

BLINN COLLEGE ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS MANUAL

SUBJECT: *Social Media Guidelines*

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 31, 2015; amended June 30, 2021

BOARD POLICY REFERENCE: CRA

PURPOSE

The Blinn College District believes that a strong presence on social media allows faculty, staff, and student organizations to enrich their relationships with the public. To operate within social media effectively, the College District has developed guidelines to ensure that all interactions on behalf of the Blinn College District represent the College District's best interests. These guidelines are broad in nature to accommodate any differences in online venues while maintaining a universal code of conduct. These guidelines apply only to official Blinn College District social media accounts created to represent College District groups and do not apply to private individual accounts.

AUTHORITY

To be recognized as an official Blinn College District social media account, register the group by contacting the Assistant Director for Digital Marketing (contact information is available at <https://my.blinn.edu/marketing>). College District social media accounts should use Blinn College in the title. This helps users find the College District's social media pages and clearly identifies each community.

Blinn College District has the right to remove content that does not follow the College District's social media guidelines, including content it deems threatening, obscene, a violation of intellectual property rights or privacy laws, or otherwise injurious or illegal. All College District policies and procedures must be followed when representing the College District to the public.

OBJECTIVES

Before submitting a request for a social media presence, please consider the following questions:

Is a social media presence needed? The answer is not necessarily always yes. It is recommended that you not begin a social media effort unless you have the dedicated time and resources to maintain new content on a regular basis. New content is critical to thrive in social media communities, and it is recommended that you plan to spend at least two hours per week maintaining and monitoring the site and responding to questions and comments from the public. Content should be updated at least once a week (probably more often for Facebook and definitely more often for Twitter). If you are unlikely to generate enough content for weekly updates, it is recommended you send content to Marketing & Communications for posting on the College District's established social media sites.

Who will monitor the social media presence? All social media accounts officially recognized by the Blinn College District must have a College District employee serving as an administrator at all times. Should a College District employee responsible for administration of a Blinn College District social media account leave the College District or no longer wish to be an

account administrator, it is that employee's responsibility to designate another College District employee, who accepts the position, to be the account administrator prior to vacating that role. The Marketing and Communications Department should be notified when a new administrator is assigned.

Blinn College District social media administrators are responsible for all posted content. Account administrators are responsible for providing the Marketing & Communications Department a current password for all Blinn College District-recognized social media accounts for the sole purpose of removing inappropriate content. The Marketing & Communications Department will use such access judiciously and if necessary will immediately inform account administrators of the reasons behind any removed content.

Blinn College District-recognized social media accounts are required to link (i.e. “friend” or “follow”) to Blinn’s institutional account within the specific social media network once the account is approved and established. The College District’s institutional account can then repost appropriate messages to reach as larger audience.

What is the goal in creating a social media presence? Before creating new social media accounts, you should carefully consider your goal. Are you using the page to: reach out to new constituents; communicate with your current audience; or post updated information about your hours, programs, etc.? Having a clear goal before you create the page will ensure a consistent message throughout the open-ended lifespan of your presence.

CONTENT GUIDELINES

What should I Post? Social media is, by nature, interactive. You should expect and encourage feedback and discussion on your pages in all forms. Maintain a professional tone in all content and post only meaningful and respectful comments. Do not commit the College to any specific activity or course of action and do not write anything that could be construed as slanderous or offensive. While some sites such as Twitter limit the number of characters that can be included in a post, please use proper spelling, grammar and punctuation to reflect your affiliation with an institution of higher learning.

Can I Post This? Use good judgment about content and respect privacy laws. Do not include confidential information about the College District community. Do not post any content that is threatening, obscene, a violation of intellectual property rights or privacy laws, or is otherwise injurious or illegal.

Representation of your personal opinions as being endorsed by the College District or any of its constituents is strictly prohibited. You may not use the Blinn College District’s name to promote any opinion, product, cause or political candidate.

By posting content to any social media site, you agree that: you own or otherwise control all rights to that content, your use of the content is protected fair use and you will not knowingly provide misleading or false information.

When using or posting online material that includes direct or paraphrased quotes, thoughts, ideas, photos, or videos, always include citations. Provide a link to the original material if applicable.

Always abide by the social media site's rules. Fans of a Facebook page cannot be censored by administrators, and are only censored by the terms and conditions of [Facebook](#). Twitter's rules are available [here](#).

Official Blinn College District trademarks and/or photos: When creating account graphics, you should never use any Blinn College trademarks/photos or alter an existing Blinn College trademark/photo without the permission of the Marketing and Communications Department, as they are trademarked property of the Blinn College District.

Questions regarding these guidelines should be directed to the Assistant Director for Digital Marketing.