

Revised 1/12/2021

OVERVIEW

Today around 7-in-10 Americans use social media to connect with one another, engage with news content, share information, and entertain themselves (Pew Research).

Social media is now for branding and engagement, not just traffic or revenue.

There is now more content than people can consume. If a post isn't interesting or useful, the user will scroll past it without a second thought. Clicks and funneled goals are hard to come by due to the daily algorithm changes and reach reduction. Social media is no longer a megaphone like it used to be. Each social media post becomes less and less likely to be seen.

Social media is now about driving conversation and engagement. It is now all about customer service, one-on-one conversations (especially with the rise of messaging features and platforms). It is all about deepening your relationship with your fans. It is not a solution to every marketing problem and simply "pushing out" marketing messages is ineffective.

People use social media to reach brands through post comments and direct messages. Social media is the first place most people turn to for customer support and to get help from brands.

The college will use a decentralized Multiple Hub-and-Spoke model for its social media governance. The very nature of social media dictates that responsibilities should be spread across the college with as many active participants as possible.

Communications, Marketing, and Public Relations (CMPR) cannot be at every event, have knowledge of every initiative, and know the day-to-day grind of classroom activities. The number of followers is no longer the top-level metric for social ROI, therefore, the number of followers is irrelevant compared to the engagement and impressions of the content. Despite multiple accounts segmenting the overall audience, social networks have stressed the importance of providing users with the content they desire (e.g. newest algorithm changes). Having a dedicated presence for programs and departments will provide users with the specific content they desire. This content can then be shared on the primary college accounts.

We will set goals, identify what social networks will be utilized, define the campus groups that warrant a social media presence, and define how each presence fits into the overall institutional effort. We will train content managers on brand guidelines and priorities, and will provide regular ongoing updates and meetings to share institutional news, stories, tips, and brand updates.

PURPOSE

Social media is a powerful tool that carries many risks and rewards. It is easier than ever to reach out to the public and share information in real time. Because of this 24/7 stream of information, it is necessary to know exactly what to share, with whom, and also have a clear understanding of what not to do. Central Piedmont encourages the use of social media by departments, offices, student groups and employees to connect with each other, showcase what the college offers our community, and to protect users' personal and professional reputations and institutional reputation.

Central Piedmont has developed these guidelines to assist our collegiate community in the safe, legal and effective use of Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, and blogs. These guidelines will be monitored and revised frequently, as changes in the social media world occur daily.

SCOPE

These guidelines only apply to social media accounts officially recognized by Communications, Marketing, & Public Relations (CMPR). It does not apply to private/personal social media accounts. College employees, students, units and departments are

responsible for ensuring content posted by, or on behalf of, any unit or department adheres to all Central Piedmont policies and to all appropriate federal and state laws.

College employees or students who post via private accounts should make it known their views are not representative of the college, if posting college-related information.

ACCOUNT CREATION, MANAGEMENT AND DELETION

CREATION

If you wish to create a social media account, you must work with CMPR to determine which social network will be effective, or if you're better off utilizing pre-existing accounts.

New account requests will only be considered from the division level of Academic Affairs or Student Affairs. Requestors will submit content to the college's main accounts for a period of six months to ensure there is quantity and quality of content available for a standalone channel.

Next, you will need to reach out to CMPR to complete [the social media account request form](#). Accounts must use a Central Piedmont email address – preferably a shared email address (e.g. socialmedia@cpcc.edu, student.life@cpcc.edu, etc.).

Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn pages and blogs are available by request for division-level only. Departments one level under division-level may request a public Facebook group or LinkedIn group.

CMPR will create the page or group, add it to the official social media directory, and provide a standardized profile picture and cover image to be used in alignment with the college's branding. Student organizations are not included on the official college directory list.

Login credentials must be shared with CMPR and passwords must not be changed unless directed to do so by CMPR. Also, a CMPR staff member must be a top-level admin and/or owner of each account in case unit employees leave the college.

OFFICIAL STUDENT CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS

Student organizations that wish to create social media accounts (Facebook groups and Instagram only) must request an account through the Office of Student Life and have a Student Life staff member as a top-level administrator of the account. Student Life will work with CMPR on any approved requests.

CMPR will create the social media account, add it to the official social media directory, and provide a standardized profile picture and cover image to be used in alignment with the college's branding.

Clubs and organizations are not permitted to use the official college logo on their social media sites (including the profile picture), as the college's logo and name are trademarked.

Clubs/organizations can create their own "look" or logo, as long as it does not include the Central Piedmont logo (or any parts of it) or the official college seal. If groups are one of the college's [officially-sanctioned student organizations](#), they may use their full name along with "at Central Piedmont Community College" or "at Central Piedmont." Please avoid using "CP" or "CPCC." Example: Central Piedmont Visual Arts Club.

ALUMNI GROUPS

Alumni groups that would like to create social media accounts (LinkedIn only) must request an account through the college's Communications, Marketing, & Public Relations (CMPR) department at socialmedia@cpcc.edu and have a division director or program chair as a top-level administrator of the account.

If the requested group is approved to have an account by CMPR, the group will use "Central Piedmont" along with their program name and "Alumni." Example: Central Piedmont Architectural Technology Alumni.

CMPR will create the LinkedIn group, add it to the official social media directory, and provide a standardized profile picture and cover image to be used in alignment with the college's branding.

CMPR will contact administrators of existing college alumni LinkedIn groups to request having the Central Piedmont social media manager added to the group as an admin, to better connect with the alumni and their post-college professional activities.

DELETION

Social media accounts may be deleted with or without notice by CMPR if the account becomes dormant and/or content is not posted on a regular basis (e.g. minimum one post per week). Those who want an account will start out on a six-month trial basis -- providing content to the college's main channel(s) -- to determine if the division/team has enough content to post and to ensure posting would be frequent, relevant and engaging. CMPR reserves the right to remove any content and/or social media page for any reason, including but not limited to, content deemed threatening, profane, obscene, a violation of intellectual property rights or privacy laws, off-topic, a violation of Central Piedmont policy, commercial or promotion of organizations or programs not related to or affiliated with the college, or otherwise injurious or illegal.

MANAGEMENT

Administrators are fully responsible for the content they post on any of Central Piedmont's social media sites and are responsible to remove content that may violate Central Piedmont policy, FERPA and/or state or federal laws.

Should an account administrator leave the college for any reason or no longer wish to be an account administrator, it is that area's responsibility to designate another employee to take their place and immediately notify CMPR to remove the former employee's administrative permissions to the site. The password will also be immediately changed in this scenario. Creators and administrators have no ownership rights over the social media accounts.

POSTING ON BEHALF OF CENTRAL PIEDMONT

1. Advertising on behalf of external vendors is prohibited, unless the event is co-sponsored by the college.
2. Do not post confidential or proprietary information about the college, its students, employees, or alumni.
3. You may post any content that is not in conflict with federal privacy requirements, including FERPA, HIPAA, state or federal law, and/or college privacy and confidentiality policies. Employees and/or students who share confidential information do so at the risk of disciplinary action and personal liability.
4. Central Piedmont trademarks and logos may not be used without approval. Contact CMPR for an approved logo and any other images you may need. For information on how to properly use Central Piedmont logos, [please refer to our official brand style guide](#).
5. Do not use any derogatory language or demeaning statements, inappropriate or incriminating images depicting hazing, sexual harassment, vandalism, stalking, underage drinking, illegal drug use or any other inappropriate behavior/language.
6. College computers and time on the job are reserved for college-related business in accordance with college policy 6:20 Use of Central Piedmont Information Technologies.
7. Keep personal views separate from college posts. Representation of your personal opinions as being endorsed by the college or any of its organizations is strictly prohibited. You may not use the college's name to promote any opinion, product, cause, or political candidate. Be sure to include the statement: "this is my personal opinion and not that of the college" on personal profiles/posts when applicable.
8. When using or posting online material that includes direct or paraphrased quotes, thoughts, ideas, photos, or videos, always include citations. Provide a link to the original material if applicable.

9. Content managers must follow all WCAG 2.0 and 508 Compliance recommendations, including captioning of all video with correct spelling and grammar as well as other accessibility guidelines including alt tags for graphics. If a video is not transcribed by an external group, it should not be shared. Flyers are not accessible, so please do not include these on social media sites.
10. Each officially-approved account must include a disclaimer statement (listed below) in their "About section" regarding content and opinions contained on the site.
11. Be aware of what type of links you are posting, as they could contain viruses or imply the college's endorsement of the site.
12. Respond to all comments, reviews, mentions, and inbox messages in a timely and appropriate manner. The whole point of social media is to be conversational with your followers. If you don't know how to respond to something, contact CMPR or view "How to Respond to Social Media Comments."
13. When working with influencers or other guests who will be appearing on a Central Piedmont social media platform, either free or via a paid service such as Cameo, please contact CMPR with the influencer's name and social media handles so they can be properly vetted before appearing on one of the college's official channels.

DISCLAIMER STATEMENT (must be included on all accounts)

Central Piedmont Community College reserves the right to remove any content and/or social media page for any reason, including but not limited to, content deemed threatening, profane, obscene, a violation of intellectual property rights or privacy laws, off-topic, a violation of Central Piedmont policy, commercial or promotion of organizations or programs not related to or affiliated with the college, or otherwise injurious or illegal.

HANDLING COMMENTS & MESSAGES ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Positive or Neutral

- Thank the person or page for their comment.
- Personalize the message with a friendly, conversational tone using personal pronouns. Use "we," "us," and "our" when referring to ourselves.
- Continue the conversation or start a new one.
- Provide some type of encouragement or motivational response to leave the person or page with a positive vibe.

Negative

- Complaint
 - Acknowledge how they feel, offer to help resolve in any way possible.
 - Try to take the conversation offline as quickly as possible in an email or direct message format.
 - Reach out to higher ranking officials and/or department heads and let them know about the complaint.
 - Typically, acknowledgement resolves further complaints.
- Trolling/Spam
 - Ignore, don't delete the comment immediately.
 - If trolling gets to the point of defamation, direct targeting, or threatening and malicious comments, then you may ban the person from the page and delete the malicious comment/tweet.
 - Explain in a reply that their comments violate the rules of the page before you ban them. If it gets to that point, screenshot and escalate to CMPR, higher ranking officials, department heads, emergency management, and/or College Security Services.

Monitoring Non-Direct Posts

- Monitor feeds for people talking about the college. If you find something, start a conversation or send a friendly response.

Tips to Communicate with your Audience

- Quickly and thoughtfully respond to comments, reviews, and private messages.
- Send GIFs, emojis, and videos as appropriate.
- Personalize every response.
- Proactively reach out to customers with issues.
- Proactively reach out to customers even if they don't directly mention us.
- Be honest and authentic.

BEST PRACTICES

Be Authentic.

When you post online, write as if you are conversing in real life and build a relationship with your audience. Write in first person and use personal pronouns such as “us,” “you,” and “we.”

Be Concise.

You do not want to write a novel on social media. Remember: short, sweet, and to the point.

Be Accurate.

Correct grammatical and spelling errors quickly. If you have questions about whether it is appropriate to write about a certain topic, consult your supervisor or CMPR.

Be Respectful.

Anything you post in your role as a Central Piedmont employee reflects on the institution. Be professional and respectful at all times. Do not engage in arguments or debates on your site. Understand your posts may encourage comments or discussion of opposing ideas. Responses should be considered carefully in light of how they would reflect on the college. All responses should be courteous and professional.

Be Confidential.

Do not post confidential, proprietary or protected information about students, employees or other members of the Central Piedmont community that would violate FERPA or HIPAA laws.

Listen.

Listening to what others are saying about your brand is one of the most important components of being active on social media. “Listen” to maintain a clear and current understanding of what is relevant and of interest to the community.

Engage and Interact.

Offer comments on interesting posts and share the good work of others using your sites. Social media is not only about sharing your news and success, it's about sharing information that is of interest to your audience. If you see a post that you think requires or would benefit from an official college response, please contact CMPR.

Be Active.

A social media presence requires a lot of attention and time. If you do not have the time or resources to check in on these sites at least a few minutes each day, and to post new content several times a week, utilize Central Piedmont's social media channels instead at socialmedia@cpcc.edu. Your site is only as interesting as your last post.

Be Timely.

One of the great benefits of social media is the ability to share information instantly on a global stage. This timeliness is also one of the expectations of that audience. Be prepared to move quickly in response to new developments, announcements, or emergencies with relevant information on your site.

Remember, Everything You Do Online Can and Will Live Forever.

Think before you post. Remember anything you share on social media can and will be shared, stored, and spread globally. Do not post anything online you wouldn't feel comfortable seeing front and center on a news outlet.

Accept and Monitor Comments.

A social media site without comments isn't very social. Be prepared to accept and respond to comments. Understand not all comments will be positive, and respond to negative comments professionally and provide additional information that may help resolve the issue. Post a disclaimer on your site stating you reserve the right to remove inappropriate comments. Remove those comments containing vulgar language, those that attack any one group or individual and those that are obviously spam.

Separate Personal From Professional.

Balancing your professional and personal social media presences can be tricky, particularly if you are an avid user of both. Content that is appropriate and of interest to your personal friends is most likely not appropriate or of interest to your department's "friends." Keep these two presences as separate as possible by keeping content about your non-work life on your personal page.

Be a Valued Community Member.

Don't just talk about your program or department – share the best information you find from trusted sources outside of campus. This will increase the value of your site.

PEW RESEARCH

- 69% of adults in U.S. use Facebook
- 73% of adults in U.S. use YouTube
- 37% of adults in U.S. use Instagram
- 67% of young adults, ages 18-24 use Instagram, 90% use YouTube, 76% use Facebook

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