



Social Media Guidelines and Procedures

College staff and faculty administering institutional social media accounts are expected to follow the Social Media Guidelines and Procedures listed below. These guidelines are broad in nature as social media technology is constantly evolving and no one set of guidelines and procedures can address all the particular situations and circumstances that may arise.

The College President has assigned the Public Information and Government Relations (PIGR) Office to maintain and monitor official college accounts on several social media sites as a way to provide announcements and information about upcoming events and activities as well as to provide a forum for open discussion among students, faculty, staff, alumni, and the community. As the administrative gatekeeper of social media, the PIGR Office is responsible for establishing, maintaining, and enforcing HCC's social media guidelines as necessary.

Official College Accounts

- A. The social media sites that represent HCC must:
 1. Abide by the college Acceptable Computer Usage policy and other policies listed in the "Related College Policies" section of the Social Media Policy.
 2. Have been created through the submission of the "Social Media Account Request" form (Attachment 2) and be registered with the HCC Public Information and Government Relations (PIGR) Office. Requests must be made by an HCC staff or faculty member.
 3. Have a minimum of one college faculty or staff member as an administrator of the online account at all times. College employees who serve as online administrators are charged with managing and monitoring content on their official college accounts on a regular

basis and are responsible for removing any content that may violate college policies.

4. Provide administrative access to all sites representing HCC to the PIGR Office. An individual, designated by the PIGR Office, will be added as an administrator or provided administrative login information.
 5. Work with the PIGR Office on the images, color palette, and naming conventions for all online sites.
- B. PIGR's Social Media & Public Information Specialist will serve as the social media coordinator and will be added as an administrator or provided administrative login information for all college-affiliated social media accounts.
- C. The PIGR Office will make the final decision in any situation regarding the use of social media and ensure the pages are set up properly according to a social media site's policies and guidelines.
- D. The PIGR Office reserves the right to enforce this policy by removing links to third-party websites and content and/or recommending the administrator remove or change the site or online content as needed.
- E. Fans and followers of official college accounts agree to respect the terms of individual social networking sites and understand that HCC officials have the right to remove any content that is deemed to be offensive, inappropriate, of a harassing or threatening nature, or can be construed as defamation of character. HCC has the right to block posts from fans or followers who violate these guidelines. Profane language will also be removed.
- F. The PIGR Office, in consultation with the administration, which includes but is not limited to, the Office of Academic Affairs, the Office of Student Affairs, the Administration and Finance Office, and/or the Office of the President, will resolve any conflicts or concerns regarding social media.
- G. Official student clubs and organizations (i.e., official chartered student groups recognized by the Student Activities Office and governed by the Student Activities Policy No. 4036) are permitted to have an official presence on social media sites with the approval of the club's advisor and the

PIGR Office. Guidelines and procedures outlined in the Social Media Policy and Social Media Guidelines document must be followed.

Social Media Content on College Accounts

1. Content should be posted on a regular basis to keep the account current and answer questions in a timely manner. Page administrators are expected to respond to user concerns and address issues of inappropriate conduct with warnings issued as needed.
2. Content should be accurate, concise, student-oriented, sensitive to diverse audiences, and respectful to the college, its employees, students, and the community.
3. Posted content should adhere to established college policies relating to electronic communication for both students and employees including, but not limited to: Acceptable Computer Usage (Policy No. 5093), Code of Trust (Policy No. 2030), Code of Student Conduct (Policy No. 4040), Free Speech & Anti-Discrimination (Policy No. 4042), and Solicitation (Policy No. 8069).
4. Concerns of abusive or inappropriate content should be reported according to the procedures posted on the social media site and shared with HCC's PIGR Office at publicinfo@hagerstowncc.edu.

Best Practices for Effective Online Communication

To be successful on social media, faculty, staff, and students posting on behalf of HCC should:

- **Be respectful of others.**
Whether you are an administrator or a fan/follower, always treat others fairly. Be sensitive to different perspectives and viewpoints and never react in a defensive or hostile manner.
- **Be accurate, honest, and transparent.**
Make sure you are providing accurate information. Take the time to verify information before it's posted. If you make an error or need to post a correction or retraction, do so publically so that others are aware of it. Do not say anything that is dishonest, untrue, or misleading.

- **Respect confidentiality and privacy laws.**

Use good judgment about content and respect privacy laws. Do not post confidential or proprietary information about the college, its students, its alumni, or staff and faculty. Follow college policies and federal requirements such as FERPA. If in doubt, contact the PIGR Office for guidance.

- **Don't violate copyright laws.**

Follow the laws governing copyright and fair use dealing with copyrighted materials owned by others, including HCC's own copyrighted material and brand. It is good practice to give credit to the owner/author/creator for content that is not your own and provide a direct link or URL to that content if possible.

- **Be professional.**

As an employee, remember that you represent HCC. You are the public face of the college and should always consider the intended audience when posting or commenting. Proofread your content prior to posting and try to avoid spelling and grammatical errors.

- **Don't be afraid to ask questions.**

If you need help, are uncertain of how to respond to a question or complaint, or need advice on how to handle a difficult situation, contact the Social Media & Public Information Specialist by calling 240-500-2262 or by emailing publicinfo@hagerstowncc.edu.

- **Think before you post.**

Once something is posted online, it lives forever. Search engines frequently catalog posts and archive social media content. Don't make the mistake of posting something that you will regret later or that could negatively impact the college, your current or future career, or your personal reputation.