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**Subject: Social Media**

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**1. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the maintenance and proper operation of Tidewater Community College’s official Social Media accounts. Social Media has reshaped the ways in which college students communicate with each other and with their institutions. The proliferation of Social Media has created among students the expectation of engagement with fellow students and their college and instant answers to questions and complaints. In addition, many students turn first to Social Media to obtain news about their colleges, whether that is registration deadlines or weather closings.

In order to remain relevant and a college of choice in the competitive higher education marketplace, TCC must meet students’ expectations for Social Media communication on many different accounts.

**2. Policy**

Tidewater Community College shall maintain an institutional Social Media presence, accessible to all, sharing news and stories that advance TCC’s mission on a variety of Social Media sites, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Snapchat.

Accounts may be added to or deleted from institutional TCC Social Media at the discretion of the Associate Vice President for Interactive Communications (AVP-IC) and Social Media Coordinator (SMC) and with the knowledge and consent of the Vice President for Public Affairs and Communications (VP-PAC). The Office of Interactive Communications

shall maintain and post online a directory of TCC Social Media channels.

This policy does not apply to comments or content originating from outside TCC, including personal pages and Social Media accounts where TCC has no institutional presence.

In posting content to official TCC Social Media channels, TCC employees shall comply with the provisions of Virginia Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) Policy 1.75 (Use of Electronic Communications and Social Media) and the Terms of Use outlined by the respective Social Media platform.

## **2.1 Social Media Standards**

The Office of Interactive Communications shall maintain TCC's Social Media Standards, which shall list the proper creation and use of social accounts; use of links; registration; frequency of posting; and the responsibilities of faculty, staff and students who establish or maintain official Social Media accounts associated with TCC.

The standards shall be publicly available at [www.tcc.edu/social-media-standards](http://www.tcc.edu/social-media-standards). The standards will be updated from time to time by the SMC, such updates to be communicated to TCC Social Media Contributors.

## **2.2 Use of Social Media by Employees, Students and TCC Entities**

Faculty, staff, and students may establish official Social Media accounts associated with TCC, with the advice and assistance of the SMC. The SMC will not, however, become responsible for the maintenance of accounts outside the OIC.

Employees and students who maintain TCC Social Media accounts shall comply with the following:

### **2.2.1 Emergency Communications**

When a TCC Alert has been activated, only institutional Social Media accounts managed by the Office of Public Affairs and Communications (PAC) shall originate content. Employees and students who maintain TCC accounts shall post only messages that repeat verbatim the posts from PAC.

### **2.2.2 Copyright**

TCC employees, students, and units of the College shall observe copyright laws. Those posting to TCC Social Media shall not use text or images from other websites or Social Media sites without first obtaining permission or otherwise observing Fair Use standards as outlined in Federal Copyright Law.

### **2.2.3 Visual Identity Standards**

TCC employees, students, and units of the College shall observe the college's Visual Identity Standards in using College logos, colors and other Visual Identity Elements.

#### **2.2.4 Editorial Style and Usage**

Poorly written posts and misspellings will harm TCC's image as an institution of higher learning. TCC employees, students, and units of the College will ensure that their posts have correct grammar and spelling. Social Media contributors will observe TCC Editorial Guidelines, including College nomenclature. TCC Editorial Guidelines will be posted and publicly available.

#### **2.3 Privacy**

TCC Social Media accounts shall abide by provisions the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and by TCC's Privacy Policy 1104.

#### **2.4 Promotion**

As representations of the College, official and institutional TCC Social Media accounts shall not promote any commercial product, business, or individual, except for those having contractual agreements with the College.

#### **2.5 Chartered Student Organizations**

Chartered Student Organizations may establish social media accounts. The organization's faculty/staff advisor shall be responsible for ensuring content produced by the organization's members abides by the Student Code of Conduct contained in the Student Handbook. Student Life staff members on the respective campuses shall monitor the social media of Chartered Student Organizations and take corrective action when warranted.

### **3. Responsibilities**

#### **3.1 Vice President for Public Affairs and Communications**

The VP-PAC shall have overall responsibility for TCC's official Social Media presence, developing and promulgating procedures to implement this policy. The VP-PAC shall designate those employees who will be responsible for the establishment and maintenance of the various pages that make up TCC Social Media. Such designated employees shall be responsible for adhering to this policy. The VP-PAC shall settle disputes related to TCC Social Media and shall take disciplinary action when appropriate within the context of applicable DHRM and VCCS policies.

#### **3.2 Associate Vice President for Interactive Communications**

The AVP-IC shall maintain day-to-day oversight of TCC's official Social Media presence. The AVP-IC shall approve the establishment of new Social Media accounts, with the knowledge and consent of the VP-PAC. The AVP-IC shall maintain familiarity with current posts and responses and ensure responses reinforce the college's brand message and reputation.

### **3.3 Social Media Coordinator**

The SMC shall maintain TCC's Social Media Standards and shall periodically provide support and training through the Social Media Users Group. The SMC shall daily monitor all institutional Social Media accounts and respond appropriately; report troubling or otherwise concerning posts to the appropriate TCC office; and work with TCC's Marketing Director to develop and post marketing communications. The SMC shall maintain TCC's Social Media Dashboard at [www.tcc.edu/social](http://www.tcc.edu/social) and the TCC Social Media Directory.

## **4. Procedures**

**4.1** TCC departments, programs, and recognized student clubs and organizations desiring to make an announcement through official TCC Social Media may do so via email to [socialmedia@tcc.edu](mailto:socialmedia@tcc.edu).

### **4.2 Training and Enforcement**

The SMC shall provide training from time to time. If an employee or student requires assistance or training to establish or maintain an account, services can be requested by emailing [socialmedia@tcc.edu](mailto:socialmedia@tcc.edu).

The SMC shall periodically review TCC Social Media accounts managed by employees and students to ensure compliance with Social Media Standards. Accounts may be dropped from the Social Media Directory if they routinely do not comply with Social Media Standards.

## **5. Definitions**

**Social Media:** Social Media refers to the use of web-based and mobile technologies to turn communication into an interactive dialogue. Social Media is designed to stimulate interaction between a source and its audience, and vice versa.

**Social Media Account:** A Social Media account represents individuals, companies, organizations and institutions on Social Media sites such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram.

**Social Media Contributor:** A faculty member, staff member, or student who establishes or maintains a Social Media account associated with TCC. A list of these contributors is maintained by the SMC.

**Institutional Social Media:** Social media accounts that are established by the Office of Interactive Communications and represent the College's institutional "voice."

**Official Social Media:** Social media accounts that are established by faculty, staff, or students; are affiliated with TCC; and are listed in the TCC Social Media Directory.

**Social Media Users Group:** Established by the Office of Interactive Communications, the users group is a forum for training, support, and discussion among TCC Social Media Contributors.

## 6. References

[Virginia DHRM Policy 1.75 – Use of Electronic Communications and Social Media](#)

[TCC Privacy Policy 1104](#)

[TCC Visual Identity Policy 3302](#)

[TCC Student Handbook](#)

[Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)

[TCC Social Media Standards](#)

[TCC Editorial Guidelines](#)

## 7. Review Periodicity and Responsibility

The Vice President for Public Affairs & Communications shall review this policy at each anniversary of its approval and, if necessary, recommend revisions.

## 8. Effective Date and Approval

This revision to the policy is effective upon its approval by the College President on July 21, 2016.

Policy Approved:

Procedure Developed:

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Edna V. Baehre-Kolovani, Ph.D.  
President

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James P. Toscano  
Vice President for Public Affairs &  
Communications

## 9. Review and Revision History

The original version of this policy was approved February 28, 2012.

Revision 1:

- Broadens the scope of Social Media channels TCC may use.
- Updates the former title of the Web Communities Coordinator to Social Media Coordinator.

- Assigns day-to-day supervision of TCC Social Media to the Associate Vice President for Interactive Communications
- Establishes the ability of faculty, staff, and students to create official TCC social media accounts representing units of the College
- Differentiates between “institutional” social media, representing the college as a whole, and “official” social media, representing specific units of the college.
- Establishes the authority of the Social Media Coordinator to create and maintain college-wide Social Media Standards and Social Media Directory and take corrective action when official TCC accounts consistently don’t observe standards.
- Clarifies the responsibility for social media accounts of Chartered Student Organizations.

Approved July 21, 2016 by President Edna V. Baehre-Kolovani, Ph.D.