

2108 – Social Media

The College recognizes the growth and use of social media platforms in our culture. This procedure is designed to meet the needs of instructors and staff to promote responsible engagement in education, innovation and dialogue in their courses, programs, activities and recruitment using social media platforms. value of social media as a communication tool that supports student engagement, recruitment, education, community connection, and institutional storytelling. This procedure is intended to encourage responsible, professional, and effective use of social media by faculty, staff, departments, programs, and affiliated student organizations.

This procedure applies to all official Barton Community College social media accounts and to employees or representatives when communicating on behalf of the College.

~~Whether or not Barton faculty and staff choose to create or participate in social media or any other form of online publishing or discussion is the Barton faculty and staff decision.~~

Official College Accounts

The use of social media that represents the College is seen as a key element in Barton's brand strategy. Procedures involving the use of the College's logo (2106), the College's computing system (2111), and the Employee Conduct and Discipline (2450) apply as well.

1. All social media accounts representing Barton Community College ~~will be reported to the Communications Department, which will be given full administrator privileges to said accounts or pages, and reserves the right to eliminate a page or account that is inappropriate, ineffective or has not lived up to expectations placed on such pages, such as post frequency or nature of content outlined in the best use guidelines.~~ or its departments, programs, offices, or affiliated organizations must be approved by and registered with the Communications Department. All social media accounts representing athletics and team pages will be approved by the Assistant Director of Athletics & Sports Information Director.

2. The Communications Department shall maintain administrative access to all official accounts and reserves the right to modify, deactivate, or remove accounts that are inactive, duplicate existing efforts, do not align with institutional standards, or present reputational, operational, or security concerns.

3. Official social media accounts are institutional assets and remain the property of Barton Community College. Account credentials must utilize institution-approved email addressed and shared administrative access.

2. 4. Any employee, department, organization wishing to establish an official media presence must first consult with the Communications Department to determine institutional need, platform appropriateness, branding consistency, and account management expectations. Any individual or department wishing to start a social media page or account representing the college must first consult the Communications Department, which will determine if a page or account is necessary. The priority is to keep accounts and pages to a minimum, with content served primarily from the college's main pages and accounts.

Personal Use

3. 5. Barton employees retain the right to participate in personal social media activities. Employees should make clear when opinions expressed are personal and not representative of Barton Community College. When discussing Barton-related matters in a personal capacity, employees are encouraged to use a disclaimer such as: "The views expressed are my own and do not necessarily reflect those of Barton Community College."

6. Employees are expected to conduct themselves online in a respectful and professional manner consistent with institutional policies, including Employee Conduct and Discipline (2450), Computing System procedures (2111), and applicable laws and regulations. If an employee identifies themselves as a college employee on their social media profiles, information that is posted could be a reflection on the College and may apply to this policy. Any conduct that would subject an employee to discipline with the College if it occurred in-person can have the same consequences if it occurs in the realm of the internet and social media. The views and information expressed in staff or student social media activities do not constitute official college information. However, Barton employees should be mindful that their posts can have consequences, just as they would in any public space. Further, inappropriate postings that may include discriminatory remarks, harassment and threats of violence or similar inappropriate or unlawful conduct will not be tolerated. In such situations, Employee Conduct and Discipline (2450) applies.

4. 7. Barton personnel are personally responsible for the content they publish online. Students, faculty and staff are expected to follow the same rules for good behavior and respectful conduct online as offline. Misuse of social media can result in disciplinary action. Barton Community College makes a reasonable effort to ensure students' safety and security online, but will not be held accountable for any harm or damages that result from misuse of social media technologies.

5. 8. Personnel will identify themselves by name and, when relevant, their role at Barton Community College when they are discussing Barton or Barton-related matters. Personnel must make it clear that they are speaking for themselves and not on behalf of Barton Community College.

6. If content is published to any website outside of Barton Community College and it has something to do with the College a disclaimer will be used such as, "The postings on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent Barton Community College's positions, strategies or opinions."

7. Employees shall respect copyright, fair use and financial disclosure laws.

Privacy, Confidentiality, and Accessibility

8. 9. Employees, students, and affiliated organizations shall not publish confidential, proprietary, personally identifiable, or protected student information through social media platforms. All use must comply with applicable privacy laws, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Web content is by definition public information and as such, no

~~Barton Community College proprietary information, student information, confidential information or personally identifying information shall be published at any time.~~

10. Photos, videos, or identifiable student information shared through official accounts should follow applicable institutional media release and privacy procedures.

11. Official Barton social media content should strive to meet accessibility standards whenever feasible, including captioning video content, providing alternative text for images, and utilizing accessible design practices.

9. 12. Students, faculty, and staff will adhere to the terms and conditions of social media platforms.

10. 13. For those social networking sites that require an “official representative” of the college, that representative shall be determined by the Chief Communications Officer. Students, faculty, or staff cannot misrepresent themselves as social media site account managers.

11. 14. Be respectful of others at all times.

Content Standards and Account Management

15. Barton personnel are personally responsible for the content they publish online. Content should be accurate, respectful, lawful, and consistent with the mission and values of the College.

16. Employees and account administrators shall respect copyright, fair use, trademark, and financial disclosure laws and regulations.

17. Artificial intelligence (AI) tools may be utilized to assist with content creation; however, employees remain responsible for ensuring accuracy, appropriateness, copyright compliance, and protection of confidential information.

18. The College reserves the right to remove or report content on official accounts that contains threats, harassment, discrimination, unlawful conduct, spam or material inconsistent with institutional standards or platform terms of service.

19. Official account administrators shall maintain account security through strong passwords, appropriate account recovery methods, and timely transfer of access when staffing changes occur.

Crisis and Institutional Communications

20. During emergencies, crises, or sensitive institutional matters, only authorized College representatives may issue official statements or updates on behalf of Barton Community College.

21. Employees shall avoid sharing unverified information regarding emergencies, investigations, personnel matters, or student incidents.

Instructional use of social media

22. The College supports an instructor's academic freedom (2520), **including the appropriate instructional use of social media. Instructors utilizing social media in courses should clearly communicate expectations within course materials and syllabi.** ~~which includes their use of social media in their courses. An instructor needs to outline their expectations in the syllabus for the course(s) using social media for instruction.~~

23. The instructor ~~does have~~ **has** the right ~~to restrict edit or delete content posted by students and post~~ such a disclaimer in the social media platform being used. The College's **official** email system (and not social networking sites) must be used when communicating about an issue involving a specific student.

~~The Title III Instructional Specialist will be responsible for training instructors on educational use of social media.~~

Clubs and Student Organizations

24. **Faculty advisors overseeing student organization social media accounts are responsible for ensuring compliance with this procedure and applicable College policies.** ~~If a club or student organization of the College uses a social media platform, the Faculty Advisor of the club/organization will be ultimately responsible for its content. They will not be responsible for links/ads/pages of a student's individual profile connected to the official group site. Furthermore,~~

25. **Student organizations utilizing social media platforms as official Barton-affiliated groups must coordinate with the Communications Department regarding account setup, branding, and institutional representation.** ~~Facebook should use a "group" rather than a "page" unless an exception is granted by the Chief Communications Officer.~~

Contact(s): Chief Communications Officer

Related Form(s):

References:

Relevant Policy or Procedure(s): 1106 – College Communications

Approved by: President

Date: 1/26/15

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