



Endicott College Social Media Policy

Social media provides community members (including students, potential students, parents, alumni, and community residents) with a closer, more personal look at Endicott College and its departments, organizations, clubs, and events. While social media continues to evolve and become increasingly popular on campus, it is important to keep it mind that it is a serious marketing tool for the College and should be treated with respect in regard to our brand. To ensure all College-affiliated accounts are communicating current and relevant information and portraying Endicott in a positive manner, inconsistent, irrelevant and/or stagnant accounts will be eliminated.

For the purposes of this policy, social media means any facility for online publication and commentary, including, without limitation, blogs, wikis, social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, SnapChat, Instagram, Tumblr, Vimeo, Pinterest, Reddit, and YouTube. This policy is in addition to and complements any existing or future policies regarding the use of technology, computers, e-mail and the internet. All uses of social media must follow the same ethical standards that Endicott College employees and students must otherwise follow.

Similar to the Endicott College website, the primary purpose of official social marketing tools is to communicate news and events and build community, which serve the secondary purposes of increasing admissions applicants, engaging alumni, assisting in fundraising efforts, and increasing affinity for the College as a whole. These guidelines are not meant to discourage use of innovative methods to improve academic quality and operational efficiencies.

Who does this policy apply to?

This policy applies directly to members of the Endicott community who use social networking pages **on behalf of the College or as representatives of the College.**

Social Media Guidelines When Posting As an Employee of Endicott College

This policy applies when communicating via social media as an employee of Endicott College. It does not aim to inhibit the usage of social media on a personal level by our faculty and staff. However, if a reasonable connection to Endicott College may be drawn from content and biographical information, please be cognizant of any possible implication that you are representing the College's views, rather than your own. Please do not use personal social media accounts for public-facing College-related communications; Endicott-related content is best used on an official Endicott account to reach the largest audience. Keep your personal and work-related communications separate and distinct, even if you are, for example "friends" with co-workers or students on Facebook.

Social Media Guidelines When Posting on Behalf of Endicott College

Before Opening a New Social Media Account

Managing a social media account takes time. Do not request to start an account unless you have time to dedicate to developing relevant, interesting content **regularly**. Good content (posts and responses) is critical in maintaining social media communities. Accounts that are updated infrequently are considered stagnant or dormant, which is grounds for deactivation. (See 'Stagnant Accounts' section below).

Prior to **requesting** to create a new social media page or group on behalf of your organization, club, department, or event, consider the following:

- Who will manage and update the account? This includes monitoring and posting new content.
- Where will new content come from? What will it consist of? How will it engage users?
- Who is your audience and what is the message? Is this same message being communicated elsewhere already?
- Do you have all applicable permissions from your supervisor and/or Dean?
- Is this a short-term need that would better be promoted using an existing account?

Note: accounts should not be created for annual or one-time events. The events should be promoted through the main organization/group/club's existing channel to reach the following that has already been built. Accounts that are created for specific events will be asked to deactivate and move the content over to the main account.

Once you've thought through the above and have approval from your supervisor or Dean to start a social page, you must reach out to Communications Associate Kristin White, kwhite@endicott.edu or (978) 232-2908 to receive final approval. If the Communications team agrees with the need for the page, then we will create your account for you to ensure all branding guidelines are followed. We will then turn the account over to you for management.

Log-in/Password Information

Once a social media account is created by the Communications team, the log-in and password will be saved in a confidential database. This will help to ensure that access to the page is always available should an admin or content manager leave Endicott or become unavailable. To prevent departments, employees, etc. from losing access to a Facebook accounts, Kristin White must be made admin of every Facebook page created and a manager of every group.

If your department changes the username or password, the updated information must be shared with Kristin White kwhite@endicott.edu.

Account Naming Guidelines

For any social media outlets related to Endicott College, the account must be titled [club, org, etc.] at Endicott College to ensure consistency of brand (example: Environmental Club at Endicott College).

Do not use acronyms (e.g., EC for Endicott College). Exceptions will be made for Twitter and other accounts susceptible to character limits on a case-by-case basis. The Communications team will work with you to decide on acceptable abbreviations when necessary and to choose handles that best represent your group or department.

A statement that acknowledges your affiliation with Endicott College must be visible in the section that describes your page – this applies to all social channels. If you must use an acronym, the acronym must be spelled out within the section so visitors know what it stands for.

Profile Photos

To ensure consistency with Endicott's brand guidelines, use only images created and provided by the Office of Communications and Publications as a profile photo. Please contact Assistant Director of Publications Angela Gulino at agulino@endicott.edu or (978)232-2015 to have an icon/profile photo created. Student clubs and organizations are required to use the vertical version of their College-approved logo as their profile photo. Use the same profile photo across your unit's social media accounts for consistency.

Photo Usage

Photos posted on any social media outlet should be done so with the utmost of care and in accordance with the official [Endicott College photography policy](#). Posting photos online is not private, and photos should be treated as such. Do not post recognizable photos of children without the written consent of their guardians.

Management and Monitoring

At least two administrators are necessary so that there is always a backup and alternative means of accessing accounts. For student organizations, there should be a smooth leadership transition from semester to semester. There must always be a faculty member with access if students are involved in page management.

Page managers should check their account daily, or be signed up to receive email updates when comments are made to ensure prompt addressing of any questions or issues. Quickly address any inappropriate messages or misuse. Such inappropriate content includes spam, advertising, offensive statements, inaccurate information, foul language, or personal attacks.

Be judicious in decisions to delete comments made on your page - unless it is undeniably inflammatory or crude, consider leaving it up. Nothing brings criticism more speedily than community members who feel censored, especially if the comment was valid. Do not delete comments simply because they are negative - instead address these directly and publicly. This will help build trust and transparency. If you do decide to delete any comments or posts, please take a screenshot of them first in case it may be needed later. If you have any questions as to whether something should be removed, please contact Kristin White at kwhite@endicott.edu.

Consider posting these rules somewhere on your page (the 'about' section is usually a good place), which will give you a charter to back up any deletion decisions: *"This is your community and we encourage you to leave comments, photos, videos, and links here. Postings and Comments that include sensitive data, confidential information, profanity, personal attacks, hate speech or other inappropriate material will be removed from this page. This page is not to be used for solicitation of sales and/or the promotion of any off-campus goods and/or services. You are fully responsible for the content that you share. Postings or comments made by individuals on this page do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of Endicott College or any of the college's departments. Thank you!"*

Professionalism and Tone

All accounts should remain current with respect to all information. Any person or group utilizing the Endicott College name should be aware that they have the power to affect the image and reputation of the school, and should make every attempt to be guided by the guidelines in this document.

The public in general, and Endicott College's employees and students, reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view. Don't say anything contradictory or in conflict with the Endicott College website. Don't be afraid to be yourself, but do so respectfully. This includes not only the obvious (no ethnic slurs, offensive comments, defamatory comments, personal insults, obscenity, etc.) but also proper consideration of privacy and of topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory. Use your best judgment or discuss questions with your supervisor prior to posting.

If you make an error, be upfront about your mistake and correct it quickly. If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so. If someone accuses you of posting something improper, deal with it quickly.

Use correct grammar and write in complete sentences when possible. Never write with all the letters capitalized. Avoid jargon and institutional language. Abbreviations are sometimes necessary to meet word limits, but don't overdo it. Do not use unprofessional abbreviations, such as "u/you," "2/to" or "r/are."

Before retweeting, sharing, or posting a link, check that link or account (and watch the video or read the article, if applicable) before posting to ensure it is appropriate content to be sharing under the Endicott name.

At all times be transparent. Nothing gains you notice in social media more than honesty - or dishonesty. Do not say anything that is dishonest, untrue, or misleading. What you publish will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully and also be cautious about disclosing confidential details.

Content should be kept short and sweet, with an ideal post of 1-2 sentences and a link or photo. Always check links to ensure they are shortened and change any pre-loaded text if needed to avoid cluttered posts. Write in a manner that represents your whole unit - use "we," "our" and other inclusive words.

Content Creation

Content should at all times be relevant to the audience of your page; however, it should not only be news and announcements. Put a personal spin on your communications by asking for feedback, posing questions, posting photos or offering congratulations on personal/group achievements. Content may be tangentially relevant to your audience, such as the Environmental Club posting a nature video or the Nursing School posting a comic about the profession. However, always keep in mind that we are speaking on behalf of the College and all content should be appropriate for all audiences.

Some ways to help produce content:

- Reuse content developed for other outlets. Newsletter tidbits can be divided up into separate posts on Facebook, for example. Videos and photos taken for other purposes can be shared online.
- Develop content calendars – sketch out a month or two of updates in one sitting, perhaps in a staff meeting, which will reduce how often you'll need to brainstorm new topics. Remain flexible if anything comes up and planned updates need to be moved.
- Schedule updates using tools like [Hootsuite](#). This can work for up to several months in advance, so you can keep your page updated even if you're unable to put active time into upkeep. However, management of any comments received will still need to be addressed in a timely manner. Remember to turn off scheduled posts if needed – you don't want your posts to be insensitive (to a current news event) or irrelevant (such as promoting an event that has been cancelled).
- Think outside the usual news/events posts for content:
 - Staff updates (photo from a recent vacation or office birthday celebration? Congrats on a recent achievement? Think casual, fun, getting-to-know-us type posts).
 - Regular features – think of something you can offer that's relevant to your office. Something like a book recommendation of the week, photo of the week, trivia question of the week, job-hunting tip of the week, etc. This gives you an excuse to post something, say, every Wednesday.
 - Share links – relevant news or advice articles, videos, etc.
 - Inspiration – share your favorite quotes.
 - Ask questions – poll questions are great for drumming up discussion. These can be professional or something as simple as 'what did you all do for the 4th of July?' Just be

- sure to word it carefully to avoid any off-color responses (and be prepared to delete them if needed) - this is not usually a problem but should be kept in mind.
- Promote news and events from other Endicott accounts to build community.

Promoting Your Account and Fostering Growth

The best way to grow your new account is to keep it active! New followers will need to see what you provide when they visit your page before they hit the 'follow' button, so don't wait for your audience to grow before you start posting content.

Don't ask for new followers or likes (once may be acceptable, though don't make it a habit or you will risk alienating your followers). However, you can ask administrators of other accounts on campus to promote your account to their new followers ("Help us welcome the Lacrosse Team to Twitter! Follow them at @Endicottlax"). Collaborate with other accounts on campus when applicable to support other Endicott departments/groups and encourage a sense of community.

Establish custom URLs as applicable for ease of promotion. Add your account (with links, when possible) to all documents, web pages, email signatures, and other communications to help spread the word. (Be advised that the custom URL on Facebook is very difficult to change – choose it carefully.)

Above all, remember that the most effective and reliable social media growth is organic and steady - be patient and update regularly.

Stagnant Accounts

The Communications team reserves the right to **disable or unpublish any Endicott College-affiliated social media accounts that are dormant (no posts, no activity) for more than THREE months**, as such stagnancy reflects poorly on the College. Similarly, misused accounts may be flagged by the College and are subject to management changes or discontinuation.

If you are finding it difficult to create content for your social media account, please consult with the Communications Associate, Kristin White, to discuss ideas and other options.

Evaluation

Effective September 2017, the Communications Department will share this updated social media policy with the Endicott College community. Any stagnant accounts as of January 2018 (no posts, no activity for three months) will be asked to deactivate.

Follow Site Rules, Copyright Laws, and Campus Policies

It is critical that you show proper respect for the laws governing copyright and fair use of copyrighted material owned by others. You should never quote more than short excerpts of someone else's work, and always attribute such work to the original author/source. It is good general practice to link to others' work rather than reproduce it.

You are responsible for reading and following the Terms of Use on any outside social media site.

Ensure that you maintain the privacy of individual's information, in accordance with all College policies and in accordance with the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#) (FERPA).

All usage of social media on behalf of Endicott College must abide by all applicable rules and regulations of the school including, but not limited to, the Employee Handbook, the Student Handbook, "Endicott College Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy," the "Faculty/Staff Web Content Policy," and the "Privacy Policy and Agreement." Any violations of these or any other applicable policies shall be handled according to the applicable College process.

If you have any questions regarding the appropriateness of sharing any information or content via social media, please consult with the Communications Associate, Kristin White

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