

# General Communications, Marketing and Community Relations Procedure 2.45.1 (8/23)

## MEDIA AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS PROCEDURE

### Contact with media agencies

Direct contact between media agencies will be initiated by and handled through the college's Marketing & Public Relations office ("Marketing"). This ensures information conveyed to the media is communicated in one voice with one brand, in a timely and accurate manner to make sure regulations restricting the release of protected information are followed.

- Employees contacted by media representatives must direct the representative to Marketing.
- Marketing will determine how to best handle the inquiry and, if necessary, generate a response or assist you in communicating with the representative.
- Non-Marketing employees are not to contact media representatives regarding official Sandburg programs, services, clubs/organizations activities or special activities.

### Coaches approached by the media

Coaches or their designees at events approached by reporters to comment on games, matches and tournaments constitutes an exception to this policy. However, should a media representative inquire about subjects other than those related to the event or team, such requests should be forwarded to Marketing.

### Mandatory approval of all public appearances of *any* college employee for *any* reason

All public appearances — including college employees who could be viewed as representing Carl Sandburg College — must be approved by the president and/or Marketing. This includes:

- News media programs, including TV, radio, podcasts, in-person, etc.
- Community speaking engagements within the Carl Sandburg College district
- Participation in community events or parades within the entire Carl Sandburg College district, and other appearances where any Carl Sandburg College equipment, signage, vehicles, flags, banners, etc., are displayed.

Please submit your request via the MPR request form on the Sandburg website.

## SOCIAL MEDIA PROCEDURE

Social media enables Sandburg to showcase its students, employees and alumni through various channels, and it creates direct interaction with our current and prospective students, their families, local communities and stakeholders.

As powerful as this vehicle is, necessary safeguards ensure best practices and overall experiences when using *any* college-related social media platform and/or referencing the college on any non-sanctioned or personal social media platforms and accounts.

Sandburg recognized and used social media accounts include, but are not limited to:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- YouTube
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- Flickr
- TikTok
- Hosted blogging site(s)

Whether personal, professional or in an institutional role, employees should follow the same behavior standards online as you would in real life. The same professionalism, conduct, policies, procedures and guidelines for interacting with students, parents, alumni, donors, media and other Sandburg constituents also apply online.

### Procedures for social media

- **Protect confidential and proprietary information:** Do not post this type of information about Sandburg, students, employees or alumni. Employees must follow General Communications, Marketing and Community Relations Procedure 2.45.1 Updated 8/23, the applicable federal requirements such as FERPA and HIPAA when online, and adhere to all existing and/or forthcoming federal/state laws and Sandburg policies.
- **Respect copyright and fair use:** When posting, be mindful of the copyright and intellectual property rights of others and of the college.
- **Employees *may not* use non-sanctioned or personal pages to post official Carl Sandburg College information *before* it's released by the college accounts:**

- Employees may share an official college post **after** it's announced by the college account. Examples may be awards, dean's list/honors list, graduation list, board items, etc.
- Employees who have authority to post to official channels (as authorized by Marketing only) may use these channels to post official information — as long as it's in coordination with Marketing to ensure alignment and timing of messaging.
- The college assumes no responsibility or liability for employee-posted content of posts, blogs or other social media activity not approved or coordinated through Marketing.
- Employees may not use Sandburg logos or imagery (including Chargers athletics) for endorsements, or on non-sanctioned or personal social media.
- Employees may not use the college name, logos or imagery to promote a product, cause, or political party or candidate.
- Respect college time and property: Refer to Regulation 2.17.3 — Use of Web 2.0.
- Follow the terms of service (TOS) of any social media platform you use. Depending on the channel, that platform may delete your account for failure to comply. In most cases, the TOS may be accessed at the bottom of the social media home landing page.
- The college will uphold principles of free speech and expression; however, not all speech/expression is protected by the First Amendment, including but not limited to speech/expression that is obscene, defamatory, "fighting words," a true threat, a false statement or that would provoke an imminent lawless act.
- The college reserves the right to remove content for any reason, including but not limited to content which is defamatory, offensive, pornographic, libelous, discriminatory or otherwise inappropriate, injurious or illegal.
- The college reserves the right to delete or shut down a college-affiliated social media presence at its discretion.

### **Institutional social media**

If you have been granted permission by Marketing to post on behalf of Sandburg, you must adhere to the following procedures and all procedures and best practices listed above:

- **Creating an account:** Sandburg departments, organizations, clubs or programs that wish to start a social media account must contact the coordinator of multimedia or submit an MPR request form to ensure all college social media sites coordinate with other Sandburg sites and their content.

- **Dedicated point of contact:** All Sandburg pages must have a dedicated employee who is identified as being responsible for content and responsiveness as an administrator or having the ability to access the account. This includes regularly posting and monitoring the page and responding to comments and questions in a timely manner. Once selected, please provide the name/contact information to Marketing.
- **Marketing will have administrative rights for all accounts:** The coordinator of multimedia will be an administrator of *all* college-related Sandburg social media accounts and have oversight privileges for said accounts.
- **Acknowledge who you are:**
  - If you are representing Sandburg when responding to direct messages on a social media platform, acknowledge this – transparency is key.
  - Never respond directly to a negative comment. Instead, ask the person to direct message you to begin resolving the issue “offline.”
  - If replying to a question or comment, and the need for a customer-care situation exists, make the post and add your initials to convey a human element.
  - Never delete unwanted or negative comments — unless they violate the terms of service or use other inappropriate language/images. Then, coordinate with the coordinator of multimedia to determine how to respond.
- **Have a plan and strategy:** Social media managers should consider their messages, audiences and goals, as well as a strategy for keeping information on social media sites up to date. If you need assistance, contact the coordinator of multimedia.
- **Link back to Sandburg:**
  - Whenever possible, link back to sandburg.edu and tag the official Sandburg accounts in your posts using the @ sign and handle of that social page.
  - Posts should be brief and re/direct a visitor to content that resides within sandburg.edu or supporting social media pages.
  - When linking to a news article about Sandburg, check first to see whether you can link to a news release on sandburg.edu instead of to an external media site.
- **Protect the college voice:** Posts on social media sites should protect Sandburg’s institutional voice by remaining professional in tone, taste and integrity.

This section applies to those allowed to post on behalf of Sandburg. These guidelines may be helpful for anyone posting on any social media site in any capacity.

- **Think twice before posting.**

- Regardless of privacy settings, others may share your post, and ultimately, it's out there in cyber space.
- Consider what could happen if a post becomes widely known, and how that may reflect both on you and the college. If you wouldn't say it at a conference or to a member of the media, you shouldn't post it.
- If you're unsure about posting something, or need assistance in responding to an online comment or inquiry, contact the coordinator of multimedia.
- **Strive for accuracy.**
  - Get the facts straight before posting anything on social media.
  - Review content for grammatical and spelling errors. This is especially important if posting on behalf of the college in any capacity. Not all social media channels allow you to edit.
  - Deleting posts may place the college in a negative light; therefore, avoid that action at all costs.
- **Be respectful.**
  - Understand that content contributed to a social media site could encourage comments or discussion of opposing ideas.
  - Responses should be considered carefully in light of how they would reflect on the person who posts and/or the college and its institutional voice.
- **Remember your audience.**
  - Be aware that a presence in the social media world is or easily can be made available to the public at large. This includes prospective students, current students, current employers and colleagues, and peers. Consider this before publishing to ensure the post will not alienate, harm or provoke any group.
  - On personal sites, identify your views as your own. If you identify yourself as a Sandburg faculty or staff member online, it should be clear the views expressed are not necessarily those of the institution.

The college assumes no responsibility or liability for employee-posted content of posts, blogs or other social media activity not approved or coordinated through Marketing.

Please direct any questions or concerns to Marketing.