

# VERMONT TECH

## Manual of Policy and Procedures

<b>Title:</b>  <b>Social Media Use and Guidelines</b>	<b>Number:</b> <b>T 123</b>	<b>Page(s):</b> <b>3</b>
	<b>Date:</b> <b>June 1, 2017</b>	

### PURPOSE

Blogs, social media applications and other online platforms present new and different ways of communicating. This policy provides guidelines for permissible behavior and consistent use for Vermont Tech employees, students and others representing the College online. Social media platforms can blur the lines between personal expression and institutional voice, so while Vermont Tech supports and encourages the use of blogs and social media, all information posted on a College department/club/program/course blog or social media account must be in compliance with this policy, VSC Policy 502 (*Computing and Telecommunications Technology Conditions of Use Policy*) and all other applicable VSC and Vermont Tech policies.

For the purposes of this policy, blogs and social media applications include, but are not limited to, services such as Blogger, Facebook, Google+, Instagram, LinkedIn, Periscope, Pinterest, Snap-chat, Tumblr, Twitter, Vimeo, WordPress and YouTube.

Vermont Tech staff, faculty and students need to follow the same behavioral standards online as they would in person, including compliance with VSC Policy 311 (*Non-Discrimination and Prevention of Harassment and Related Unprofessional Conduct*) and VSC Policy 312 (*The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act*). The same laws, professional expectations and guidelines for interacting with others apply online as they do with in-person interactions.

### STATEMENT OF POLICY

The scope of this policy is for any Vermont Tech sponsored or College-Affiliated club, department, or program social media accounts and blogs. A site is College-Affiliated if it uses "Vermont Tech" or

"VTC" as part of its name (e.g., Vermont Technical College Alumni Association, Vermont Tech Ski & Ride Club or Vermont Tech Equine Studies Program). This policy shall not contradict VSC Policy 309 (*Student Publications*). Though the policy applies only to College-Affiliated sites, it provides a good guide to all social media use.

## GUIDELINES

The Vermont Tech and College-Affiliated social media sites are places where students, alumni, faculty, staff, prospective students, friends and fans of the College can follow news at Vermont Tech and interact. With that in mind, we expect users to abide by these rules:

1. Keep it clean. No swears or porn.
2. Be nice. No threats, abuse, name-calling or spam.
3. Be respectful. No hate speech.
4. Be transparent. Don't pretend to be somebody else and don't let anyone use your identity.
5. Be accurate. Make sure to have the facts verified before posting or sharing. Don't perpetuate misinformation.
6. Debate, but don't attack. Stay away from personal attacks, please.
7. No ads. No pushing a product, service or political candidate, and no personal fundraising.
8. Don't steal. Don't post somebody else's stuff or use copyrighted material without permission, and don't libel someone.
9. Respect privacy. Don't post pictures or videos of guests, staff/faculty or other non-Vermont Tech individuals without their permission. Don't post confidential or proprietary information.
10. Stay safe. Refrain from referring to/endorsing illegal or unsafe behavior.
11. Strive for openness. There is no real privacy on social media. Understand that the College is susceptible to public disclosure and all posts, written by the College staff or general public, become part of the public record.
12. Comply with existing policies. Whether it's respecting the privacy of personal information in Policy 312, being wary of malware under Policy 502 or abiding by protections under Policy 311, make sure you follow those policies online. And each social media platform has its own Terms of Use to comply with too.
13. Be timely. Monitor and respond to comments in a timely way, at least within 24 hours.
14. Don't "go rogue." You can't use the Vermont Tech/Vermont Technical College or Athletics name or logos without permission from the College.

Violations of these guidelines could result in offending posts being removed, college-affiliated accounts being suspended or terminated, and conduct issues being referred to the Dean of Students or appropriate conduct bodies.

## PROCEDURES

A social media site is only as valuable as it is regularly updated and maintained. Please consider the time and resources needed (See Best Practices section for details) before creating an account.

All College-Affiliated club, department, program, or other social media accounts and blogs must be registered with the Marketing Department along with administrative access. Before creating a new account, contact the Marketing Department for registration.

Ask the Marketing Department for an approved logo and other images to ensure coordination with the College. Non-approved logos may not be used on College-Affiliated accounts.

Administration of student club pages must include the club's staff/faculty advisor. All College-Affiliated accounts must have a staff/faculty administrator. Students may have administrative control if given by their staff/faculty advisor, who must also have administrative rights.

If an employee or student is removed as the administrator for an account with a single-login access point, the club, department, or program shall change the password for security purposes and share the new login information with the Marketing Department.


Recognizing that these communication tools have the potential to significantly affect individual and institutional reputations, at a minimum Vermont Tech expects all sites associated with the College to:

- Abide by the General Guidelines listed in this document
- Assign a responsible administrator to each social-media account
- Maintain up-to-date login information with and administrative access for the Marketing Department
- Follow established best practices (Addendum)

#### POLICY MODIFICATION HISTORY

I. The following dates reflect chronological changes made to this policy which are henceforth considered depreciated.

a) June 1, 2017

Signed By:  Patricia Moulton President
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