

# Social Media Guidelines and Policies

St. John's College

## General Guidelines and Purposes

With these guidelines, St. John's College aims to foster the growth of virtual communities, protect the reputation of the college and its community members, and provide for the cooperation of those who create and administer social media pages on the college's behalf.

The St. John's College website remains the college's official online identity, and the college community's efforts in social media are not intended to replace or rival this vehicle for communication. Rather, social media pages should serve as a less formal augmentation to the communication and community-building efforts of the college.

Purposes of college social media pages:

For the college as a whole:

- To foster the development of social, professional, and learning communities within the existing network of the greater college community
- To support recruiting, retention, and alumni relations
- To enhance the reputation of the college
- To build institutional loyalty and pride
- To stimulate involvement with the college by the sharing of information on news and events
- To draw friends of the college more closely into the community

For Admissions:

- To promote community development among admitted students
- To reach out to prospective students

For Student Groups/Activities:

- To communicate with and recruit members (for events, meetings, pictures, etc.)
- To foster conversation and friendship between members

For Alumni Relations and Reunion Organizers:

- To share information, develop relationships, and facilitate attendance

## **Violation of College Policy**

Activity on social media found to violate the Rules of the College Community, as outlined in the Student Handbook, will be handled accordingly. These policies cover such topics as civility, responsibility, citizenship, discrimination and harassment, as well as the possible penalties of infractions.

## **Privacy on Social Media Sites**

While the use of social media networks can give the user a sense of personal privacy, it is important to remember that none of these sites can offer complete protection of private information. St. John's College therefore strongly urges users of social media within its community to be duly cautious about the type of information that they provide on these sites, and to familiarize themselves with the limitations and capabilities of the privacy settings of the social media sites they use. Information that puts oneself or another community member in danger, or confidential information about the college or its community members, should never be posted on these sites.

The college recognizes that the interactive and public nature of social media mean that the college has limited control over the content that is posted on its affiliated pages. The college does not take responsibility for content posted by users who are not official representatives of the college. Pages that are officially affiliated with the college should include a disclaimer to this effect.

## **Posting Photos and Videos**

Photo and video material posted on social media networks are subject to privacy and copyright laws as in other public media. Such information should never be considered fully private when being posted online, and care should be taken to make sure that it is appropriate for public display. Community members using these sites should use utmost discretion in choosing photo and video materials for their social media pages.

Items of concern:

- *Photos/videos of children* – Photos of children should be avoided and personally identifiable shots should not be posted without written permission from the child's parents
- *Photos/videos of those who might object* – This includes photos of people who have expressed that they do not wish to have their photo posted, and specific photos that reflect negatively on a person to which that individual might object
- *Potentially offensive or inappropriate photos/videos* – photos/videos portraying controlled substances, nudity, obscenity, medical patients, graphic scenes, etc.

- *Professional photos/videos* – Proper credit and treatment must be given with regard to photos/videos in cases where the copyright is not owned by the person posting them

## **Copyright**

St. John's College encourages all community members, and expects administrators of officially affiliated web pages to be aware of copyright law as it applies to intellectual property on the internet. All community members should be careful to abide by these laws. A news resource for best practices and changes in the law can be found at <http://www.centerforsocialmedia.org/fair-use/best-practices>.

## **Use of the St. John's College Name and Logo**

Groups that choose to use the St. John's College name in relation to their activity on social media networks should be aware that their actions and representations reflect on the reputations of the college as an organization and its individual members. Use of the St. John's College logo and seal should be reserved for officially affiliated pages only. Officially affiliated administrators who wish to obtain permission to use the logo and seal should seek clearance from one of the communications directors before proceeding.

## **Administration and Updates**

The administration of social media pages that are officially affiliated with the college should be done under the general oversight of the communications offices. It is expected on official sites, and recommended for unofficial sites, that the communications office be notified before the page becomes public, and that someone in one of the communications offices be given administrator privileges on the page.

In the interest of professionalism and reputation, administrators on social media pages should strive to keep content updated, fresh, and relevant. Pages should have a lead administrator as well as additional supporting administrators to allow for good moderation at all times.

## **Content and Management**

- Content posted on officially affiliated social media accounts should be overseen by communications directors and/or their appointed supervisors. Offices are encouraged to submit potential content to the respective communications offices.

- Each communications office or appointed official administrator should check the various social media sites daily to monitor commentary
- Profanity and hostile commentary is not allowed and should be removed if found. Disclaimer statement from the college website and adapted for each social media forum should be available somewhere on each site.

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