

SECTION: Personnel Policies and Procedures / General Personnel Policies and Procedures
SUBJECT: Social Media Policy
SOURCE REFERENCE: GSCC Internal Policy

NUMBER: F/8.13

GADSDEN STATE SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

Social media is about community engagement: connecting with your audience and building relationships. Honesty, authenticity and open dialogue are key. Gadsden State Community College supports the need for a strong presence on social media.

The College encourages departments, programs, groups and entities to be active in the social space and create social media accounts to build enriching relationships and campus awareness. Official Gadsden State social media accounts are an extension of the College and should reflect the school's values and institutional goals.

Gadsden State has developed a social media policy and application process to ensure that any and all interactions on behalf of Gadsden State represent the Gadsden State best interests. All social media accounts recognized by the College will be listed on the Gadsden State website in the Social Media Directory.

APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

This policy will apply to social media accounts created by College employees for the official business purposes of the College, including Gadsden State Community College. This includes Gadsden State faculty, campuses, student organizations, groups, departments, programs, entities, etc.

It will therefore impact students, faculty, and staff who utilize social media for communication in conjunction with representing Gadsden State. Some examples of the various communication media included under this policy are Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube.

All officially-recognized social media accounts will be publicly listed by the College in a social media directory on the Gadsden State website.

EXEMPTIONS FROM THIS POLICY

This policy will apply only to social media accounts created for the express purpose of officially representing Gadsden State groups, departments, programs, entities, etc. and will not apply to private social media accounts. College employees acting in an individual capacity should exercise caution to communicate clearly that they are not acting in a representative capacity or expressing the views of the College.

DEFINITIONS USED IN THIS POLICY

Poster or User: A person submitting content to any social media site that is officially recognized by Gadsden State.

Social Media: Social media is media designed to be disseminated through social interaction using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques. Social media uses the Internet and web-based technologies to transform how people communicate with one another and receive news, information and entertainment. Social media has transformed people from content consumers to content producers. Types of social media include networks like Facebook and YouTube but also include blogs and podcasts.

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Social Media Accounts: These are accounts or profiles created on social media outlets such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, etc.

Social Media Best Practices: These consist of widely recognized guidelines, ethical considerations, and conventions for creating successful social media campaigns and accounts.

Social Media Terms and Conditions: The terms and conditions imposed by the social media website in which the User is participating.

College's Best Interest: To represent the College in a fair, accurate, and legal manner while protecting the brand and reputation of the institution.

POLICY STATEMENT

Gadsden State has developed a policy to portray, promote and protect the institution properly and to assist Gadsden State entities in creating and managing their social media accounts. The following policy also provides suggestions on how to protect personal and professional reputations while using social media.

This policy requires that:

1. To create a recognized Gadsden State social media account, you must first apply by completing the request for services form, then meet with the PR and Marketing Department to discuss account requirements and goals.
2. Each social media account will have two responsible Gadsden State employees assigned as administrators, as well as at least one member of the PR and Marketing Department.
3. Inappropriate, offensive, injurious, and illegal content may be removed by employees identified as account administrators or at the direction of the PR and Marketing Department.

POLICY PROVISIONS

Use of Social Media Sites for General Business, Marketing and Communications

The Director of Public Relations will be responsible for administering this policy.

Administrators may contact Gadsden State's Digital Content Specialist at any time for consultation.

The following requirements apply to all Gadsden State Social Media accounts:

1. The PR and Marketing Department must approve the profile picture of all Gadsden State recognized accounts. If the Gadsden State logo is used in the design of the profile picture, it should be the updated logo and should not be altered in any significant way.
2. All social media accounts officially recognized by Gadsden State must have at least two Gadsden State employees as administrators at all times to ensure adherence to this policy. The Digital Content Specialist should have access as an administrator or editor on all Gadsden State social media pages. If an employee

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steps down as page administrator, it is the academic or administrative department's responsibility to replace said page administrator and remove their access to the page.

3. Gadsden State employees identified as administrators of accounts are responsible for managing and monitoring content of their social media accounts. Administrators are responsible to remove content that may violate the College's Conduct Policies or the Social Media Terms and Conditions.

4. The PR and Marketing Department will periodically conduct audits to ensure policy compliance.

Guidelines for Content:

a) Gadsden State employees are expected to adhere to the same standards of conduct online as they would in the workplace. Laws and policies respecting workplace conduct, contracting and conflict of interest as well as applicable policies and guidelines for interacting with students, parents, alumni, donors, media and all other College constituents apply online and in the social media context just as they do in personal interactions. Employees are fully responsible for what they post to social media sites. Adhere to Gadsden State Community College compliance requirements, policies and guidelines. For employees, this includes but is not limited to acceptable behaviors outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual, Professional Code of Conduct or Employee Handbook.

b) Use good judgment about content and respect privacy laws, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Do not include confidential information about the College, its staff or its students in materials posted on social media sites. Examples include information about a student's grades or performance, admission status, GPA, Social Security number and any/all other information that would be covered by FERPA; personally identifiable health information such as medical conditions or injuries or healthcare sought or received; and other private personal information that the person has not consented to have published. The College will not ask for, nor should an individual send, credit card or payment information, classified information, privileged information, private information or information subject to non-disclosure agreements via any social network internet communication service. Don't violate the law. Refrain from using information and conducting activities that may violate local, state or federal laws and regulations.

c) Social media posters must also be aware of NCAA rules governing interactions between the institution and its employees, and prospective student-athletes. All employees should refrain from contacting (Tweeting, messaging, friending on Facebook) prospective student-athletes prior to signing a National Letter of Intent. Always check with the Director of Athletics before posting anything that may violate these rules.

d) Post only content that is not threatening, obscene, a violation of copyright or other intellectual property rights or privacy laws, or otherwise injurious or illegal. If you are unsure whether certain content is protected by privacy or intellectual property laws, contact the Digital Content Specialist.

e) Representation of your personal opinions as being endorsed by the College or any of its organizations is strictly prohibited. Gadsden State's name or marks may not be used to endorse any opinion, product, private business, cause or political candidate.

f) By posting content to any social media site, the poster represents that the poster owns or otherwise has all of the rights necessary to lawfully use that content or that the use of the content is permitted by fair use. Posters also agree that they will not knowingly provide misleading or false information, and that they will indemnify and hold the College harmless for any claims resulting from the content.

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g) While Gadsden State is committed to the protection of academic freedom, it shall have the right to do so, and, with respect to any site maintained in the name of the College, may remove or cause the removal of any content for any lawful reason, including but not limited to, content that it deems threatening, obscene, a violation of intellectual property rights or privacy laws or otherwise injurious or illegal. Administrators are responsible for monitoring postings and comments to social media sites and for deleting posts that do not adhere to our policies. Comments that are obscene, defamatory, profane, libelous, threatening, harassing, abusive, infringing of intellectual property rights, invasive of privacy, hateful or embarrassing to another person or any other person or entity are not allowed and should be removed. Administrators agree to take all reasonably possible steps to prevent and eliminate inappropriate comments and understand that it may be necessary to discontinue the use of the social media if such comments cannot be eliminated or prevented.

h) When using or posting online material that includes direct or paraphrased quotes, thoughts, ideas, photos or videos, always include citations. Provide a link to the original material if applicable.

i) If you also maintain your own personal social media accounts, you should avoid creating confusion over whether or not the account is associated with Gadsden State. If you identify yourself as a Gadsden State Community College faculty or staff member online, it should be clear that the views expressed on your site are not those of the College and you are not acting in your capacity as a Gadsden State employee. While not a requirement, Gadsden State employees may consider adding the following disclaimer to personal social media accounts: "While I am an employee at Gadsden State, comments made on this account are my own and not that of the College."

User Agreements for Social Media Accounts

Whenever a social media account is created, the social media outlet requires the account creator to agree to certain terms and conditions for use of the site by clicking "Yes" or "I accept" as part of the account creation process. These are legal contracts, and they often contain terms and conditions that create risks for the account creator and the College (for officially-recognized Gadsden State accounts). In view of this, Gadsden State has adopted this policy to manage these so-called "clickwrap agreements" and mitigate the risks they create. Account administrators are delegated authorities to create official social media accounts through completion of the application process and approval-by the PR and Marketing Director.

College employees and departments are not authorized to enter into advertising agreements with social media sites without prior authorization and approval obtained by contacting the PR and Marketing Department. Any Gadsden State department or program wishing to purchase advertising services from social media sites, or from any type of publication, must follow all applicable rules and policies governing both the public relations considerations and the procurement and contracting considerations related to such services.

Disclaimers

The following disclaimer is posted on the Social Media Directory and applies to all officially recognized social media accounts:

- Comments and posts on Group, Division or Program accounts are those of the site administrator(s) and do not necessarily reflect Gadsden State opinions, strategies or policies.

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- **User-generated Content:** Gadsden State accepts no responsibility or liability for any data, text, software, music, sound, photographs, images, video, messages or any other materials or content generated by users and publicly posted on Group, Division or Program accounts.
 - **Inappropriate Content:** Anyone who believes a Group, Division or Program account includes inappropriate content should report it to the site manager first, then to the PR and Marketing Department.
 - **Linked sites:** Gadsden State accepts no liability or responsibility whatsoever for the contents of any target site linked from Group, Division or Program accounts.
 - **Terms of Use:** By posting content on Group, Division or Program accounts, you represent, warrant and agree that no content submitted, posted, transmitted, or shared by you will infringe upon the rights of any third party, including but not limited to copyright, trademark, privacy; or contain defamatory or discriminatory or otherwise unlawful material. Gadsden State reserves the right to alter, delete or remove (without notice) the content at its absolute discretion for any reason whatsoever.
 - **Copyright:** The content on Group, Division or Program accounts is subject to copyright laws. Unless you own the rights in the content, you may not reproduce, adapt or communicate without the written permission of the copyright owner nor use the content for commercial purposes.

 - **Photography, Video Recording, and FERPA Compliance**

Gadsden State Community College may photograph, video record, or otherwise capture images, audio, or likenesses of students, faculty, and staff while participating in College-related activities, events, classes, programs, or while present on College campuses. Such recordings may be used by the College for legitimate educational, informational, marketing, advertising, promotional, and public relations purposes, including publication on College websites, social media platforms, printed materials, and other official communications.
 - In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Gadsden State Community College will not use images, video, or recordings in a manner that discloses a student's non-directory educational records or personally identifiable information from education records without appropriate consent, unless otherwise permitted by law.
 - The College considers photographs and video recordings captured for institutional purposes to be part of its official media resources. Participation in College activities or presence at College-sponsored events where photography or recording occurs constitutes acknowledgment that such media may be used for College purposes without compensation.
 - Faculty, staff, or students who do not wish to be photographed, recorded, or included in College advertising, marketing, or social media content must submit a written request to decline participation. Requests must be submitted in writing to both the Public Relations and Marketing Department and the Human Resources Department. Gadsden State Community College will make reasonable efforts to honor such requests; however, the College cannot guarantee that an individual will not appear incidentally or in the background of photos or videos taken in public or group settings.
 - This provision does not supersede FERPA, applicable privacy laws, or College policies related to student records, academic freedom, or employee rights, and it does not apply to private personal social media accounts.

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APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Fill out a request for services and select "Social Media". Then describe the idea for the page and who it is for.
2. The PR and Marketing department will schedule a meeting to discuss the Social Media Policy and best practices for the page. You should come to the meeting with your desired name for the page, any profile picture ideas or creations, and an idea of the content that will be posted to the page.
3. Once approved, you will create the profile(s) using the approved username and profile picture and assign page administrators.