

Mountwest Administrative Procedure

Social Media

Social media are powerful communications tools that have a significant impact on organizational and professional reputations. Because they blur the lines between personal voice and institutional voice, Mountwest Community & Technical College has crafted the following procedure to help clarify how best to enhance and protect personal and professional reputations when participating in social media.

Social media are defined as media designed to be disseminated through social interaction, created using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques. Examples include but are not limited to LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and MySpace.

Both in professional and institutional roles, employees need to follow the same behavioral standards online as they would in real life. The same laws, professional expectations and guidelines for interacting with students, parents, alumni, donors, media and other Mountwest constituents apply online as in the real world. Employees are liable for anything they post to social media sites.

Institutional Social Media

Mountwest Community & Technical College will utilize social media to promote events, communicate important dates, highlight accomplishments and establish an ongoing dialogue with the college's primary constituents.

The college will host one official account on each of the major social media sites, including Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, etc. The college will host one institutional site on LinkedIn and one Mountwest Alumni site on LinkedIn. Due to the targeted messages of these groups, Career Services, the Mountwest Foundation and recognized student organizations may manage their own Facebook pages. The college's marketing agency and Marketing & Media Coordinator will have access to and ultimate oversight of all current and future ancillary Facebook pages. These pages will be linked as "likes."

Ancillary pages are not permitted on any other social media site. Other pages will be deemed "unofficial" and will be subject to removal. The institution will take action to remove unofficial pages. The college's marketing agency, the Marketing & Media Coordinator and at least one other college employee designated by the Coordinator will be tasked with maintaining and updating these pages on a regular basis. The content of these pages must remain relevant to the college's many constituencies.

All individual Facebook pages related to Mountwest must have a full-time employee who is identified as responsible for maintaining the content of the page. Ideally, this individual is the unit head of the department. Should additional entities wish to establish and maintain their own pages, they must submit a request and justification to the Marketing & Media Coordinator at news@mctc.edu. Approval of such requests will be at the discretion of the marketing committee.

Submitting content for publication on social media sites
Individual academic and student services departments should utilize the institution's primary page to disseminate their messages. All information, including time, date, location, cost, Web site link and any additional information, should be sent to news@mctc.edu.

Best Practices on Institutional Sites

When posting on behalf of an official Mountwest unit, contributors should adhere to the following best practices:

1. *Think twice before posting* - Privacy does not exist in the world of social media. If you would not share it at a news conference or with a member of the media, consider whether you should post it online. If you are unsure about posting something or responding to a comment, contact the Marketing & Media Coordinator.
2. *Strive for accuracy* – Double-check facts for accuracy before posting them on social media. As an educational institution, it is also critical that all content be free of grammatical and spelling errors.
3. *Be respectful* - Understand that content contributed to a social media site could encourage comments or discussion of opposing ideas. Responses should be considered carefully in light of how they would reflect on Mountwest and its institutional voice.
4. *Remember your audience* - Be aware that a presence in the social media world is or easily can be made available to the public at large. This includes prospective students, current students, current employers and colleagues, peers, contributors and potential contributors. Consider this before publishing to ensure the post will not alienate, harm or provoke any of these groups.
5. *Use appropriate photography* – None of the still photographs or videos used should be considered embarrassing or harmful to the subject or the college. Photographs and videos posted on social media sites easily can be appropriated by visitors. All photographs or videos of students, faculty and staff members require an image release before posting. Image releases are kept on file with the Marketing & Media Coordinator.

Consider adding a watermark and/or posting images at 72 dpi and approximately 800 x 600 resolution to protect your intellectual property. Images at that size are sufficient for viewing on the Web, but not suitable for printing.

6. *Link back to the institution* - Whenever possible, link back to the Mountwest Web site. Ideally, posts should be very brief, redirecting a visitor to content that resides within the Mountwest Web environment. When linking to a news article about Mountwest, check first to see whether you can link to a news release instead of to a publication or other media outlet.
7. *Protect the institutional voice* - Posts on social media sites should protect Mountwest's institutional voice by remaining professional in tone and in good taste. No ancillary Mountwest unit should construe its social media site as representing Mountwest as a whole. Consider the institutional voice when naming pages or accounts, selecting a profile picture or icon, and selecting content to post.
8. *Protect the institutional brand* - Posts on social media sites should adhere to guidelines outlined in the institution's [Brand Identity & Graphic Standards Manual](#).