

SOCIAL MEDIA BEST PRACTICES Addendum to Policy T123 Social Media Use & Guidelines

- **Think twice – or more – before posting.** Privacy does not exist in the world of social media. Consider what could happen if a post becomes widely known and how that may reflect both on the subject of the post and Vermont Tech. Search engines can turn up posts years after they've been created, and comments can be forwarded or copied. If you are unsure about posting something or responding to a comment, contact the Marketing Department.
- **Be consistent.** It's more important to keep to a regular posting schedule than have weeks of high post counts followed by weeks of dormancy. Identify a realistic schedule and stick close to it. This might be 10-12 Facebook posts a week, or less, like 3-4. Stay consistent either way. It brings the highest engagement.
 - Check all social-media sites daily for comments that require feedback. This also allows you to monitor for spam comments and to block any individuals who repeatedly post offensive comments.
- **Take time with crafting content.** Review content for grammatical and spelling errors. Because many sites don't have automatic spell check, put the post in a Word document or Grammarly to check for grammar/spelling errors before posting. Avoid overusing abbreviations, emojis, or hashtags. Your message should be easy to read.
- **Be respectful.** Some online communities can be volatile, tempting users to behave in ways they otherwise wouldn't. Your reputation, and the College's reputation, are best served when you remain above this behavior.
- **Review your tags.** Facebook and other apps allow tagging of organizations so be aware that anyone may tag your account in a picture or a status update. Review tags often to ensure your account has not been tagged in anything inappropriate.
- **Remove only inappropriate or offensive comments.** In most cases, negative comments should not be removed; they should be responded to professionally. If someone has a problem and posts about it on a platform, find a solution for that user and post the solution publicly so that those who are part of our online community will feel they can come to us with questions and issues.
- **Be a valued member.** If you comment on social media, make sure you're contributing valuable insights rather than just promoting yourself or the College.
- **Use good photography and videos.** Posts that include photos and videos usually generate the most engagement. Make sure your photo or video is both relevant to the post and high quality. Blurry or dark photos and jarring videos should not be used. People should be dressed appropriately – they should be dressed as would be appropriate for attending class. Don't use filters or edit the images to be unflattering to the subject(s). Identify the platform you plan to post a video to ensure it meets the requirements. For instance, Instagram stories takes 1080X1920 video, while Instagram posts takes 1080x1080 and Instagram TV takes 1080X1920 and 1920X1080. Knowing what dimensions ahead of time makes posting a lot easier. Give credit to the photographer and videographer where needed.

- **Avoid streaming videos.** Because of the risk involved in streaming live videos, the College requires that you contact the Marketing Department before streaming live video (services such as Youtube, Facebook, Instagram, etc). Consider capturing the action in a standard video. Then review what you've shot and edit it as needed before posting.
- **Support emergency communications.** During a campus emergency, you may retweet or share posts from the official, main College social media accounts. *Please refrain from speculating or giving an opinion about the situation, however.*
- **Have multiple administrators.** For continuity purposes, the College recommends (and practices with its accounts) having multiple members trained and provided access as administrators for a given account.
- **Link back to college resources.** Wherever possible and when it makes logical sense, link back to the college's website and resources to support your social media posts.