

Social Media Guidelines for COM Department Accounts

Note: You are responsible for content on your personal social media accounts; however, this addresses **professional social media accounts**, such as the COM Child Development Lab School Facebook page or the COM Student Life Instagram page.

Checklist Before Creating a Social Media Page

Before you create a new social media page, make sure the time will be well spent by answering the follow questions:

- *Goals* – What do you hope to achieve through social media? Who will be your audience? What are your plans for reaching those people?
- *Responsibility* – Who will handle the day-to-day maintaining and monitoring of a social media profile? Will staff have the skills and time needed? (Avoid relying on students for this role.)
- *Content* – What is your strategy for developing meaningful, dynamic content that gets the conversation going? Do you know how often to post and when to post?
- *Listening* – Social media isn't just about producing content, it is about becoming a consumer of content as well. Administrators should be listening to both the feedback of their target audience and for inspiration from industry experts. Have you allotted time and manpower to this purpose?
- *Tools* – Have you chosen which social media platforms you will use and why?
- *Strategy* – Have you created a strategy that outlines the who, what, when, where and why of your campaign?

1. **Creating the account:** For all COM professional accounts (for a department, lab, service, etc.), the staff member creating the account must either make the COM communications coordinator an administrator (Facebook) or give the username and password to the communications coordinator (Instagram, Twitter, etc.). This ensures that accounts can continue in the event you leave the college or an issue arises.
2. **Monitoring:** The administrator must monitor accounts/pages regularly (recommended daily) and respond to questions and concerns. If you have questions about how to respond to a comment or question, contact the communications coordinator. The communications coordinator will be happy to meet with the staff or faculty member managing a current social media account; however, if a page is abandoned or not regularly monitored, COM has the right to request its removal.
3. **Posting:** The administrator must post regularly (at least twice a week) to the page. Know your audience – students, community members, staff – and ask questions, post photos or offer tips. Remember that everything online is public and anyone, not just the COM community, can view it.

Content Development

All content (text, photos, videos, etc.) should:

- Be accurate
- Be professional
- Be active, up-to-date and posted frequently
- Be grammatically correct
- Be appropriate for a general audience
- Relate directly to COM, the College's mission, postsecondary education, campus activities, or other matters pertaining to education or life as a COM student, faculty member, staff member or alumnus
- Have a clear, concise and authentic voice

Content may not:

- Promote individual opinions or causes that are not directly related to the College
 - Infringe on any copyright laws or be posted without permission from the owner
 - Contain anything obscene, explicit, threatening or offensive
 - Contain student information protected by FERPA
4. **Contests:** If you plan on pursuing a contest or promotion, please contact the communications coordinator to coordinate efforts.
 5. **Comments:** If a specific negative comment comes, address it and offer answers. (Example: After a negative comment was posted on COM's Facebook page dealing with Student Services, Dr. Stanfield gave the Marketing Department permission to offer her email and extension to help solve the problem.) In the event of an issue or negative comment arising, please contact the communications coordinator as soon as possible so we can be prepared to respond as well if necessary.

Best Practices

1. Ask questions and invite responses. The more people like your posts and links, comment on your photographs, answer your polls, participate in discussions and post their own photos, the more people will pay attention to what's going on in your group.
2. Link to other COM pages and groups. Comment on their posts. Share their posts. The bigger our network is, the more people will hear about us.
3. Be authentic. Be willing to post interesting or funny things. Have the voice of a person and not an institution. Be willing to spend some time on your page and online community.

College of the Mainland's social media accounts:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/collegeofthemainland

Instagram: <https://instagram.com/collegeofthemainland>

Twitter: [@comducks](https://twitter.com/COMDucks)

YouTube: www.youtube.com/user/COMFightingDucks

LinkedIn: College of the Mainland