Social Media Policy

(Original 2/2012, rev. 12/17/2019)

Purpose:

SUNY Cortland encourages the appropriate use of social media as a method for communicating ideas and information and as part of the College's educational mission.

This policy is applicable to all College employees, including student assistants, specifically the behavior of individuals as they utilize a variety of social media technologies, and is not limited to any specific media format.

Social Media Defined:

For the purpose of this policy, social media is defined as web-based and mobile technologies that enable the exchange of user-generated content and conversation.

Policy:

I. College-Related Social Media:
    Official SUNY Cortland social media may allow members of the public to comment or react to posted content and information. Individuals, including College employees acting in their personal capacity, may post or comment anonymously or identifiably.

    In general, SUNY Cortland invites discussion of important ideas and issues through social media. However, SUNY Cortland reserves the right to remove posts of comments that are obscene, defamatory, offensive, abusive, contain threats of violence, spam or advertising, or are unrelated to the original content or information posted. SUNY Cortland also reserves the right to remove posts of comments that violate applicable laws including, but not limited to, copyright and trademark, or those that violate the use policies promulgated by the applicable social media provider.
    a. If authorized and in keeping with SUNY Cortland policy, College departments may use social media to promote the educational mission of the College. Uses may include recruitment of new students, communications with accepted and registered students, fundraising and alumni relations.
    b. Departments may use the College's name, address, telephone numbers and logo for social networking purposes.
    c. Departments must identify an individual faculty/staff member who will be responsible for the maintenance of social media sites.
    d. Social media accounts representing the College must adhere to the Social Media Best Practices guidelines.
    e. In any use of social media, College departments, including all faculty/staff of such departments, shall not violate any laws and/or College policies including, but not limited to those regarding:
        i.   Inappropriate language
        ii. Inappropriate pictures of any sort or kind
        iii. Posting or promoting illegal activity or proof of illegal activity
        iv. Harassing or discriminating against any person

- v. Posting defaming comments or remarks against any person
- vi. Copyright and trademark
- vii. Posting any personal opinions of any sort or kind regarding the College without a disclaimer that such opinions are not the official position of the College and/or
- viii. Posting unprofessional or rude comments, responses or postings of any sort or kind about the College or its employees

II. Procedures for Creating College-Related Social Media:

To post on behalf of a College office or department:
1. Register your site with the Marketing Office by completing the [Social Media Registration Form](). Existing accounts should also complete the registration form so the Marketing Office can maintain a directory of College-represented social media pages.
2. Have a backup administrator in case of emergency or employee turnover. SUNY Cortland's assistant director of web and digital marketing, in the Marketing Office, can be given administrative rights to your social media content if another backup administrator is unavailable.
3. Have a plan. Develop a strategy for keeping information on social media sites up to date and interesting.
4. Protect the institutional voice. Posts on social media sites should protect the College's institutional voice by remaining professional in tone and in good taste.

III. Personal Social Media (using campus resources):
- a. Any use of or access to personal social media done during business hours on College computing and networking resources shall be consistent with the College's Information Technology Resources Acceptable Use Policy, including personal incidental use.
- b. In any personal use of social media, the use of any College logos, trademarks, letterhead, pictures, address and/or telephone numbers is strictly prohibited.
- c. Do not use the College's name to promote or endorse any product, cause or political party or candidate.
- d. The official College website or College-sanctioned social media sites, College-wide or departmental, shall not include links to personal sites.
- e. College-issued email addresses should not be used for personal social media use.
- f. There is no right or expectation of privacy in the personal use of the College's computing and networking resources.
- g. By using the College's computing and networking resources, the faculty/staff member is consenting to monitoring of the use by the College without further notice to the faculty/staff member.
- h. In any personal use of social media, the user shall not violate any laws and/or College policies, including but not limited to those regarding:
  - i. Inappropriate language
  - ii. Inappropriate pictures of any sort or kind
  - iii. Posting or promoting illegal activity or proof of illegal activity
  - iv. Harassing or discriminating against any person
  - v. Posting defaming comments or remarks against any person
  - vi. Copyright and trademark
  - vii. Posting any personal opinions of any sort or kind regarding the College without a disclaimer that such opinions are not the official position of the College and/or
  - viii. Posting unprofessional or rude comments, responses or comments of any sort or kind about the College or its employees

      ix.   Posting material or content that creates a material conflict of interest related to the College's business interests and educational purpose e.g. posting material that is offensive or harmful to the public image of the College.

IV. Personal Use of Social Media (using personal resources):
   a.   While faculty/staff may identify themselves as an employee of the College, they should be clear that they are not representing the views of the College.
   b.   The use of any College logos, trademarks, letterhead, pictures, address and/or telephone numbers is strictly prohibited.
   c.   The College's name should not be used to promote or endorse any product, cause or political party or candidate.
   d.   The official College website or College-sanctioned social media sites, College-wide or departmental, shall not include links to personal sites.
   e.   College-issued email addresses should not be used for personal social media.
   f.   If it is generally accessible, employers can look at social media sites.
   g.   Individuals can be held liable for what they write online. They have been held liable for commentary deemed to be proprietary, copyrighted, defamatory, libelous or obscene (as defined by the courts).
   h.   Employees can be disciplined for posting material or content that creates a material conflict of interest related to the College's business interests and educational purpose e.g. posting content or images that are defamatory, pornographic, harassing, libelous or are otherwise in violation of the law, or that are harmful to the public image of the College,
   i.   Guidance:
      i.   Be responsible
      ii.   Be authentic, factual, respectful
      iii.   Be careful
      iv.   Avoid engaging in online disputes
      v.   Add value
      vi.   Be explicit that your views are your own
      vii.   Keep work out of it
      viii.   Be cautious when engaging students through social media
      ix.   Remember — the internet is permanent; do not write anything you wouldn't want to have attached to your name forever.

V. Sanctions
   a.   Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action in accordance with appropriate Agreements between the State of New York and the various bargaining units.