

Barnard College Social Media Guidelines

About These Guidelines

Barnard College welcomes the use of social media to interact with and inform the general public and the Barnard community in support of the College's educational mission. These guidelines are intended for staff, faculty, and students managing social media accounts that represent Barnard administrative units, departments, centers, and initiatives, as well as official student groups, clubs, and organizations. If you are in an administrative or faculty role and overseeing a social media account on behalf of your area, please familiarize yourself with these guidelines.

In advance of establishing new College-related accounts, please [contact the director of digital strategy](#) for initial guidance on developing a strategy for your social media presence. Using social media effectively requires committing time and resources to the initiative on an ongoing and consistent basis so do consider whether existing accounts can be used to get out your message.

The Office of Communications maintains Barnard's official College-wide accounts on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and other key platforms. Where needed, individual departments may create their own social media accounts. Before doing so the department should consider its goals and ability to maintain the account effectively.

Official Use of Social Media

Unless specifically authorized by the Office of Communications or designee, no College employee may create an official College presence on any form of social media, now in existence, or created in the future, or represent themselves as a spokesperson or authorized representative of the College. Any existing websites or pages that represent the College are reviewed routinely and may require amendment, or, when necessary, removal. Employees assigned to operate an official social media presence must consult with the Office of Communications and comply with these Guidelines developed by the College, which may be amended from time to time.

Applicable Barnard Policies

Please adhere to all applicable Barnard policies as well as the terms of use for any social media platforms you are using. Relevant Barnard policies may include (but are not limited to) the following:

- [Data Privacy Policy](#)
- [Acceptable Use Policy](#)
- [Student Code of Conduct](#)
- [Policy on Intellectual Property and Copyright](#)
- [College Policies in the HR Employee Handbook for Administrators](#)

Creating and Managing a Social Media Presence

- Work with your supervisors and the Director of Digital Strategy to determine if creating new social media accounts can advance your department goals. The Director of Digital Strategy can assist with developing a social media content strategy and provide guidance on managing your accounts.
- Select an appropriate name for your presence that clearly and simply identifies the connection to Barnard.
- Use [this webform](#) to request approved social media profile avatars that follow Barnard's visual identity guidelines.
- Designate an account administrator with the primary responsibility for overseeing the account, as well as a backup administrator. Make sure that your account passwords are kept secure and accessible to those in the department who may need them if regular administrators are unavailable. Please follow these [guidelines for creating a strong password](#) for your social media account, and change your passwords at least every six months. The College may request administrative access to social media accounts to provide further backup.
- When starting out, concentrate on a single account and assess from there.

Planning and Creating Social Media Content

- **Social media posted on behalf of the College should help to advance the mission of the College.**
- Social media post on behalf of the College should be effective, appropriate, and respectful.
 - An effective post provides benefit to your audience while also helping to advance your departmental goals both in alignment and advancement of Barnard's mission. An effective post informs, enlightens, entertains, reminds, and starts a conversation with your audience.
 - An appropriate post is relevant to department goals or areas of expertise, and communicates in a style that is appropriate for your area's public image.
 - A respectful post is created with consideration for how your words and actions may affect others.
 - Please see the section below on "Inappropriate Social Media Content" for boundaries on social media content.
- Keep in mind that content posted to college-related accounts represents your area, but also reflects on the College as a whole.
- Managers who delegate the drafting of social media content to student workers should review and approve content before it is posted. Student group advisors should regularly review social media content and plans for the clubs, groups, and organizations they oversee. If you are planning a student takeover of a social media account as a special promotion, confer with the Director of Digital Strategy on best practices well in advance.
- Managers should communicate 1) guidelines to their staff regarding who is approved to represent the department on social media and 2) notification procedures if staffers see posts about the department that requires tracking and/or a response.

- Separate the personal from the professional. Content that is appropriate to share with your personal followers may not be appropriate for your department's followers. When in doubt, err on the side of caution and keep personal material off of your department account, whether it is original content or shared.
- Planning posts in advance using a calendar can help you maintain an active presence.
- Share or repost content posted by other reputable accounts that aligns with your goals and message. Be aware that sharing without adding any commentary implies that you fully approve of the message you are sharing. Viewers may infer associations from various aspects of the shared post including the account being shared as well as the content, links, and hashtags.
- Protect confidential and proprietary College information.

Maintaining Your Social Media Presence

- Be prepared to experiment, measure success, and change direction based on what you learn from your audience. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn offer built-in analytics so you can see what content is most popular.
- Carefully check your spelling and grammar when drafting text for your post. Double-check names and account handles. Watch for typos and check links.
- Don't use more than three hashtags in a post (unless you're using Instagram).
- Be obvious, honest, and transparent when managing your account. Posts may be difficult to permanently delete or edit once they are posted, so be careful when you create your post.
 - Make corrections quickly, visibly, and publicly if you unintentionally post inaccurate information.
 - If you catch an error within one minute of posting and your account does not have many followers, you can delete the post. Otherwise please post a corrected version. As a best practice, proceed as if a full history of posted content, edits, and deletions is always visible to users (and not just limited to certain platforms).
- Interact with your community. Social media is all about engagement. Offer your audience insights and interesting information that's unique to your area of expertise. Respond to commenters in a timely manner.
- Monitor your account. If you see inappropriate comments being posted to your account, please notify the director of digital strategy to coordinate a response; **do not** respond on your own.
 - An inappropriate comment is one that is obscene, defamatory, offensive, threatening, abusive; promotes unsafe behavior, spam, and/or advertising; and/or is unrelated to the content under discussion.
 - Be forthcoming on your page or account about if and how comments are moderated.
- In the event of an emergency or crisis situation, managers of official Barnard accounts are asked to retweet or repost only official information provided by Public Safety and/or the main College social accounts. Official accounts are asked to postpone any previously scheduled posts during an emergency.

Closing a Social Media Account

- If you decide to close a social media account, please consult with the digital strategy director. It may be worthwhile to direct users to another Barnard-managed account that would be relevant to their interests.

Separating Your Personal Social Media Accounts

We ask that members of the Barnard community identify your personal social media accounts as personal accounts; In some cases, community members maintain several social media channels, with some for personal use and others for official Barnard business. Please use care to separate the two uses and do not use College outlets to distribute personal communications. In the interest of transparency, employees who use personal social media channels to talk about work or College-related matters are asked to disclose their affiliation with the College. Employees are encouraged to add a disclaimer to their social media accounts stating that their thoughts are their own. For instance, on Twitter, users can use the “Bio” field to note that the views and thoughts expressed are their own and do not reflect the views of the College. Personal communications that may be reasonably seen by a third party as being representative of or conducted on behalf of the College should be clearly noted as being personal and not an official communication from the College.

Inappropriate Social Media Content

The College reserves the right to remove posts or comments that are obscene, defamatory, offensive, threatening, abusive, consisting of spam and/or advertising, or are unrelated to the content under discussion. Barnard College also reserves the right to remove posts or comments that interfere with an individual’s dignity and rights to privacy; promote dangerous or unsafe activity; violate applicable laws including, but not limited to copyright and trademark; or those that violate the use policies promulgated by the applicable social media provider.

If a social media post comes to the attention of the Office of Communications for review, Communications will contact the social media manager for more information and may request an edit or deletion of the post. The supervisor of the social media manager will be included on communications. In the event of a disagreement, the Senior Staff member of the area involved will also be consulted for input.

The College will act to protect its intellectual property, including official marks and copyrighted material, from misuse or abuse.

The College will act to prevent any person or group from misrepresenting their affiliation to the college.

Violation of these social media guidelines will be enforced in accordance with the Enforcement section of the [Barnard College Acceptable Use policy](#).

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