

BC SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDANCE

Introduction

In the rapidly expanding world of electronic communication, *social media* can mean many things. In general, social media encompasses various activities that integrate technology, social interaction, and content creation. Through social media, individuals can create online content, organize, edit, react, or comment on content, as well as combine and share content on their personal website or someone else's. Social media uses many technologies and forms. This document serves to help Bakersfield College (BC) employees, volunteers, affiliates, and consultants in making decisions when maneuvering social media.

BC understands that its employees use social media sites and other online engagement platforms to share events in their lives, to communicate, and to discuss their opinions with others, including family, friends, and co-workers. However, the use of social media and other online engagement platforms may present certain risks and carry with it certain responsibilities. When BC employees are engaged in their professional duties and tasks as employees of the College, BC expects their actions and behaviors to support the mission of the College. This expectation extends to their interactions on social media and other online engagement platforms administered or managed by college-recognized clubs, departments, programs, employee affiliated groups (EAGs), community, and other collaborative groups affiliated with Bakersfield College. This guidance is intended to aid in the balance of personal vs. formal affiliation with BC and complement existing policies and procedures.

Understand Your Rights and Responsibilities in Using Social Media Technology

Employees are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner that does not adversely affect the job performance of others. To the extent your social media use impacts college employees and students, follow state and federal regulations as well as [District Board Policies and regulations](#), including but not limited to those that protect individual privacy rights and [nondiscrimination](#), [anti-harassment](#), and [anti-workplace violence](#) policies.

While you are more likely to resolve work-related complaints by communicating directly with co-workers, you do have other channels such as speaking with your direct supervisor, filing an internal complaint or grievance, or connecting with a human resource representative. Nevertheless, if you decide to post complaints or criticism or affirm such communication, do not use statements, photographs, video, or other image or audio content that reasonably could be viewed as unlawful harassment or discrimination or other violation of the law such as unlawfully threatening conduct. Examples of such conduct might include offensive posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment based on race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, physical, emotional, or cognitive disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, sexual orientation, or any status protected by law. Examples of unlawful threatening conduct include but are not limited to posting material that would make a reasonable person afraid for one's safety or the safety of one's family.

Expectations

Employees are expected to be truthful and accurate in any communication. Include a link to your sources of information when applicable. If you make a mistake, correct the information, and/or retract it promptly. Never post any information or rumors that you know to be false about employees or students. Employees will not disclose information that may violate the rights of others (e.g. using college profiles to enhance or endorse personal communications or connections for personal gain or to harass or harm others). All employees are subject to FERPA, HIPPA, and other confidentiality assurances. For example, do not disclose another individual's social security number, medical information, financial information, or a student's grades in a manner that violates that person's rights. This also includes posting images or video content taken of others without the express permission of those being captured.

The district and college logos may not be modified and are to be used only for approved college work, including when employees act or respond as representatives of Bakersfield College. For example, the use of logos should not be used for political endorsement or personal products. Use good judgment when posting or reacting to something on social media. Keep in mind your actions and statements can have an impact not only on yourself but others within the BC or broader community. It is expected that communication not adversely affect individual job performance, or the performance of other employees, or adversely impact students served by the college.

If you publish a communication such as a blog or post online related to the work you do or content associated with BC or the Kern Community College District (KCCD), make it clear that you are not speaking on behalf of the college or the district by including the disclaimer, “The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the KCCD.” Additionally, it is important to follow all copyright, fair use, and intellectual property rights when engaging in social media settings.

Using Social Media for College-Related Communication and Interactions

Social media and other online engagement platforms can be used to increase visibility and publicize to a greater network, but to ensure clarity for the source of the originating post or message, college departments, programs, areas, pathways, and other groups are to only repost or reshare an original post without commenting on or changing any of the originator’s information. Ensure there is an appointed employee responsible for monitoring social media content and comments for any site that is linked to BC (e.g. a department, club website, or EAG social media page). Post a disclaimer regarding appropriate content expectations and change the settings to ensure comments are reviewed and approved before posting. Remember that the other policies of ethical and professional social media engagement still apply.

All EAGs automatically consent to the use of all digital images, photographs, videotapes, or film, taken of the EAGs and/or recordings made of their voices and/or written extractions, in whole or in part, of such recordings or musical performance representing BC and/or others with its consent, for illustration, advertising, creating derivative works, or publications in any manner. If the stated information is not to be released, please notify the Office of the President in writing.

Personal Use of Social Media

Avoid using personal social media while working. Do not use college or district email addresses to register on social networks, blogs, or other online tools utilized for personal use. The district and college logos may not be modified or used for personal use or personal endorsements. For example, the use of logos should not be used for political endorsement or personal products and even affiliated organizations require permission to use the BC logos and seals.

Being affiliated with Bakersfield College means that your personal engagement on social media can affect the college as a whole. Being civil and thoughtful in advance of a posting, responding, and reacting is ideal. Anything could eventually become public, even without your consent. In communication or interactions on public social media and other public online engagement platforms when you are expressing personal opinions about the work you do as an employee of BC or Kern Community College District (KCCD), you should make it clear that you are not speaking on behalf of the college or district. It is best to include this disclaimer, “The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the KCCD.”

Media Contacts

Bakersfield College strives to anticipate and address situations in order to provide accurate information and reduce disruption to our community and the public we serve. To best serve these objectives, the district will respond to all news media in a timely and professional manner only through its designated offices. Employees are not authorized to comment on behalf of the college or district and should direct inquiries regarding the college’s position to the Marketing and Public Relations Office.