photos, videos, text). Also has a social networking aspect in that users can follow and reblog each other.

Twitter – Social networking and short form blogging (microblogging) site on which users can send 140 character blasts called “tweets.” Focus is on succinct presentation of information.

YouTube – Video sharing service. Allows for embedding of videos on websites and easily links to videos on social networking sites.

Vine – A short-form video app that integrates well with Twitter.

1. Creating Your Account

The guidelines for creation are similar for all major social media. If you are unsure of which medium is right for you, please contact lbergman2@washcoll.edu.

Accounts for College centers, departments and programs should be created and maintained by an employee or authorized representative of the College. Student workers or alumni volunteers may administer social media sites, but should be supervised by a faculty or staff member as in any other facet of student employment or service.

The Office of College Relations and Marketing should be notified of any new social media presence created to post on behalf of the College or its affiliates. Information about the site as well as contact information for the Page Administrator(s) should be sent to crm_help@washcoll.edu. We keep a record of social media outlets and do our best to monitor them in an effort to cross-promote and share news from other College social media on our main social media outlets.

2. Naming Guidelines

When possible, include reference to Washington College in the username or display name through “Washington College,” “WC,” or “WashColl.” Try to avoid confusion with the other Washingtons out there (Washington & Lee, Washington College of Law, etc.) by doing a search for your ideal group name.

This helps support a united brand, shows consistency and even improves visibility in search results.

Examples:

- Washington College [Department, Center, Program]
- [Department, Center, Program] at Washington College
- WC[Insert Name] → WC Athletics
- WashColl[Insert Name] → WashColl Alumni

3. Use of College Logos and Marks

College Relations & Marketing has several Facebook banners with the College logo available for use at

https://drive.google.com/folderview?id=0ByUJGIVEMnxud1BUOUxiVEQ3ZW8&usp=drive_web&tid=0ByUJGIVEMnxuVFpGaHhPbDVsazA

If you would like a specialized banner or profile picture, please contact crm_help@washcoll.edu.

4. Responsibilities

Page Administrators representing the College are responsible for abiding by the Washington College Honor Code, which provides basic ethical guidelines, and the Acceptable Use Policy for Washington College Office of Information Technology, which outlines usage guidelines for the College’s technology resources and use of the network ID.

Human Resources also provides a policy for the use of social media. Social media administrators—including student workers and volunteers—should review this policy when creating new pages and groups. Included in the policy are rules regarding use of personal social media and confidentiality. Volunteers should abide by this same policy as they are acting as representatives of the College. You can review the policy at <http://www.washcoll.edu/offices/human-resources/college-policies/social-media-policy.php>

4.1 Privacy

Additionally, Page Administrators and other posters must protect confidential information and adhere to College and legal privacy, confidentiality, and property laws. Follow FERPA requirements and NCAA requirements when applicable.

Be mindful of copyright laws. Page Administrators are responsible for making sure all material used is properly sourced and credited.

Do not use social media to collect personal information of users. State and federal laws have strict requirements and restrictions, and—in the case of minors—additional penalties can apply to violations.

5. General Content Guidelines

- The Internet is forever. Once content is posted, it may be redistributed through the Web or other media channels, and older versions or information may continue to exist even if the content is deleted or modified.
- Posts should be unique to the social medium. Each medium has specific styles and consumers of social media can easily discern if posts are automated to post the same thing in multiple locations.
- Content that depicts controversial or dangerous activities (e.g., documentary of science experiments) should only be posted in the proper context and with support of College administrators. A legal disclaimer may be necessary.
- Content should not show the College in a negative light. This includes but is not limited to: content that might be considered racist, bigoted or demeaning to a group of individuals; content that shows violence or humiliation; content that depicts illegal activities.
- Content should be suitable for audiences of all ages.

6. Commenters

Social media is all about engagement. Fans and followers should be encouraged to interact with each other through commenting and posting, but should adhere to certain guidelines. If possible, post and publicize comment guidelines on the social media site (in profile description).

Guidelines should include a warning against abusive language and inappropriate content as well as advertising. Example comment guidelines are as follows:

- Comments should be relevant to a topic discussed and to the point.
- Posts that are off-topic, abusive, include profanity or threatening language, reference illegal activities, or contain personal attacks will be deleted.

- Spam and advertising posts will be deleted immediately.

Moderate comments and responses but do not engage with or delete comments of commenters who are negative unless they are offensive.

Comments that report negative situations (broken pipe in building, ice on campus path, etc.) should be shared with the appropriate College administrator and responded to with a notification of the action taken.

Questions?

If you have any questions, please contact Digital Strategist Lindsay Bergman-Debes in College Relations & Marketing at crm_help@washcoll.edu