Southeastern Technical College
Social Media Policy

Overview

Social media technologies and their ease of use make them attractive channels of communication. However, these tools also can open the possibility of unintended consequences. To enhance the effective use of these technologies, these guidelines draw upon examples of best practices from various institutions to outline the most appropriate use of social media. Due to the rapid changes in technology, this guideline may be reviewed and updated as needed.

Social media provides Southeastern Technical College’s employees, students, and others (“Users”) an opportunity to interact online to exchange thoughts, ideas and experiences through discussions, postings, photos and videos. These guidelines address the use of Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and other social networking sites and tools used by STC, its employees, and student groups affiliated with the College while performing their duties. This guideline does not seek to dictate the personal uses of social media by employees or students. This document addresses the responsibilities and obligations associated with access to computer systems and networks owned or operated by Southeastern Technical College. Use of all social media through the College’s computer systems and networks shall at all times adhere to the College’s Information Technology Acceptable Use Policies and Copyright Guidelines, as well as social media sites’ communications standards, applicable local, state and federal laws, ethics, and privacy and intellectual property rights. These guidelines govern the use of the College’s computer resources for all social media activities in order to maintain standards of quality and relevance to our primary goals of teaching and learning, and our position as a community institution.
In professional roles, STC employees shall maintain the same behavioral standards online as are required in person. Therefore, the same policies, professional expectations and guidelines for interacting with students, parents, alumni, donors, media and other College constituents apply online as well.

The information contained in this document is not in any way an endorsement of personal use of social networking sites on work time or on work equipment. All use outlined here is intended for the interactions and participation on our STC sites and pages to enrich our student’s and other stakeholder’s online social network experience with STC. Unaccepted uses are strictly prohibited pursuant to the Information Technology Acceptable Use Policies.

Questions regarding the use of social media or this guideline should be referred to the Director of Marketing & Public Relations at (912)538-3157. Questions regarding the “Information Technology Acceptable Use Policies” should be referred to the Information Technology Department at (912)538-3149.

This policy will establish general guidelines regarding internal or external communication using social media. The absence or lack of explicit reference to a specific situation does not limit the application of this policy. Students and faculty should use appropriate professional judgment where no guideline exists. Consult the STC conduct code or the Marketing & Public Relations department for clarification if you are uncertain.
General Guidelines

Information published on social networking sites shall comply with all existing College policies, including but not limited to the College's Privacy Notice to Computer Users policy. This also applies to comments posted on other blogs, forums or social media and networking sites.

Respect Copyright and Fair Use:
When posting, be mindful of the copyright and intellectual property rights of others and of the College. Permission to use or reproduce copyrighted works is required unless the intended use is clearly permitted under the “fair use” exemption. This includes music, art, literary works, copyrighted photographs or texts, video clips, audiovisual works and audio recordings. Questions regarding fair use or the Copyright Guidelines can be directed to the STC Library at (912)538-3209.

Understand Your Personal Responsibility:
Staff and faculty are personally responsible for the content they publish on social media sites, blogs, other websites, wikis, forums, or any other form of user-generated content. What you publish online will be publicly accessible for an extended amount of time. Be mindful of what you post and protect your privacy and the privacy of others.

Content placed by administrators cannot promote individual opinions or causes that are not directly related to College purposes.

Correct Mistakes:
If you make a mistake, correct it. Be open and honest; admit you've made an error. If you can correct the original post, do so and be clear that you are making a correction. If you need to add an amended post, do so.

Be Respectful and Professional:
If you are respectful and professional, even while disagreeing with a person or post, you will achieve greater results. View comments or concepts you disagree with as an opportunity for candid and respectful dialogue.
Do No Harm:
Let your social networking activities do no harm to Southeastern Technical College or to yourself and others whether you are conducting College social networking activities or personal social networking activities.

Employees of Southeastern Technical College should remember that when they use social media platforms, these platforms are immediate, permanent, and accessed by students, co-workers, and the community. Accordingly, they should give the ramifications of anything they publish due consideration, regardless of whether it is personal or professional. Everything ultimately reflects on the College.

Maintain Confidentiality:
All Users are prohibited from posting confidential or proprietary information about STC, students, employees or alumni. All Users shall adhere to all applicable College privacy and confidentiality policies. Examples of confidential information include student ID numbers, home addresses, SSNs, and contact information. Proprietary information includes quotation of copyrighted materials without proper citation or attribution, etc.

Like all educational institutions, Southeastern Technical College is bound by the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act, and as such, we require permission from our students before publishing content about them. Similarly, please be respectful of the privacy of colleagues and ensure you have their approval before publishing content about them.

Maintain Transparency:
The fine line between personal and professional activities on social media sites is blurred easily. Be conscientious about what you post and how you portray yourself. Be honest about who you are and what you represent. In personal posts, employees are strongly advised against identifying themselves as a STC employee. However, if an employee does identify him/herself as a College employee, the employee must be clear that the post is of a personal nature and does not represent the views of Southeastern Technical College.
**Be Involved and Use Etiquette:**
If you participate in social networking sites, follow etiquette and contribute constructive content. Social media sites are not the place for domineering conversations, self-promotion, or spam postings. These types of behaviors are not tolerated and can result in your being banned from the sites where you use this behavior.

**Be Mindful; Think Before You Submit Content:**
There is no expectation of privacy on any social networking sites. Search engines can index and display posts, content, remarks, and pages any time after they have been published. There are archiving services that cache sites even if they have been taken down and replaced or updated. If you are having a heated reaction to content, take a moment to compose yourself in a respectful and professional way before you respond or act. Post only information, photos, images, and other user-generated content that you are comfortable being completely public and archived by third-party sites or services.
Social Media Guidelines When Posting as an Individual

Prohibited Use of STC Logos or Making Endorsements:
All staff, faculty, and employees are prohibited from using College logos, trademarks, or images on personal sites. Do not use STC’s name or likeness to endorse products, causes, or political actions of any kind. Questions regarding proper use of STC logos and associated materials should be directed to the STC Marketing & Public Relations Department. The only acceptable use of STC logos or making endorsements is when it is related to or sharing official STC information.

Use A Disclaimer:
If you post content to any social networking site outside of STC that has to do with the College, its staff, or your work, use a disclaimer such as: “This post contains my own personal opinions and does not represent Southeastern Technical College’s opinions, views, or positions.”

Don’t Use Pseudonyms:
Do not pretend to be someone else or use fake names. Tracking tools enable supposed anonymous comments and posts to be tracked back to their origin.

Protect Your Identity:
While you should maintain transparency and honesty in your social networking interaction, be careful to not reveal confidential information about yourself that could be used to steal your identity. Never post your home addresses, home phone numbers, where your children go to school, or other information of a sensitive nature on social network sites.

Does It Pass the Publicity Test?
If the content you wish to post would not be appropriate for a face-to-face or telephone conversation, it is also not appropriate for social networking sites. If you would not be comfortable reading about your actions, comments, or content in the local paper or defending them in an interview, then do not post that content.
Be Respectful:
Use the same behavior that is expected of you while on campus. Don’t use insults, slurs, obscenity, or inflammatory language at any time.
Social Media Guidelines When Posting On Behalf of Southeastern Technical College

Social Media Site Approval:
No one shall launch a social media account on behalf of a College department, student club or organization, or any other officially-sanctioned STC entity or activity without first obtaining approval from the Marketing & Public Relations Department. Administrators of sites created prior to this document will be provided with a copy for use and reference and must ensure the site complies with all policies and laws now and moving forward. Only authorized individuals may send or post messages on social networking sites on behalf of STC.

Acceptable Use & Monitoring:
All STC policies, including those related to harassment, discrimination, respect for diversity, retaliation, workplace violence, ethics, and conflicts of interest apply to all Users’ postings and social media content.

STC reserves the right to monitor employee use of social media. As set forth in the Information Technology Acceptable Use Policies, employees may be disciplined for violating the confidentiality of STC, of fellow employees, posting harassing or defamatory content or other infractions of STC’s normal workplace standards of conduct. This applies to postings and blogging occurring at any time.

Terms of Service:
Obey the Terms of Service of any social media platform used.

Use of Photographs:
All photographs to be used as official College posts shall be obtained from the College’s Marketing & Public Relations Department.

Photographs posted on social media sites can be easily copied by visitors. Whenever possible, post images at 72 dpi and approximately 800x600 resolution to protect your intellectual property. Images at that size are sufficient for viewing on the Web, but are not suitable for printing.
For personal social media activities, STC employees are reminded that they should be respectful of co-workers, students, management, and other Colleges and universities. It is recommended that you obtain authorization from individuals or Colleges and universities prior to posting their picture, using their trademark, or identifying them by their name.

**Monitoring Sites:**
Social media demands a high level of responsiveness. Administrators are not required to be available 24/7, but are expected to monitor their sites and respond as necessary on a daily basis.

**Social Media Comments:**
STC encourages interaction from social media users, but is not responsible for comments or postings made by visitors.

STC reserves the right and will remove content and/or comments that are not related to official College business and consistent with the College’s mission. We also do not permit messages selling products or promoting commercial or other private for-profit ventures.

STC asks that employees making comments on STC pages show respect for other users by ensuring the discussion remains civil. Employee comments and content are also subject to the site’s terms of use and code of conduct.

Negative comments can be handled with a careful response. Always try to:
- Provide a polite and friendly answer to the question/criticism
- Direct him/her to a source of information/assistance, or offer to assist if you can
- Remember that a negative comment is an opportunity to showcase STC
Guidelines for Use of Facebook on Behalf of Southeastern Technical College

Facebook is referenced as an example. These guidelines apply, however, to all social media sites.

STC’s Official Facebook page:
The Marketing and Public Relations Department and VP of Student Affairs are administrators for the College’s official page on Facebook. Those who wish to contribute information to the STC Facebook page as an official message from the College should email Krysta Rushing at krushing@southeasterntech.edu.

Fans of the page, including students, representative of student clubs, faculty and staff, are also encouraged to post comments and announcements.

Creating and Managing a Facebook Page
Anyone who wishes to create a Facebook page or group for a College-affiliated department, program, club or organization, must first meet with Krysta Rushing, Director of Public Relations for guidance about requirements outlined in this document. Krysta can be contacted at (912)538-3157 or krushing@southeasterntech.edu.

Pages or groups created by a department or organization on behalf of the College must be created by authorized representatives of the College. The department’s initial page creator must include Krysta Rushing as a page administrator. While the PR director does not intend to actively maintain or monitor these sites, this designation will enable the Marketing and Public Relations Department to properly track College Facebook pages and respond quickly in the event of a problem, such as the unavailability or departure of the staff member who has administrative control of the page.

At present, Facebook page creators have super-administrator rights over the pages they create, however these rights can be transferred to additional administrators if needed though the submittal of a help ticket to Facebook.
To comply with Facebook terms of service and enable the College to track authorized College pages, any department or organization wishing to create a page or group must provide the Marketing & Public Relations Department with the name and contact information for the individual(s) who will be authorized by the department to administer the page on an ongoing basis.

All content published by the College must be accurate and consistent. As such, information distributed by social media must match the information distributed through Southeastern Technical College’s print materials and website.

**Account Security:**
The department’s authorized page administrator(s) must maintain the security of his/her Facebook password and is fully responsible for all use of and any actions that take place using his/her account, including those that result from the failure to protect his/her user ID against unauthorized use. Any changes in the designated page administrator(s) must be promptly communicated to the Marketing & Public Relations Department. Departments may not register for more than one User account, or register for a User account on behalf of another individual, group, or entity.

**Graphics:**
Facebook pages should feature the department, program or organization’s official image or identifying mark, if one exists. Departments and programs are encouraged to use photography to display campus beauty. All photos shall be obtained from the Marketing and Public Relations Department. Users can submit images for approval that then become part of the library for any authorized site creator/administrator to draw from.

**Collecting User Information:**
Facebook may not be used to collect personal information of users. Facebook terms and conditions, as well as state and federal law, impose significant requirements and restrictions on the collection of personal information of users. In the case of minors, significant additional penalties can apply to violations.
**Facebook Site Monitoring:**

STC Facebook pages and groups must be monitored and updated on an ongoing basis by the department or units that create them to enable rapid response to any problems that may arise and to ensure an engaging, interesting environment for visitors. Minimally, pages should be reviewed on a daily basis, and ideally, they should be checked morning and afternoon. A stale or outdated page can be more damaging to the image of an entity than not having a page at all.

Every July, each STC related social media account will be revisited to make sure all information is up-to-date and will be determined if the account should remain active or not.

**YouTube**

YouTube is a popular way to reach large audiences with videos. Southeastern Technical College strongly discourages individual departments from setting up their own YouTube channels. We instead encourage departments to use the official Southeastern Technical College YouTube channel ([http://www.youtube.com/user/SoutheasternTechColl](http://www.youtube.com/user/SoutheasternTechColl)). The benefit to the departments is accessing a much larger audience than they would on their own channel, and the benefit to the viewer is they are then linked in with all of the content STC has to offer on YouTube. If you have any videos you would like to be added to the STC channel, please send them to Krysta Rushing at krushing@southeasterntech.edu.
Social Media Best Practices

- Share information only appropriate for the public. Keep in mind that content posted may be distributed through the Internet and other media channels and may be viewed by the general public. If deleted or modified, older versions may continue to exist online.

- Content that promotes or depicts illegal activity, is threatening or harassing, includes obscenities, or defames a person is prohibited. In addition, the College’s social media should not be used for political or commercial purposes.

- Strive for accuracy: Get the facts straight before posting them on social media. Review content for grammatical and spelling errors. This is especially important when posting on behalf of the College.

- Be respectful: Understand that content contributed to a social media site could encourage comments or discussions of opposing ideas. Responses should be considered carefully in light of how they would reflect on the poster and/or the College.

- Remember your audience: Be aware that a presence in the social media world is or easily can be made available to the public at large through the Internet. This includes prospective students, current students, current employers and colleagues, and peers. Consider this before publishing to ensure the post will not alienate, harm, or provoke any of these groups.

- Employees are reminded to use discretion when using social networking media. If unsure about how policy or guidelines apply to your posting or social media site, employees are encouraged to consult with their supervisor before taking action whenever possible.

Resources

In developing the College’s social media policy and guidelines, the Office of Marketing and Public Relations drew upon a variety of excellent resources, including those made available through Mount Wachusett Community College, Greenville Technical College, Guilford Technical College, Grand Rapids Community College, Bluegrass Community and Technical College, and Vanderbilt University.
Social Media Toolkit

Are you interested in having a social media presence on behalf of Southeastern Technical College? Read through the following information and then fill out an application form.

The tools and resources on these pages are intended to help you begin and maintain a social media presence. But before you jump in, think about these questions:

**Who are you trying to engage?**
Did you know most folks under the age of 25 do not use Twitter? Or that in the U.S., there are approximately six million more females than males on Facebook? Figuring out who you want to have conversation with will help determine which platforms are best for you.

**What would you like to accomplish?**
If you simply want to promote an event or send out news about your department, a community on STC’s Portal might be a better choice for you. Facebook and Twitter require daily maintenance and a desire to engage with others. Of course you may always send news and announcements to the social media team and we will gladly post appropriate messages on the current Southeastern Technical College’s website, Twitter and Facebook accounts.

**What is your message?**
This is a trick question. Social Media is all about connecting, not pushing a message. To be a good participant, you must first be a good listener. Your online community will tell you what they want to hear from you.

**Do you have what it takes?**
To be successful at social media takes not only time and some strategy, but it often takes an outgoing personality. If you've been described as a people person or friendly, you may have what it takes. Or you may be a connector — someone who enjoys making connections and providing helpful information. In any case, you'll need to have some personal or professional experience with social media before hosting an account on behalf of STC.
Apply for an account
Read the terms, fill out the application form, and submit to Krysta Rushing. You will then be contacted by the Marketing & Public Relations Department to review your application.

Southeastern Technical College
Social Media Content Owner / Moderator Terms and Agreement

1. Each Content Owner/Moderator is familiar with, and agrees to comply with Southeastern Technical College’s Social Media Policies and the guidelines listed in the Southeastern Technical College Content Owner/Moderator Terms and Agreement Form.

2. To prevent stagnant conversation, social media content is refreshed at least weekly.

3. To utilize social media efficiently, all social media platforms should have a specific purpose and topics should be relevant to the mission of STC.

4. All comments are moderated. Comments that are obscene, defamatory, profane, libelous, threatening, harassing, abusive, hateful or embarrassing to another person or any other person or entity are not approved. Owner/Moderator agrees to take all reasonably possible steps to prevent and eliminate non-approved comments and understand that it may be necessary to discontinue the use of the social media if such comments cannot be eliminated or prevented.

5. Any threats to harm a person or one’s self are immediately addressed by notifying the STC Security Personnel.

6. The Social Media Participation Guidelines are posted or linked to on all external STC social media sites.
Application Form
Fill out a separate form for each platform you are requesting.

☐ I agree to the terms listed above.

Content Owner Name: ____________________________________________

Department/Organization: ____________________________________________

Which social media site are you requesting?
☐ Facebook
☐ Twitter
☐ Other ____________________________

Please describe your experience, personal or professional, with the social media site you are requesting: ____________________________
___________________________
___________________________

Who would you like to engage? Choose one primary group.
☐ General Public
☐ Current Students
☐ Prospective Students
☐ Donors
☐ Internal Faculty/Staff
☐ Other ____________________________

Why did you choose social media?
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
Will someone other than the Content Owner moderate the page? If so, who?
________________________________________________________________________

How much time are you planning to spend maintaining the social media site?
________________________________________________________________________

Give some examples of content you plan to share. ___________________________
________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

_________________________  __________________________
Signature of Content Owner       Date
Participation Guidelines

Be sure to link to these guidelines on the info or bio area of the social media site you are using.

Thank you for participating with Southeastern Technical College in social networking communities such as Twitter, YouTube and Facebook.

We ask that you treat others with respect, even if disagreements occur. Please do not post material that could be considered an infringement on the rights of others. STC reserves the right to delete postings, or block users, that it deems to be slanderous, obscene, soliciting, or threatening.

Remember that these are public forums and whatever information you share will be viewed by others. Consider this carefully before posting detailed personal information. STC has no control over the policies and practices of these third party sites. Once you leave www.southeasterntech.edu, or any of its related sites you are subject to the policies of those sites.

The information provided by Southeastern Technical College on these social media sites is intended for informative educational purposes only.

If you are an employee of STC, please remember that all laws and STC policies apply, including but not limited to FERPA, Information Technology Acceptable Use Policies, Security and Safety. We suggest that you take time to review these policies. Please consult your supervisor if you have questions about the appropriateness of your comment.

By participating with STC in social networking communities, you agree to indemnify STC against any damages, losses, liabilities, judgments, costs or expenses arising out of a claim by a third party relating to any posts you have made.