

Carroll College Social Media Guidelines

June 29, 2012

When the guidelines apply

The following guidelines apply to you whenever you are engaged in social media in your capacity as a Carroll employee or as a student acting on behalf of the college or of any Carroll organization. For example, these guidelines apply when you are operating a Facebook site for a Carroll academic department or writing a WordPress blog as a spokesperson for a Carroll club. Adhere to these guidelines if you are officially representing Carroll in the social media sphere.

These guidelines do not apply when your Carroll connection is noted only for the purpose of basic identification and the circumstances do not imply that you are acting on behalf of Carroll. For instance, you are not required to follow these guidelines if you simply list Carroll as your employer on your LinkedIn profile or your personal Facebook page.

Your purely private personal use of social media is under your purely private personal control. However, personal and professional social media realms are difficult to separate completely. An incoming student, a curious alumnus, or a professional colleague may explore both types of your social media activity. Consider this when developing your social media presence.

The obvious

Online posts may be viewed by people across the globe and may be available for years to come. Do not publish materials you do not want your current and future employers, colleagues and students to read or watch. Remember that online is just like real life: the same rules that apply to you in the workplace apply to your online presence.

Let us know.

Carroll's Communications Director is responsible for enforcing social media policy and for approving Carroll social media sites. Notify the Communications Director before you initiate Carroll social media sites. The Communications Director tracks the college's social media presence and relies on this data when formulating various public relations and marketing strategies.

Complete the Social Media Activity Request Form, which may be downloaded from the portal's Document Center. Submit the form to the Communications Director. Do not develop social media sites until you have received written approval from the Communications Director.

Be legal.

Follow local, state, federal and international laws and the rules on third-party web sites. In particular, be careful when posting details that might damage a person's or corporation's reputation; even repeating false information posted elsewhere may lead to legal prosecution for libel or slander. Of course, respect copyright and

other intellectual property rights. Do not post, without written permission from the owner, text, images, graphics or videos that you have not personally created unless such a posting falls under the fair use exception under federal copyright laws. Finally, keep in mind the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) whenever posting information related to students.

Leave it to the official Carroll spokesperson.

Supplying the public with consistent and accurate information is vital, especially in legal controversies or during a college crisis. Do not provide details about a legal matter or crisis involving the college unless you are designated to do so. If you are aware of a social media discussion about a legal matter or crisis that could benefit from official college input, contact the Communications Director. And, remember that confidential personnel matters and confidential information about students, employees and other members of the campus community cannot be shared.

Adhere to Carroll policies.

Keep in mind that all Carroll policies—including those related to political activities, logos and trademarks, film showings and photographs—apply to your social media activities. Know these policies, and contact the Communications Director to find them if you are unfamiliar with them.

Use Carroll's reputation properly.

Using the Carroll name or logo may constitute implied support by the college for your online postings. Do not promote non-Carroll products or services while using the Carroll name or logos or imply Carroll support for or partnership with another institution, individual or business, unless your supervisor has approved such a relationship. Also gain your supervisor's approval and ensure you will not violate Carroll's *Political and Political Campaign-Related Activities Policy* before you advocate for a cause or take a stand on a public policy issue. Avoid publicizing groups or affiliations that are not directly associated with the college or focus of your social media site, and remove purely commercial advertisements posted by others on your site. Refrain from providing links to one-sided, partisan sites.

In the same vein, when engaged in a purely personal enterprise, such as a business or charity, do not imply Carroll support unless your supervisor has approved such a relationship.

Money matters.

If you plan to solicit funding online for a Carroll department, organization or activity, check with the Office of Institutional Advancement (OIA) for tips and to coordinate with other fundraising activities. Fundraising is far more effective and less confusing and troublesome to donors if it is conducted with planning and coordination with OIA.

Be professional and respectful.

Treat others with respect and courtesy. Use positive language at all times possible. Keep your social media activities free from offensive material, including threatening, defamatory, racist, sexist, pornographic, or violent material. Refrain from portraying a person or situation in a false light or posting an unflattering image of anyone. Honor others' right to privacy when you are posting.

Be honest, genuine, and fair.

Identify yourself and your role at Carroll and always disclose conflicts of interest, whether monetary, personal, or otherwise. Never attempt to mislead your audience by posting under a false identity or by other means. When monitoring an online conversation, do not censor participants because you do not agree with what they are saying. Personal opinions must be identified as such (versus the college's official position on anything).

Be literate and responsible.

Be sure to monitor and update your social media pages daily and have a responsible Carroll employee in charge of doing this—dead sites with stale information do not portray Carroll in the best light. Check your grammar, spelling and facts before you post or send. Poor writing and misinformation discredit your message and tarnish the reputation of the college. If you make a mistake, admit

and correct the error. Also, be wary of perpetuating hoaxes; confirm the validity of information before you spread the word. Cite and link to your sources.

Uncertain? Ask.

Contact the Communications Director whenever you need advice.