

CATAWBA COLLEGE

OFFICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

Social media enables Catawba College to connect with key audiences such as students, alumni, parents, donors, employees and the surrounding community. It allows us to freely and easily share our exciting news and updates, as well as event information and important announcements.

If you or your department creates, owns or posts to any social media account/service/tool/app/website on behalf of Catawba College or as an official representative for your department or the College (including, but are not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube, etc.), you should follow the established guidelines below.

Following these guidelines will help ensure and maintain consistent branding and messaging so that we all “speak the voice of Catawba” and maintain and present a common, positive tone and impression on prospective students and our social media audiences in general.

DISPLAY NAMES, USERNAMES, & HANDLES

Display names and usernames (also called handles) are very important as they help followers find you and quickly intuit what the purpose of the account is. When setting up your username/account/handle, remember that you will be representing Catawba College and/or your department – not yourself. Personal names should be avoided as they may cause confusion with what topic/service/page the account is used for, and they may be confused with personal accounts/pages. The account name should reference Catawba if possible and the service/job title/department for which it is used. The sample below shows correct/incorrect ways to designate account names and usernames.

 **CORRECT:** **Acceptable Display Names:** Catawba Webmaster, CatU Webmaster, Catawba Web
Acceptable Usernames/Handles: @CatawbaWebmaster, @catuwebmaster, @catawbaweb

 **INCORRECT:** **Incorrect Display Name:** Maegen Worley
Incorrect Usernames/Handles: @CatawbaWebWorley, @CatawbaWorley, @webmasterworley

LOGOS & PROFILE PHOTOS

The Office of Public Relations can help brand and/or provide logos and photos for your social media accounts. If your department does not have an existing logo or you do not have one on file, simply contact Public Relations. Do not design or create your own logo. With formally trained, experienced and skilled graphic designers on staff, the Office of Public Relations is the only department on campus authorized to create logos to ensure acceptable, tasteful, consistent, and accurate branding for the College.

tone

As an institute of higher education, Catawba’s posts should be a good balance of personal, but formal conversation, good grammar and coherent speech as you would use in actual, personal conversation. While you do not have to be overly formal, “texting shorthand” should be avoided if at all possible as it may be cryptic for many of our audiences (i.e. How RU? WTG, GR8 students at CatU! CU on campus!).

CONTENT

All social media posts should be related to your area. Personal remarks, announcements, viewpoints, etc. about random news and events unrelated to your department should not be shared through accounts that are used on behalf of Catawba College. Know your audience and post content relevant to them.

RE-TWEETING

Never retweet external tweets from non-Catawba accounts. If you want to share or “re-tweet” a link, resource or information that is external to Catawba, the correct way to share this is to craft, re-type, or copy-and-paste that information into your own department social media account and tweet it as your own. Failure to do so (and so doing an actual retweet) of an external tweet results in Catawba’s followers being directed to external social media accounts, as well as THEIR tweet showing up in our College list feed. In summary, it is okay to share outside, relevant information or links – but do so using an original tweet from your department account. Contact the webmaster if you need further clarification.

THINK (AND RE-READ) BEFORE YOU POST

Consider that whatever your post contains, the world can see. Although deleting posts and tweets is possible, posts can be copied, shared, and carried forward in a matter of seconds. Before you post, take a moment to check for errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling. This will greatly help minimize errors (and embarrassment) for both you and the institution.

FREQUENCY

Be informative, timely and relevant. Avoid over-tweeting and over-posting to avoid becoming a nuisance to your audience. A maximum of 2-3 posts each day should be more than adequate to relay important and relevant information. During times when there will be much information to relay, consider spreading the posts out over a few days and/or using a single post to point to online content. While personal texting, messaging, and tweeting habits may be quite frequent and constant, audiences receiving updates from institutions and places of business often find it cumbersome to receive too many updates and too much constant contact without merit.

EXCEPTION: Catawba’s Athletics teams and Sports Information staff often need to post play-by-play updates at live events as appropriate and expected by their specific audience of followers (i.e. scores, play by plays, etc.).

HASHTAGS

Hashtags are used in social media to easily search and locate topics, conversation threads, photos, and like-minded groups. At least one hashtag (but not more than three) should be used on every post on all social media. Examples: #catawbacollege, #gocatawba, #music (used in conjunction with #catawbacollege), #business, #theatre

MODERATION

While it is fine to moderate comments and discussions, you should avoid censoring them as they, by nature, are participatory and involve sharing among many different users. We do recommend that you monitor live discussions for off-topic or abusive comments, while still allowing for an open exchange of ideas. If you have to remove an abusive or inappropriate comment, we suggest simply doing so without bringing attention to it and avoid posting, replying or commenting about the removal or the comment itself.

ADMINISTRATION

Before creating a social media presence, you should have a plan in place for who will be responsible for maintaining and posting updates to it. You should know what tools, apps or programs will be used and how problems and questions will be handled.

HELP US HELP YOU

Catawba has a [social media directory](#) in which all the known official social media accounts are listed. To be included and to help raise awareness of your social media presences, make the webmaster aware of your account or username. Links

to your social media will also be added throughout the website in the respective places, and will be liked/shared on Catawba's main social media outlets.

LOGIN INFORMATION

The Office of Public Relations requests to be copied on the login information for all new and existing accounts. This will help ensure that we have access to the accounts should the need arise. It will also aid in a smooth transition should a change in employment, department or position take place.