

Social Media Policy

Policy Name: Social Media Policy

Approval Authority: Cabinet

Interpreting and Implementing Authority: Director of Communications

Effective: July 17, 2017

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Policy Statement

Wesleyan College recognizes and embraces the power of social media, and the opportunity those tools provide to communicate with the Wesleyan College community, including students, faculty, staff, parents, alumnae/alumni, and other interested parties. A college's social media presence is an extension of the school's brand. With so many groups engaging in social media, it becomes extremely important for open lines of communication to exist across campus. This policy provides guidance concerning the use of social media through the College's network, systems or equipment and/or the use of social media to represent or discuss matters related to Wesleyan College and/or members of the Wesleyan College community; and also sets forth rules for the administration of Wesleyan social media sites.

The use of social media at or concerning Wesleyan College is governed by the same laws, policies, rules of conduct, and etiquette that apply to all other activities at or concerning Wesleyan College.

Wesleyan College honors the right of every Faculty, Staff and Student to freely express their own ideas, in keeping with our Freedom of Expression policy. However, even activities of a private nature posted to personal social media accounts can be subject to disciplinary action if they cause significant disruption to the operation of the college, or cause harm to a member of the Wesleyan community.

Entities Affected by the Policy

This policy applies to all use of social media by Wesleyan College students, faculty, and staff to represent or discuss matters concerning the College and/or members of the College community, whether or not such use involves the College's network or other online resources.

Policy Details

I. Social Media Defined

For the purpose of this policy, social media is defined as Internet or mobile digital tools and systems used to share and/or receive information or conversation. Social media includes, without limitation, texting, blogs, and propriety platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest, SnapChat, Google+, YouTube, Flickr, and Yammer.

II. Social media sites CONTAINING THE WORDS WESLEYAN/WESLEYAN COLLEGE

The Office of Communication may utilize social media to present information and content to the public and receive feedback from the public and the College community. ***Content and information released on social media is equivalent to content and information released to the press and the public in any other format, including press release, letter to the media, open letter to the public, etc.*** Care must be taken that content and information released to the public over social media is accurate, does not violate applicable laws (including, but not limited to, copyright, trademark and defamation law) or Wesleyan College policy.

Unless specifically authorized by the Office of Communications, no Wesleyan College employee or student, alumnae/alumni may create an “official” Wesleyan College presence on any form of social media, now in existence, or created in the future, or represent themselves as a spokesperson or authorized representative of Wesleyan College. Some employees may be required to use social media as part of their employment responsibilities. If so, such status will be clearly stated in an employee’s work responsibilities.

With appropriate authorization, Wesleyan College social media sites may be administered on behalf of (a) Wesleyan College as an institution; (b) individual programs or departments; (c) members of the faculty, in connection with a specific course; or (d) student organizations. Unauthorized use of the Wesleyan College name, logo, or trademarks without the express permission of an authorized official of the College is strictly prohibited.

1. Process for Creating a Wesleyan College social media presence

- Any person or organization who seeks authorization for a new site will be expected to articulate an appropriate purpose of the site and a reasonable plan for managing its content. All new sites require approval from the Office of Communications.
- To ensure that all social media efforts adhere to the design and policy standards of Wesleyan College and that efforts are not tied specifically to a Wesleyan community member’s personal account, all official Wesleyan College social media accounts must be created by the College’s Office of Communications, who will then grant the appropriate person(s) administrative access to those accounts. To request an account, fill out the form “Social Media Page Request Form” found on the portal.
- All social media sites created by faculty, staff, or students must add a representative of the Office of Communications as an administrator: awiggs@wesleyancollege.edu and/or provide username, password, and log-in information.
- All social media sites must provide the Office of Communications the names and contact information of all administrators. The Office of Communications must be notified of any changes or additions to designated administrators.
- All social media administrators must sign a statement indicating they understand and agree to adhere to the guidelines outlined in the Wesleyan College Social Media Policy, and return it to the Office of Communications.

2. Authorization of Social Media Sites

- Institutional sites that represent Wesleyan College as a whole must be authorized in advance by the Director of Communications.
- Program and academic departmental sites must be authorized in advance by the Provost for the College.
- Individual office pages must be approved by the supervisory Vice President.
- Sites administered by members of the faculty in connection with specific courses must be authorized by the Department Chair or Program Director and the Provost for the College, respectively.
- Sites sponsored by recognized student organizations in connection with specific activities must be authorized by the Dean of Students.
- Alumnae/alumni sites must be approved by the Alumnae Office.

3. Site Registration

- All Wesleyan College social media sites shall register each term with the Wesleyan College Office of Communications. In addition, the Office of Communications shall keep track of registrations and may, in its discretion, review site content (but is not required to do so).

- If a site does not register (or renew its registration) for a year, or if the Office of Communications becomes aware of content posted on a Wesleyan College site in violation of this policy, the Office of Communications shall promptly take appropriate action, which may include notifying the site administrator, the official who authorized the creation of the site, and/or other College officials, and removing the offending content and/or closing the site.

4. **Site Requirements: Required Terms of Use, Privacy Policies, and Disclaimers**

- Every official Wesleyan College social media site shall clearly set forth Terms and Conditions of Use applicable to the site.
- The Terms and Conditions of Use must also include the following: “In connection with the use of this site and as a condition of such use, the user expressly acknowledges and agrees that any use of the site is subject to these Terms and Conditions of Use which incorporate by reference the Wesleyan College Social Media Policy, and all other relevant policies of the College; that these Terms and Conditions of Use may change without notice and continued use of the site constitutes acceptance of such changes; that Wesleyan College neither endorses nor shall be held liable for the content of any postings that are not made by authorized College personnel or that are in violation of this policy; and that the user shall indemnify Wesleyan College, its affiliates, and their respective officers, directors, trustees, employees, agents and representatives from any and all expenses and liabilities, including but not limited to reasonable attorneys’ fees, resulting from any content posted by such user or any violation of these Terms and Conditions of Usage. Users also understand that they are posting on a third party site, which the College does not own or control, and that such use is expressly subject to all relevant third party site policies and disclaimers.”

5. **Usage Guidelines for Social Media Administrators**

Official Wesleyan College social media administrators must agree to the following:

- Assign an administrator who regularly monitors postings and content.
- Create a content calendar with pre-planned content for slow periods. Aim for standard times for postings and updates.
- While the recommended minimum frequency is once to twice a week, be sure not to overload your followers with updates.
- The Office of Communications reserves the right to disable or temporarily unpublish Wesleyan College social media accounts that are dormant (no posts, no activity) for more than THREE months, as such stagnancy reflects poorly on the College.
- When page editors and administrators, especially students, have left the College and no longer require access to social media accounts, you must update/adjust your page roles immediately and alert the Office of Communications.
- Monitor comments and respond respectfully in a reasonable amount of time, or delete a comment if it is deemed inappropriate.

III. **Rules for Posting to Wesleyan College Social Media Sites**

Wesleyan is not responsible for monitoring or pre-screening content posted on its official social media sites. However, Wesleyan College reserves the right to monitor its sites and remove, without notice, any content that Wesleyan determines to be harmful, offensive, commercial in nature, or otherwise in violation of law or this policy. If any member of the Wesleyan community becomes aware of objectionable content posted on a Wesleyan social media, or objectionable comments concerning the College that are posted on an unaffiliated site, notify the Office of Communications promptly. Do not reply on behalf of the College. The Office of Communications Social Media Coordinators will work with the appropriate department(s) as necessary to address the objectionable content.

Whenever appropriate, share content directly from Wesleyan College's social media pages rather than duplicating it. When content is directly shared, it is linked back to Wesleyan College's social media accounts. This facilitates the Office of Communications' efforts to analyze social media traffic and engagement (e.g. "likes" and comments). In addition, posts originating from Wesleyan College will have the appropriate links attached to bring the viewer back to the website or coordinating landing page.

The following *Usage Rules* should be followed when posting to any Wesleyan College social media site, communicating with members of the Wesleyan community, or discussing the College on any site, even through your own personal account or using your own phone, computer or other device without using the College network or equipment. All Wesleyan policies governing inappropriate conduct such as sexual or racial (or other) harassment, bullying, discrimination, defamation, infringement of copyright and trademark rights, and unauthorized disclosure of student records and other confidential and private information apply to communications by Wesleyan students, faculty, and staff through social media.

- If endorsing Wesleyan College, accurately disclose your relationship to the College. When using Wesleyan sites or acting within the scope of your College responsibilities, you may only endorse Wesleyan College, its programs, or its services if you have been authorized to do so by the College. Sign your post with your real name and indicate your relationship to Wesleyan. Do not use pseudonyms or post anonymously.
- Carefully consider the accuracy, clarity, length (brief is better) and tone of your comments before posting them. Posts on social media sites should protect the College's institutional voice by remaining professional in tone and in good taste. Do not spread gossip, rumors, or other unverified information.
- Be truthful, accurate and complete in describing Wesleyan programs and services. Do not make false claims or representations about Wesleyan College programs or services, and do not speculate or guess if you do not know the information.
- If you utilize a social medium as a means of student participation in course work or organization be sure to also provide a practical and appropriate alternative for students who may be unable or reluctant to utilize that social medium (for example, some students may not be comfortable with opening a Facebook account).
- Do not post copyrighted content (such as text, video, graphics, or sound files) without permission from the holder of the copyright. Remember, even information that is widely available to the public (such as text, photographs, or other material posted on the Internet) may be subject to copyright restrictions that prohibit unauthorized duplication or dissemination.
- Do not post trademarked content (such as logos, names, brands, symbols and designs) without permission from the trademark owner. The "®" symbol indicates that the mark is federally registered and the owner has the exclusive right to use it. The "TM and SM" symbols indicate that the owner may have common-law rights, but the mark is not federally registered. This includes the use of the Wesleyan College name, logo or trademarks.
- Do not use social media to promote a product, cause, or political party or candidate.
- Respect the views of others, even if you disagree.
- As per our Nondiscrimination Policy, you are not to use social media to harass, threaten, insult, defame, or bully another person or entity. Do not post or store content that is obscene, pornographic, defamatory, racist, excessively violent, harassing, threatening, bullying, or otherwise objectionable or injurious.
- Do not use social media to engage in any unlawful act, including but not limited to gambling, identity theft or other types of fraud.
- Do not disclose confidential College information, non-public strategies, student records, or personal information concerning (past or present) members of the Wesleyan community without proper authorization.
- Do not transmit chain letters, junk email, or bulk communications.

- Do not post a person’s photograph or video image without first obtaining permission and signed talent releases from anyone depicted in the photograph or video. Blank release forms may be found on the Portal and should be promptly returned to the Office of Communications after they are signed.
- Do not represent your personal opinions as institutionally endorsed by Wesleyan College. If you are not authorized to post specific content on behalf of the College, then the following disclaimer should appear in your post: “These are my personal opinions and do not reflect the views of Wesleyan College.”
- Do not insult, disparage, disrespect or defame the College or members of the Wesleyan community.
- Do not discuss legal issues or risks, or draw legal conclusions on pending legal or regulatory matters involving the College.

IV. Posting to Social Media Sites Not Administered by Wesleyan College

Wesleyan College is aware that members of the Wesleyan community may wish to express their personal ideas and opinions through private social media that are not administered by the College. And as per our Freedom of Expression policy Wesleyan acknowledges that every member of the Wesleyan College community (students, faculty and staff) have the right to express their ideas, even if they are unpopular or discomfoting. Nevertheless, Wesleyan reserves the right, under circumstances it deems appropriate and subject to applicable laws and regulations, to impose disciplinary measures, up to and including dismissal from the College or termination of employment, upon students, faculty, or staff who use private social media sites or communications resources in ways that cause significant disruption to the operation of the College, or cause harm to a member of the Wesleyan community. In appropriate cases, such conduct may also be reported to law enforcement authorities.

V. Employee Usage of Social Media

Employees are not allowed to spend excessive time using social media for personal purposes during working hours. In addition, employees may not use any Wesleyan College social media sites, networks, equipment, or peripherals for unauthorized commercial purposes.

Violations of the Policy

Wesleyan reserves the right, under circumstances it deems appropriate and subject to applicable laws and regulations, to impose disciplinary measures, up to and including dismissal from the College or termination of employment, upon students, faculty, or staff who use private social media sites or communications resources in violation of the Usage Guidelines in this policy or in ways that reflect poorly on the College or are deemed to interfere with the conduct of College business. In appropriate cases, such conduct may also be reported to law enforcement authorities.

Interpreting and Implementing Authority

The Director of Communications is responsible for informing the campus of this policy, updating the policy as needed and informing the appropriate supervisor if there has been a violation of the policy.