
TITLE: **Social Media Procedure and Guidelines**
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Social Media Procedure and Guidelines

The purpose of Whatcom Community College's (WCC) official social media platforms is to provide students, stakeholders, followers, and visitors with information about WCC programs, student groups, and events.

Engagement through social media platforms allows WCC to create a sense of community and belonging, increase campus connection, and share out resources that foster student success.

To ensure that all social media platforms associated with WCC are aligned with WCC's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion within our community, the following procedure has been implemented.

This procedure includes guidelines and processes for creating social media accounts associated with WCC.

Section 1: Social Media Guidelines

- **Moderate Comments:** WCC values the active participation of our students, fans, followers, and friends in fostering dialogue on our social media channels. However, user comments and posts on WCC social media platforms reflect the views of the authors and may not necessarily align with WCC's official stance.

To encourage constructive interactions, WCC reserves the right to monitor discussions and may remove comments, posts, and/or replies that:

- Constitute discriminatory harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, status, or age.
 - Share private or sensitive information including, but not limited to, email addresses, phone numbers, mailing addresses, or personal identification numbers.
 - Share political statements, including comments and/or posts that endorse or oppose political candidates, political parties, or ballot measures.
 - Are off topic and not relevant, including, but not limited to, spam and product/service promotion.
 - Make fun of or disparage a student, employees, or community members.
 - Disseminate false information or impersonate someone else.
 - Contain obscenities.
 - Exhibit threatening or abusive behavior. Should you come across threatening comments, please contact WCC's Public Information Officer, at 360-383-3312. All life safety threats should be reported immediately to 911.
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- **Protect confidential and proprietary information.** Do not post confidential or proprietary information about Whatcom Community College, students, employees, or alumni. Employees must follow the applicable federal requirements such as FERPA and HIPAA, as well as NWAC regulations. Adhere to all applicable college privacy and confidentiality policies. Employees who share confidential information do so at the risk of disciplinary action or termination.

- Respect copyright and fair use. When posting, be mindful of copyright and intellectual property rights of others and of the College. For guidance or questions about fair use or copyrighted material, contact the Public Information Office at 360.383.3312.
- Do not post photos of staff or students without a signed photo release form. Posting photos of staff or students requires a signed photo release form. For minor students, parental or guardian consent is necessary. These forms are available on the staff intranet and the public website.
- Do not use Whatcom Community College logos for endorsements. Do not use any version of the WCC logos or any other college images or iconography on personal social media sites. Do not use the College's name to promote a product, cause, or political party/candidate.
- Comply with the terms of service. Understand and follow the Terms of Service of any social media platform you choose to utilize.

Section 2: Social Media Account Processes

- Have a plan. Departments should consider their messages, audiences, and goals through the development of a social media strategy. This strategy should also identify how the content will be kept up-to-date, current, and relevant. The Public Information Office can assist and advise you with your social media planning.
- Choose your platforms wisely. Refrain from using potentially damaging or politically charged social media platforms, for example Twitter and TikTok.
- Notify the College's Public Information Office. Divisions, departments, or other college units that have a social media page/site or would like to start one must contact the Public Information Officer at 360.383.3312. This promotes consistency between all institutional social media sites and coordination with other WCC sites and their content.
- Add the College's Public Information Officer as an administrator to all social media pages/sites. The College must retain institutional access. After notifying the Public Information Officer of your department's or unit's site, add the PIO as an administrator to the page using the pio@whatcom.edu email address. If you need assistance with this process, please email pio@whatcom.edu.
- Use a profile image that has been approved by the Public Information Office. Work with the Public Information Office to ensure the profile image used on your page or site is a good representation of not only your department or work unit, but of the College as a whole.
- Use the appropriate email address. Use your work email address for institutional social media sites only. Do not use your work email address to set up a personal social media site. Doing so makes the site property of the

state.

- Take responsibility for your social media page. All institutional pages must have a full-time appointed employee who is identified as being responsible for content. Ideally, this should be the unit head or department leader.
- Link back to the College. Whenever possible, link back to the official Whatcom Community College website. Ideally, posts should be very brief, redirecting a visitor to content that resides within the WCC web environment. When linking to news articles about Whatcom, check first to see whether a news release is available on the Whatcom Community College “NEWS” section of the public website (www.whatcom.edu/news) instead of linking to an external publication or other media outlet.
- Delete inactive social media accounts: Avoid keeping inactive social media accounts associated with Whatcom Community College. If you have created a social media account using the college’s name or branding, but are not actively posting to it, contact the Public Information Officer at 360.383.3312.