



SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

This document is a compilation of social media protocols adopted by North American universities and colleges. It's intended to be a guide for Yukon College employees and students who manage or publish content to social media channels under the name of Yukon College, or as a YC employee.

The College supports employee participation in social media channels. These channels provide an excellent opportunity to network, communicate broadly and creatively, and share knowledge. Staff are encouraged to promote existing YC social media accounts via their own personal accounts. The creation of any social media accounts with Yukon College or YC in the name, must be approved by College Relations.

The following ten guidelines will help YC staff and students use these forums effectively, protect your personal and professional reputation, and provide direction with following Yukon College brand guidelines document and communications policy (*both of which can be found on MyYC, on the College Relations page*).

TEN GUIDELINES

Your identity. Be honest about your identity and be thoughtful about what you choose to share. (Social media sites are a resource for scam artists.)

Communicating with students. Instead of "friending" students on social networks, consider creating a group or page for your program. This will allow you to communicate with students on a platform they are comfortable with, while retaining privacy and boundaries.

Check often. Visit your channel at least twice daily, and preferably have the application open all day. (e.g., Twitter, Facebook.) Update often. You will get out of the social networks, what you put it into them. On Facebook consider updating your page no more than 1-2 times a day and spread the posts throughout the day. On Twitter you can get away with updating more frequently, if you have something of value to say.

Respond to questions quickly. For questions directed to your channel, respond as quickly as possible—within the hour, if possible; at least within the day, even if it is only to say, "I don't know, but I'll find out and get back to you".

Be aware of liability and impact to your reputation. You can be held legally liable for what you post on your site and on the sites of others. Individual bloggers have been held liable for commentary deemed to be under copyright, defamatory, libelous or obscene (as defined by the courts). Employers are increasingly conducting web searches on job candidates before extending offers. Be sure that what you post today will not come back to haunt you.

Don't use your social media channel during a crisis situation taking place at Yukon College. Never participate in social media when the topic being discussed may be considered a crisis situation – safety issues. Refer all social media activity regarding crisis topics to College Relations at CollegeRelations@yukoncollege.yk.ca. For the safety of all, clear direction on what to do in the event of a crisis needs to come from one, coordinated source.

By all means, express your ideas. You are more likely to achieve your communications goals if you are constructive and respectful. If you feel angry or passionate about a subject, it is wise to delay posting until you are calm and clear-headed. Your reputation, and the College's, is best served when you remain above the fray. Remember to follow the Yukon College Code of Ethics posted around the campus, and consider the impact of your comments on your own public image and Yukon College's public image/brand.

Be prudent. Think before you post. There is no such thing as a "private" social media site. Search engines can turn up posts years after the publication date. Comments can be forwarded or copied. They can also be traced back to your IP address. Archival systems save information even if you delete a post. You may view your posted material as your intellectual property, but the terms of useage that you agreed to, may establish the post itself as the property of that social media channel.

Be accurate. Make sure that you have all the facts before you post. It's better to verify information first than to have to post a correction or retraction later. Cite and link to your sources whenever possible. If you make an error, correct it quickly and visibly. This will earn you respect in the online community.

Maintain confidentiality. Do not post confidential or proprietary information about Yukon College, its students, its faculty, its employees or alumni. Use good ethical judgment and follow College policies. If you discuss a situation involving individuals on a social-media site, be sure that they cannot be identified. Remember that you are legally bound by the guidelines of the federal Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) and Yukon's Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act www.priv.gc.ca/leg_c/r_o_p_e.asp and www.atipp.gov.yk.ca/atipp_overview.html.

A suggestion:

On Twitter if you @YukonCollege on relevant tweets, we'll often re-tweet. On Facebook, it's advisable to post an original image along with your posting, if you're looking to maximize the potential for it to be read/viewed.