Holyoke Community College
Web and Social Media Guidelines

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Introduction

These guidelines were drafted to address the use by Holyoke Community College (HCC) and its employees of websites, blogs, Google sites, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other social networking sites and tools.

The Office of Marketing and Communications has a qualified, knowledgeable team that maintains, manages, and protects the HCC brand online and on social media. Per national college communications standards, you may not represent the college online (including creating a blog or website) without working with Marketing and Communications. We have extensive access to assets and tools such as the HCC photo archive, intensive design programs, stock photos, and more that we are excited to utilize to support your web or social media project. The department reserves the right to reject any proposal.

How can you contribute to the HCC online presence? There are many opportunities to collaborate and create with Marketing and Communications. Please don't hesitate to fill out the Project Request Form here:
https://forms.monday.com/forms/b3eed717d13611b356b604aac422473f?r=use1

General Requirements

Holyoke Community College reserves all rights to social media accounts, websites, blogs, and applications bearing the college name and/or marks and their content. This includes photo, audio, and video sharing sites; blogging and micro-blogging platforms; and wikis and social networking applications/sites including but not limited to Facebook, Google+, Twitter, YouTube, Vimeo, Flickr, Picasa, LinkedIn, FourSquare, Pinterest, WordPress, Tumblr, and Instagram. Accounts, sites, pages, and applications may only be created – and may only be removed – in cooperation with the college's Marketing and Communications department. Accounts are to be managed by authorized staff trained by a Marketing and Communications department member. Under special circumstances, with permission of the college's director of marketing and strategic communications, a student may be authorized to administer a page or post on behalf of the college for a specified term.

College staff members who manage or participate in blogs or social media accounts on behalf of HCC (including officially sanctioned student clubs and organizations) must be familiar with and adhere to applicable laws and college policies, including but not limited to those outlined in the HCC "Acceptable Use of Information Systems" and "Use of Copyrighted Material" college policies under The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA); social media sites' terms of use and codes of conduct; the Commonwealth's public employee conflict of interest laws; and the requirements and guidelines outlined in this document.

In summary, these documents address the responsibilities and obligations associated with access to computer systems and networks owned or operated by HCC, HCC and social media sites' communications standards; applicable local, state, and federal laws; ethics; privacy; and intellectual property rights.

Guide to Creating and Posting Content

Please remember that copyright claims could be asserted against the college if a department posted any content (such as text, image, or video) in which a third party claims a copyright. Further, posting inappropriate content could subject the college to embarrassment or legal action.

Before you post

Content should not be posted unless it is related to official college business and is consistent with the college mission. Share only information appropriate for the public. Remember that content posted may be redistributed through the Internet and other media channels and may be viewed by the general public. If deleted or modified, older versions may continue to exist online. Always review content carefully before you post.

Content that promotes or depicts illegal activity, threatens or harasses, includes obscenities, or defames a person is prohibited. Further, social media shall not be used for political or commercial purposes.

Do not include any personally identifiable information that can be used to locate someone offline. This includes anyone's personal photo, hobbies, identification numbers such as social security numbers or student IDs, addresses, or phone numbers (other than authorized business addresses or phone numbers).

Do not upload, post, transmit, share, store, or otherwise make publicly available any private information of any third party, including addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, Social

Security numbers, and/or credit card numbers. Student record information shall not be transmitted via Facebook or other social media. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protects the privacy of student education records. The college must have written permission from a student to release any information from their education record other than directory information as defined by HCC. To comply with FERPA, the college email system must be used when communicating an issue involving a specific student. For questions regarding FERPA, contact Allison Wrobel, Registrar, at 413.552.2242 or awrobel@hcc.edu

To avoid discrepancies and minimize the need for updating, social media shall not be used to post policy or detailed information, such as program admission criteria. Instead, users should be directed to the official college sources (electronic and print publications) for such information.

Use of college logo, marks, and images

Use of college marks, such as logos and graphics, must comply with the college's graphic identity, image use, and style guidelines from the Marketing and Communications department. Questions regarding the use of college marks should be directed to the Art Director, Harry Hill, at 413.552.2287 or hhill@hcc.edu

Use of copyrighted or proprietary materials

All faculty, staff, and students must adhere to the college's "Use of Copyrighted Materials" policy and respect the intellectual property of others, and use works owned or created by others only to the extent such use is permitted by law. The college must secure written permission prior to using/incorporating any copyrighted or proprietary materials. Permission to use or reproduce copyrighted works is required unless the intended use is clearly permitted under the doctrine of "fair use." This includes music, art, literary works, copyrighted photographs or texts, snippets of copyrighted video, audiovisual works and sound recordings, or information considered to be a trade secret by a college contractor. **This also includes any image taken from Google Image search results.** Questions regarding fair use and HCC "Use of Copyrighted Materials" policy can be directed to Narayan Sampath, the Vice President of Administration and Finance, at 413.552.2220 or nsampath@hcc.edu

Questions about the appropriateness of a post should be addressed to the Multimedia Specialist, Louis Burgos, at 413.552.2537 or lburgos@hcc.edu

Use of people's images

The Marketing and Communications department makes it a practice to obtain permission in the form of a model release from individuals whose readily identifiable images will be used to promote the college on the web and in publications. We encourage this practice among other college departments. Forms may be downloaded at http://hcc.edu/marcom.

Because there is no expectation of privacy, the Marketing and Communications department does not obtain model releases from those participating in and/or attending public and HCC events and activities, including but not limited to commencement, alumni events, open houses, information sessions, student activity period events, as well as other gatherings. Use of identifiable images of minors is prohibited without written permission from a parent or guardian.

Sharing content

A "share link" is a button and/or a text link appearing on a webpage that, upon being clicked by a user, enables the launch of a sharing mechanism through which users can share with others or post to their own member profile, links and content from that page. Using such links is permissible, and users should consult with the director of marketing and communications for details.

Social media: "comments" guidelines

Holyoke Community College encourages interaction with social media users but is not responsible for comments or posts made by visitors. Comments posted also do not in any way reflect the opinions or policies of the college.

HCC asks that people making comments on HCC pages show respect for other users by ensuring the discussion remains civil. This is especially true since sites such as Facebook allow individuals as young as age 13 to join. Comments and content are also subject to the site's Terms of Use and Code of Conduct.

HCC reserves the right but assumes no obligation to remove comments that are not related to official college business; are inconsistent with the college mission; are racist; sexist; abusive; profane; violent; obscene; spam; advocate illegal activity; contain falsehoods; are off-topic; or libel, incite, threaten or make personal attacks on HCC students, employees, guests or other individuals.

The college reserves the right to block and ban users as appropriate. Messages selling products or promoting commercial or other ventures are not permitted.

Administrators who delete a post or a comment should consider whether to send a message to the author explaining why the post was removed. Consider whether it is appropriate to post a remark stating in general terms what the post was and why you took it off. If you are criticized for infringing on users' right to free speech, acknowledge those posts, open the comment thread, and encourage comments. Generally, people understand and support page managers who practice fairness, transparency, and full disclosure.

Facebook encourages all users to "report" links and/or comments when they find abusive content.

Social media: negative comments

Negative comments can be challenging to deal with, particularly those that land beyond the border of respectful communication but far short of an offense grievous enough to warrant removal (see "Comments" section above). It takes restraint to deal with negative comments. In some cases, you can resolve a problem with a careful response. Always try to:

- Provide a polite and friendly answer to the question/criticism.
- Direct the commenter to a source of information/assistance or offer to assist if you can.
- Remember that a negative comment is an opportunity to showcase HCC.

Sometimes, no response may be the best response of all. If your attempts to resolve or assist are rebuffed and nothing productive can come of further interaction, let subsequent posts go without comment. Often, friends or fans will counterbalance the negative feedback with their responses. Other content managers and the HCC director of marketing and strategic communications can provide support and feedback if you struggle with negative comments.

Reporting problems

Facebook accepts complaints regarding abuse and other issues, for example harassing messages. This can be done via "Report" links below a piece of content or via the Facebook "help" page. X users should report abuse of X Rules and/or Terms of Service to https://x.com/en/tos. Using a college Facebook page, Twitter account, or blog should be reported immediately to the director of Marketing & Communications.

Personal/unofficial blogs and posts

If an HCC employee writes anything related to the business of HCC on personal pages, posts, or comments, s/he must identify her/his official title and affiliation with the college.

Employees will specify, in a manner that makes it clear to the average reader, whether posts/comments are their own opinions or official HCC statements. The manner of disclosure shall be that the employee is stating an official position of the college.

Writing that does not mention HCC-related topics does not need to mention the employment relationship. If employees blog anonymously, they should not discuss matters related to the HCC business. If HCC-related topics are mentioned, they should disclose their affiliation with the college.

Tips for creating content

To share content through the College's main social media pages, keep these guidelines in mind for digital media (social media):

1. **Use Images, not PDFs**: Stick to image formats, as PDFs are not ideal for social sharing and may reduce engagement. Some platforms (e.g., Facebook) will not allow a PDF to be posted.
2. **Avoid links in images**: Since images aren't clickable, don't include URLs directly within them.
3. **Skip QR codes**: QR codes are less effective for digital content, as phone users can't scan from their devices.
4. **Keep text minimal**: A concise message is more engaging. Too much text may lose audiences' interest. Remember, "Less is more.".
5. Contact marketing (Harry Hill, Jane Johnson Vottero) for campus-wide promo questions.

View the example of what follows the guidelines and what doesn't.

Guidelines for Event Recording Requests

To ensure that events are professionally recorded, please follow these guidelines:

1. **No Internal Recording Services**
   - Our organization does not provide in-house recording services for events (only social media coverage). You must coordinate with an external provider if you need your event recorded.
2. **Contact for Assistance**
   - For assistance finding a reliable recording service, please contact **Jane Johnson Vottero** in the Office of Marketing and Communications. Jane can provide the appropriate contact information for the vendors recommended for external recording.
3. **Advance Notice**
   - Please contact Jane at least **four weeks, but as soon as possible, before your event to ensure availability and proper planning**.
4. **Responsibility for coordination**
   - The event organizer is responsible for coordinating with the external recording provider, including discussing pricing, writing purchase orders, scheduling, and specific recording requirements.
5. **Important Note**
   - External recording providers are independent contractors. Our organization is not responsible for the services rendered by these providers.

If you have any questions or need further guidance, please contact Jane Johnson Vottero in Marketing.

Creating and managing a social media account on behalf of the college

Those who wish to create a Facebook page or other social media account must first contact Louis Burgos, the HCC Multimedia Specialist (lburgos@hcc.edu; 413.552.2537) to assess the need for the proposed account, review the requirements outlined in this document, and outline the responsibilities of the manager(s).

Facebook page registration

Pages created by a department on behalf of the college must be created as "Facebook pages" rather than groups or personal profiles. A Facebook page is a profile used by an entity (i.e., a non-individual) for business purposes; authorized college representatives are the only people allowed to create pages.

Facebook page creators and administrator(s)

Facebook page creators have permanent, non-revocable, non-transferable, super-administrator

rights over their pages. Should they leave HCC, they retain the right to remove any and all other administrators, edit content, and even delete the page. To reduce the number of potential problems down the road, a member of the Office of Marketing and Communications staff should create the page and remain an admin (or share the login information in case it needs to be accessed). This is solely to maintain HCC ownership of the page. The administrators designated by the department or program will be responsible for the content and maintenance of the page as described in this document.

Student administrators

With limited exceptions, students may not be named as page administrators. To discuss student page administration, please contact marketing and communications. No student may administer a page without the prior approval of the web and social media manager, dean of student affairs, or the coordinator of student clubs and activities. Page administration rights for students are to be granted on a per-semester basis only.

Account Security

The department's or office's authorized page administrator(s) must maintain the security of his or her Facebook password and is fully responsible for all use of and any actions that take place using his or her account, including those that result from the negligent failure to protect his/her user ID against unauthorized use. Any changes in the designated page administrator(s) must be communicated to the marketing and strategic communications director. Departments may not register for more than one user account or register for a user account on behalf of another individual, group, or entity.

Graphics

The College Marketing and Communications team will create a web graphic for the "profile picture" of HCC-related Facebook pages (this graphic may be used only on Facebook). Page administrators are welcome to manage the selection of the page's cover photo. (Please see "Use of copyrighted or proprietary materials" on page 3.) Photos suitable for web posting are available through the director of marketing and communications. Please avoid stretching images or graphics – the Marketing and Communications department is happy to provide appropriately sized images.

Collecting user information

Facebook may not be used to collect users' personal information. Facebook terms and conditions and state and federal law impose significant requirements and restrictions on collecting users' personal information. In the case of minors, significant additional penalties can

apply to violations.

Facebook page monitoring

Facebook pages must be monitored and updated on an ongoing, consistent basis by the departments or units that create them to enable rapid response to any problems that may arise and to ensure an engaging, interesting environment for visitors. Minimally, pages should be reviewed daily, and ideally, they should be checked in the morning and afternoon. To be effective, pages must be dynamic and updated more frequently than a web page. A stale page can cause more damage to the image of an entity than having no page at all.

Tips for successful social media interactions

Be responsive

- Social media demands a degree of responsiveness that many are unaccustomed to providing.
- While you aren't required to be available 24/7, you are expected to check in and respond **to all messages** and comments as necessary daily, Monday-Friday.

Be transparent

- Whenever possible, identify yourself, your relationship with HCC, and any other relevant affiliations from the first encounter.
- Provide a means of communication (e-mail, etc).
- Never use a false or obscured identity or pseudonym.

Be honest

- When it comes to honesty and accuracy, be the first to respond to your own mistakes. If you make an error, acknowledge and correct it quickly. In a blog, if you modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so.
- Be honest.
- Proactively ask bloggers to be transparent about their relationship with you and/or HCC.
- Never ask bloggers to fabricate an endorsement or write anything they do not believe.

Respect others

- Respect differing viewpoints and personalities.
- Keep in mind that the absence of body language and/or intonation makes it difficult to interpret meaning. If emotion is included in a post, clearly label it. Separate opinion from non-opinion and clearly label it. Always clarify.

Respect the work of others

- Respect copyright and fair use.
- Always get permission to use content created or supplied by others.
- Always give credit when using content created or supplied by others.