

# Using Social Media to Build Thought Leadership and Promote the College

## Overview

Social media is one of the many tools in our marketing toolbox. Social media provides employees, students, alumni and others (“users”) an opportunity to share news, events, ideas, and experiences. It is an excellent, low-cost way to engage the community and build the MWCC brand.

All are encouraged to use social media to share MWCC information available to the public (press releases, calendar events, articles, etc.). To enhance the effective use of social media, these guidelines outline the most appropriate use of social media for the MWCC community in order to maintain standards of quality and relevance to our primary goals of teaching and learning, and our position as a community institution. The information in these guidelines is not in any way an endorsement of personal use of social media on work time or on work equipment.

Note: Use of all social media (personal or MWCC-related) through the College’s computer systems and networks shall at all times adhere to the [College’s Information Technology Acceptable Use Policies](#) and [Copyright Guidelines](#) as well as all social media sites’ communications standards, applicable local, state and federal laws, ethics, and privacy and intellectual property rights.

Questions regarding the use of social media or these guidelines should be referred to the Marketing and Communications department at 978-630-9122 or [marketing@mwcc.mass.edu](mailto:marketing@mwcc.mass.edu). Questions regarding the Information Technology Acceptable Use Policies should be referred to the Human Resources Department at 978-630-9160.

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## General Social Media Guidelines for All Users

**Maintain Confidentiality:** Do not post confidential or proprietary information about MWCC or other individuals. Follow federal policies and requirements, such as HIPAA and FERPA.

**Maintain Privacy:** Do not discuss or post photos of individuals on social media without their permission. If you would not present the content in a public forum, do not post on social media.

**Respect College Time and Property:** MWCC employees can use social media if approved by their supervisor, use is directly related to MWCC goals, and they are in compliance with MWCC policies. Personal social media use should be done on personal time and on personal devices. Use of MWCC branding or photos on personal social media accounts is prohibited.

**Do No Harm:** Your posts should not be harmful to yourself, others or MWCC whether you are using social media for MWCC-related or personal purposes. Content that promotes or depicts illegal activity, is threatening or harassing, includes obscenities, or defames a person, group or organization is prohibited and will be documented and removed.

**Understand Your Personal Responsibility:** You are personally responsible for the content you publish on social media, blogs, or any other form of user-generated content. Be mindful that what you publish will be public, exist for a long period of time, and may be redistributed throughout the internet. Comply with all Copyright laws and only post information to which you own the rights. (This includes music, art, literary works, photos, text, video, etc.).

**Maintain Transparency:** Be honest about who you are without sharing sensitive information that could be used to steal your identity (address, phone number, etc.). If you identify yourself as an MWCC employee on your personal social media, please be clear that you are sharing your views as an individual, not as a representative of the college.

**Correct Mistakes:** Be upfront and quick to correct a mistake. If you go back and edit a previous post, make it clear that you've done so.

**Respect Others:** You are more likely to successfully communicate if you are constructive and respectful while interacting with others. This includes when discussing a bad experience or disagreement. MWCC employees are expected to interact on social media with the same respect required when interacting with college constituent's in-person. If you would not be comfortable reading about or defending your actions in a Boston Globe interview, do not post that content.

**Be a Valued Member:** Make sure the content you contribute to any social media site is valuable to its community. MWCC reserves the right, but assumes no obligation to remove content that is not related to official college business and consistent with the college's mission. We do not permit messages selling products or promoting commercial or other private for-profit ventures.

**Consider Your Audiences:** Social media often spans traditional boundaries between professional and personal relationships. Use privacy settings to restrict personal information to otherwise public sites. Carefully and thoughtfully choose the photos and information you share as well as your profile photo or avatar.

**Know Your Medium:** Make sure you know how each social media platform is used. Just as you would not use a screw driver to hammer a nail, be sure to know the tool and how to best use it. Be aware that MWCC uses each platform strategically for specific audiences (see "Official College Social Media Accounts" on subsequent pages for further information).

**Think Before You Post:** There's no such thing as a "private" social media account. Photos and comments can be forwarded, copied, and screenshot. Archival systems save information even if you delete a post. If you feel

angry or passionate about a subject, it's wise to delay posting until you are calm and clear-headed. Only post content that you would be comfortable sharing with the general public (peers, coworkers, current and future employers, etc.).

## Official College Social Media Accounts

**Official Administrators:** The Marketing and Communications department is responsible for maintaining the official MWCC social media accounts. Unless otherwise authorized by the Director of Marketing, only employees from this department are allowed to post to the official accounts. At the time of this revision, MWCC's official accounts are:

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>Facebook:</b>  | Facebook.com/mountwachusett<br>Facebook.com/MWCCAlerts |
| <b>Twitter:</b>   | @mountwachusett  |
| <b>Instagram:</b> | @mountwachusett  |
| <b>Snapchat:</b>  | mountwachusett   |
| <b>YouTube:</b>   | youtube.com/mountwachusett                             |
| <b>LinkedIn:</b>  | linkedin.com/school/mountwachusett/                    |

**Strategy:** Each social media channel has a specific goal and purpose for a specific audience as outlined below.

### Facebook

Audience: Prospective students, community, parents, non-traditional students

Content: Links to news stories, event photos/albums, promotional videos and graphics

### Twitter (*note: no longer actively posting due to decrease of channel use*)

Audience: Prospective students, community, parents, non-traditional students

Content: Links to news stories, event photos (1-3), promotional videos and graphics

### LinkedIn

Audience: Community members, colleagues, alumni, potential employees, foundation supporters

Content: Articles, relevant news stories and events.

### Instagram

Audience: Current students, traditional students

Content: Well-composed, high-quality photos highlighting points of pride or events

### Snapchat (*note: have not used since 2018*)

Audience: Current students, traditional students

Content: Organic, candid, student-generated photos which may or may not be adorned with Snapchat filters and graphics

### YouTube

Audience: Prospective students, community

Content: High-quality video promotions, commencement and other events that are live-streamed

**Content:** Anyone from the MWCC community can request for information to be posted on an official account, however, the Marketing and Communications department will determine if the content is appropriate as well as how, when, and where to post the content so that it strategically aligns with the overarching social media plan and schedule.

## Administering an Official College-Affiliated Social Media Account

**Account Approval:** Anyone who wishes to create a social media account for a college-affiliated group, department, program, club, organization, etc. must first meet with Director and/or Associate Director of Marketing and Communications to review administrative requirements and obtain official approval. It is preferred that the Marketing and Communications department set up the initial account to help maintain MWCC ownership of the account and provide proper branding.

**Approved Administrators:** An MWCC employee must be the official administrator for any college-affiliated social media account, however, when deemed appropriate, and approved by the Director of Marketing and the Dean of Students, an MWCC student can assist with account administration. Qualified students must be in good academic standing with a GPA of 2.5 or higher and have no previous disciplinary history with the College.

It is required that the Director and the Assistant Director of Marketing are both added as full admins (or given the up-to-date username and password depending upon platform) to all college-affiliated social media accounts before the account is published. However, the day-to-day maintenance responsibilities will fall on the affiliated department, group, etc. This is a precautionary measure to make sure that:

- MWCC is never locked out of an account
- Should there be a problem, the Marketing and Communications department can quickly react and assist (such as the termination of a social media administrator)

Social media account administrators must keep the Marketing and Communications department up-to-date with the names and contact information of who is administering the account at all times and notify them with any personnel changes that might effect this.

**Account Security:** The social media account administrator(s) must maintain the security of their account password and is fully responsible for all use of and any actions that take place using their account, including those that result from the failure to protect their information against unauthorized use.

**Content and Time Commitment:** Administering a social media account is time-consuming and the content you post should be of high quality and strategic to your goals. At the time of this revision, best practices recommend the following:

- Facebook: 8 times/week
- Instagram: 6 times/week (and/or use stories to post multiple things in one day)
- LinkedIn: 2 – 5 times/week promoting hiring and career development
- YouTube: 1-3 times/month

**Use of Photos/Videos:** Photos/videos must be owned by the person posting or by MWCC. Any photo that is pulled from an internet search or copied from another source is strictly prohibited to avoid copyright infringement. It is your responsibility to generate high-quality content and post it according to the best practices listed above. A stale or outdated account can be more damaging to the image of an entity than not having an account at all. All administrators are expected to abide by MWCC's General Social Media Guidelines as set forth at the beginning of this document as well as all [MWCC's policies](#).

**Response Time:** When a user asks a question, response time should be reasonably prompt. While you are not required to monitor your account 24/7, you should be monitoring and responding promptly during business hours.

**Platform Compliance and Collecting User Information:** Administrators are responsible for reviewing and complying with any policy and/or terms of service set forth by the platform of which they are using. In addition, no social media account may be used to collect personal information of any user.

**Account Termination:** The Marketing and Communications department will monitor social media activity across all college-affiliated accounts. If they find that an account is not being used according to these guidelines, they have the right to terminate or unpublish the account. A courtesy email will be sent to the account administrator to let them know that the account is out of compliance and they have one month to correct the situation. If at that time it has not been remedied, the Marketing and Communications department will terminate or unpublish the account.

## Addressing and Responding to Negative Actions

**Responding to Negative Content:** Negative comments/posts may come up now and then and should be handled with a careful, thoughtful response.

Always try to:

- Provide a polite and friendly answer to the question/criticism
- Direct the user to a source of information/assistance if you cannot help them yourself
- Refrain from removing a comment just because it's negative, remember that a negative comment is an opportunity to showcase MWCC
- If the content falls under the "Do No Harm" category in the General Social Media Guidelines, the content must be documented by taking a screenshot, saving with the appropriate date, and sending to the Chief of Campus Police, Dean of Students, and Executive Vice President. They will determine if further action needs to be taken, once you've sent the screenshot, you can remove the harmful content. If a backlash post occurs, explain that the previous post was removed because it violated our social media guidelines and thus had to be removed. (Also provide a link to our guidelines for further information.)
- Negative posts which reach the level of concern should be screen shot and saved in the pcloud folder "Concerning Posts" in the Social Media folder.

## Platform Specific Usage for Faculty/Staff/Executives

### LinkedIn

LinkedIn is the world's largest professional network, and the most powerful social networking site to help grow businesses. Job seekers, employers and potential students use LinkedIn to research faculty and alumni as part of their decision-making process.

The more complete your profile, the easier it will be to connect with colleagues, alumni, and community partners. You should only have one LinkedIn profile. There are tools to allow you to merge your profiles if you discover you have a second (if you forgot you created it).

### *Best practices for LinkedIn*

- A profile image. Professional headshots are best, save the vacation photos for Facebook or Instagram.
- Link to MWCC, and your other employers where they appear in the profile. This will show you as an employee of the college from the college profile.
- Detail your experience, including any committees, papers authored, books written, volunteer work, etc. Your profile is a digital version of your resume that is highly searchable. Make sure you are using keywords that are relevant to your work or the work you would like to pursue.
- Take a few moments every day to check in with LinkedIn, share any content which you think will be of value to other connections who would see it.
- Connect with colleagues you have met that share the same role as you.
- Write and post an article that could benefit your connections and build your status as a thought leader.
- Use LinkedIn as an outreach platform to conduct research.
- Learn new skills needed for today's job market through InLearning.

### Twitter

It is perfectly acceptable to have both a personal and a professional Twitter account. The application allows you to switch between the two easily. The college account is depreciated due to the decline of civility on the platform.

### *Best practices for Twitter*

- Keep tweets professional
- Tag other users, like the college, by adding their twitter name, for example @mwcc . This expands the reach of your tweet to the followers of the account you tagged.

- Hashtags are used to organize content. One or two are great, but too many can make the text difficult to read. #CommunityCollege
- Use the Retweet feature to share a tweet from someone you follow (especially the college). This expands the reach of the tweet you shared to your followers.
- Use images when and where you can to make tweets more engaging.