



Social Media Procedures and Guidelines

November, 2015

Social media, in particular Facebook, allows instructors and staff to engage and interact, in a relatable and dynamic way, with a wide variety of audiences, including students, alumni, potential students, and industry partners. When employing these recommendations and guidelines, a program may find success in increasing the visibility of the program, building enrollment, and engaging with community and industry partners.

The goal of the recommendations below is to help employees who are interested in effectively using social media to share their news and broadcast information.

Procedures

Bates Technical College officially uses Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Vimeo for social media communications; however, this document also includes, but is not limited to, other social media sites, such as LinkedIn, Tumblr, Flickr, YouTube and others.

If you wish to create your own social media channel, please obtain supervisor approval and submit your request and justification (via email is acceptable) to the communications and marketing department. Upon approval, the department can create the profile page for you, or you may create it yourself. Either way, you must name the department as an additional administrator of the page or chosen social media tool.

Social media pages must use the following guidelines:

- Must be set up as a page, not a profile
- Name must reflect that it's a Bates Technical College program (i.e. Bates Technical College Carpentry)
- Must add clindquist@bates.ctc.edu or communications@bates.ctc.edu as admin to the page
- The communications and marketing department will not manage or create content for your page, and you must accept responsibility for monitoring and maintaining the page, including responding to visitor posts.
- The communications and marketing department reserves the right to remove or deactivate any page that has not been posted to in the last six months.
- If the college logo is to be used, it must be approved by the communications and marketing department. No portion of the logo may be altered; colors and fonts must remain as in original file. If requested, the communications and marketing department can create a personalized profile photo and/or cover photo.

Maintain Confidentiality

- Do not post confidential or proprietary information about Bates Technical College, its students, its alumni or your fellow employees.
- Use good ethical judgment and follow college policies and federal requirements, such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996 and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- Be aware that what you post on college-supported social media sites (and on college email) is considered public information and can be disclosed to the media or general public if requested through a public records request.

Maintain Privacy

- Always get permission from a named or pictured individual before posting it on a social media site. As a guideline, do not post anything that you would not present in a public forum.

Use good judgment

- Be mindful that what you publish will be public for a long time—protect your privacy.
- You are responsible for what you post on your own site and on the sites of others. Be sure that what you post today will not come back to haunt you.
- The line between professional and personal business can get blurred: Be thoughtful about the content you are postings and potential audiences.

Best Practices

The best practices below are intended to help you be comfortable with managing your social media site.

- **Create a proper Facebook page.**
 - <https://www.facebook.com/pages/create/> (<http://www.jonloomer.com/2012/08/24/convert-facebook-profile-to-business-page/>)
 - Benefits of a business page vs. personal profile page:
 - Access to Facebook Insights, measure your reach/success
 - Profiles are limited to 5,000 friends, so your growth will eventually be hindered.
 - Bates' official FB page cannot interact with your profile, thus reducing your profile's reach.
 - Profiles set up wrong are unprofessional. It screams, "I don't know what I'm doing," which is not the message Bates wants to send.
 - Access to advertising (if you have \$\$). You can promote posts, target people with relevant interests, and attract new fans/students/partners!
 - Ability to assign Administrator roles to your friendly communications staff. 😊
 - CONTENT SCHEDULING! Now, you can schedule your posts to go out whenever you want. If you have a fantastic article to share, don't do it on low-interaction days like Monday-Tuesday, morning. Do it later in the week, or on Saturday, when people are not at work, and when users are more statistically likely to LIKE and SHARE and COMMENT.
 - Avoid having your profile page shut down by FB for violating user terms.
 - So many more benefits, so just do it!
- **Know your audience.**
 - Who do you want to engage with? If you start with a clear idea of who your audience is, your posts will do much better. Choose quality over quantity always!
 - Ask yourself:
 - Who is the audience I wish to engage?
 - What's my intended outcome?
 - **Do I have the time commitment and experience to manage a social media account?**
Facebook is a conversation and engagement tool. Please know that it takes a lot of time to curate a page and to be successful at it.
- **Produce quality and accurate content.**
 - Value added. People will like your page if you bring value. Ask yourself, what can I provide my followers with that they can't get anywhere else, or will have a hard time finding?
 - When you open a social media site as a Bates Technical College representative, you must be aware that you are a professional representing the college, and that there are real-world consequences for the things that you communicate online.

- Strive for accuracy. We're all human, and if you make a mistake, own it and correct it as quickly as possible.
- Think before you post. There's no such thing as privacy on social media, so be thoughtful about the articles, photos, etc. that you post.
- **Manage your site.**
 - Regularly monitor and update content. As a social media manager, you must make sure your content is timely and accurate.
 - Be aware that you should have sufficient content to engage with your community on a regular basis. Strive for consistent postings at least one or twice a week. Respond to posts.
 - Interact with other Bates-related pages (see a list at the end of this document) to promote Bates as a community.
 - Know social media etiquette and culture.
 - Constantly monitor your posts and comments, and delete posts that are abusive and hateful, that don't adhere to Bates user policies.
- **Create your "voice."**
 - Find an authentic and transparent social media personality.
 - Are you silly, clever, compassionate, inspirational?
 - Do you share more than articles? Like, campus tips, news about info sessions, student projects?
 - Engage with people! Your followers are on social media because it engages them. Keep the content fun, informative and interesting.
 - Avoid stiff, formal language and remember that people want to interact with you, not machines. Be authentic.
 - We can't say it enough: interact with people. That said, please make sure that before you begin this journey, you have adequate time to manage your social media.
- **Represent!**
 - You're part of Bates Technical College, so represent it! Use appropriate branding, colors and logo.
- **Collaborate and support other Bates-related social media sites.**
 - Collaboration is key to success. You should not do social media in a silo. Individuals can share best practices and learn from others, and content should be shared generously.

Bates social media sites:

- <https://www.facebook.com/BatesTechnicalCollege>
- <https://twitter.com/BatesTechnical>
- <http://instagram.com/batestechnical>
- *We also have flickr, WordPress, and YouTube sites.*

Need help? Contact Chelsea Lindquist, clindquist@bates.ctc.edu 253.680.7106.

Sources:

The best practices outlined above were compiled from numerous published sources. The following published sources are used throughout the proposed social media guidelines:

(General SPSCC Social Media Guidelines) (<http://www.jefferson.kctcs.edu/~media/Jefferson/Documents/Technology-Solutions/Social-Media-Policy--2013-v1.ashx>)