Trinity College Policy No. 6.1.1

Policy Statement

This policy outlines the acceptable use of social media platforms for official College accounts and requirements on personal use of social media by employees when personal accounts include Trinity College affiliations.

Accordingly, other policies of the College also apply to social media, depending on the context. These include conduct policies in the *Employee Handbook* (password required) and the *Student Handbook,* the Acceptable Use Policy, the Joint Statement on Academic Freedom, and the Policy on Nondiscrimination. Such policies apply equally to social media as they do in other contexts, and individuals are expected to comply with them.

***This policy shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the College's** Joint Statement on Academic Freedom.*

Professional Use
The Office of Communications and Marketing maintains the official Trinity College accounts on various social media platforms, including Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, X, Threads, Bluesky, Flickr, and TikTok, and leads the overall College social media strategy.

All who manage social media accounts associated with Trinity should comply with this policy and ensure that the accounts they manage, in accordance with this policy, are used in a way that supports the academic mission of the College, represents the Trinity community in an authentic and positive manner, and does not harm the reputation of the College. Faculty or staff members who are responsible for College-affiliated social media accounts and their student delegates are expected to behave responsibly as representatives of the College, keeping in mind that social media postings, including comments and responses, can be shared and stored by millions around the world.

In accordance with Trinity's Policy on Nondiscrimination, individuals are prohibited from using College social media to harass, threaten, discriminate against, or disparage others. Social media accounts may not be used to respond to job-related requests (e.g., employment references) or to release proprietary information about Trinity or its students, faculty, staff, or alumni or any other confidential information about any member of the Trinity community.

Use of the College's name, word mark, or other institutionally identifiable information must meet the standards set forth in the Policy on the Acceptable Use of Technology Resources, and the College's brand guidelines. Use of Trinity brand elements on personal or nonaffiliated accounts

in any way, such as utilizing a Trinity logo, is prohibited, as it may be interpreted as representing the College.

Personal Use by Employees

Only the President and the Vice President for Strategic Marketing and Communications officially speak for the College, unless authority has been expressly delegated. To avoid confusion, the College reserves the right to ask staff employees to remove or modify references to Trinity or their professional role at the College from personal social media accounts. Doing so protects the employee's right to speech and avoids potential conflict with Trinity's reputation. Division leaders (i.e. Vice Presidents), Human Resources, and/or the Office of the President will speak with staff discretely when such conflict exists.

Examples of when the College may ask for the removal of professional affiliation or reference to Trinity might include when:

- Personal posts, comments, or shared content contain material that is discriminatory, harassing, threatening, violent, or presents significant risk;
- Personal posts are reasonably misperceived as representing the College's position.

This provision applies regardless of privacy settings, as content may still be accessible or shared beyond the employee's intended audience. Staff who receive requests from division leaders, Human Resources or the Office of the President may be asked to remove their professional affiliation from their profile.

The College expects faculty, who have academic freedom, to abide by the professional responsibilities described in the AAUP's "Committee A Statement on Extramural Utterances:" "to be accurate, to exercise appropriate restraint, to show respect for the opinion of others, and to make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution."

Managing Trinity College Social Media Accounts

Trinity College's social media presence is collectively stronger when official accounts engage across audiences, interact with other official accounts, and collaborate on content creation. When accounts go dormant due to inactivity or lack of management continuity, extra support is needed to maintain the College's public presence. Community members who have or would like to create an official social media account that represents a Trinity department, team, center, unit, or program must submit a Social Media Account Registration Form to the Office of Communications and Marketing. The office will then register the account and provide training on uses and best practices. The Social Media Account Registration Form must include the following information:

- Name of the requesting entity and responsible employee(s) for the account (required)
- If posting is delegated to a student(s), provide student name(s), class year(s), and Trinity email(s) (must have active Trinity credentials and a trincoll.edu email).
- Intended audience(s)
- Continuity plan if roles change or the managing employee changes employment

- Accounts and handles
- Credentials that are shared in 1Password with the Office of Communications and Marketing and departmental/team lead

Registered accounts will be included in the official Trinity College social media listing and promoted accordingly. Visit the social media section of the Office of Communications and Marketing website for more information. Please note, these social media accounts should not post statements that could be construed as that of the College, on behalf of the full community, or an institutional statement.

Inactive Sites or Accounts

A site or account that is inactive for more than one academic year may be taken down or requested to be deleted by the College. Departments are responsible for managing continuity between account managers and informing the Office of Communications and Marketing of any change in status.

Emergencies

The Office of Communications and Marketing manages crisis communications, public relations, and media responses via social media and is the only office authorized to communicate for the College under these circumstances. In the event of a crisis on campus, all social media accounts must direct the attention of their followers to the College's official channels and refrain from posting any information—including previously scheduled posts—other than official information provided by the official Trinity social media accounts. The Office of Communications and Marketing also manages responses to media inquiries and other messages to the campus community.

Use of Trinity Seal or Word Mark

Use of the Trinity seal or word mark as a profile picture or post on social media accounts is prohibited.

Copyright

Any photo, video, narrative, or other content posted on official Trinity accounts must be the property of the department or unit, must be in the public domain, or must fall under fair use. Photos taken by the Office of Communications and Marketing should be posted only with permission and must include credit or attribution. The College reserves the right to reuse, distribute, or share content posted on brand social media channels.

Posting Guidelines

Trinity reserves the right to delete posts, DMs, or comments on any official College social media accounts that represent Trinity and its athletic teams, groups, clubs, and departments, including posts that contain:

- Confidential, personally identifying, or private information (as defined by law)

- Profanity
- Personal attacks
- Bullying or harassment
- Racist, sexist, homophobic, or other slurs
- Abusive, wildly off topic, or threatening content
- Pornography or sexually explicit or obscene visuals or text
- Violations of copyright or privacy laws
- Content that violates the College's student, employee, or faculty handbooks or College policies
- Spam or commercial solicitations
- Malicious or harmful software
- Content factually misrepresenting the College

All content, comments, and posts on Trinity's social media channels are bound by the terms of service for that social media service and must uphold the College's mission and values at all times.

Adherence to Terms of Service
Read, understand, and obey the terms of service and use of all social media you use. Below are the terms of service for accounts in use by the College:

- [Facebook terms of service](#)
- [Instagram terms of use](#)
- [Threads terms of use](#)
- [YouTube terms of service](#)
- [LinkedIn User Agreement](#)
- [Flickr terms of service](#)
- [TikTok terms of service](#)
- [Bluesky terms of service](#)
- [X terms of service](#)

Additional Guidelines
Social media posts, including comments and responses, can be shared rapidly to users worldwide. When creating social media posts for a College account, please adhere to the following guidelines:

Recognize Your Responsibility to Trinity
You are representing Trinity when posting on official college social media platforms; acknowledge this. Employees should discuss with their supervisors any questions they have as to whether and when they are authorized to respond directly to user comments. If the supervisor is unclear about levels of authority, please contact the Office of Communications and Marketing.

Be Thoughtful
If you have any questions about whether it is appropriate to write about certain kinds of material in your role as a Trinity employee or as a student representative of the college, consult your supervisor or the Office of Communications and Marketing before you post.

Have a Plan

Departments should consider their messages, audiences, and goals as well as strategy for keeping information on official College social media sites current. Consider the audiences you are hoping to reach and the kind of information they would most like to have from the College. Recognize that consumers of social media are accustomed to significant interaction. When you establish or manage a social media account, plan to monitor and update it frequently. The Office of Communications and Marketing can assist and advise you with social media planning.

Protect the Institutional Voice

Posts on official Trinity social media sites should protect the College's institutional voice by remaining professional in tone and in good taste. If you see unfavorable opinions, negative comments, or criticism about Trinity, do not try to have the post removed or send/post a written reply. Instead, forward this information to the Office of Communications and Marketing, which may advise you on responding or may respond on behalf of the College.

Be Respectful

Be respectful of others' posts and comments. 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 author and/or the College and its institutional voice.

Think Twice before Posting

Social media has the ability to send your message around the world instantaneously. Before you publish the content, you need to be sure that you want everyone to read what you've written. Any comment that you would not want to make in a public forum is not one that you want to publish on a social media account. Even comments or posts intended to be private can be made public by anyone who has access to them (e.g., through screenshots of material posted in public places).

Check Your Posts Carefully

By their very nature, social media communications move quickly. The ease and speed with which you can post on these sites fly in the face of careful editing and fact gathering. Be sure of your facts. Take time to look over grammar and spelling. This is especially important if you are posting on behalf of Trinity.

Understand that Social Media Posts Represent a Conversation, Not a Monologue

Your posts may well generate responses. That is what social media tries to encourage. But those conversations should not degenerate into uncivil, heated arguments. Evaluate responses carefully with this policy in mind.

Accessibility

Please consider accessibility when crafting posts. This includes using clear language and avoiding the use of institutional acronyms, avoiding the use of emojis and emoticons to replace text, and adding alternative text to images, videos, and GIFs where supported.

Posting on Your Own Personal Social Media Accounts
Although the College does not seek to regulate the use of personal social media beyond this policy, as a Trinity employee or student, you should be aware that the public might view you as speaking as an official representative of the College. As a reminder, any content posted in any online space, regardless of the intent for privacy, has the potential to be publicly and permanently visible.

Anyone who posts to a blog or other social media site is liable for that content. Individuals have been held personally liable for commentary deemed to be proprietary, copyrighted, defamatory, libelous, or obscene (as defined by the law).

Key Offices to Contact Regarding the Policy and Its Implementation

Responsible Officer: Vice president for strategic marketing and communications (or a designee appointed by the president)

The Office of Communications and Marketing is the key contact for any questions. Please see the Social Media section of the office's website.

Date of Policy Revision
The effective date of this policy is December 20, 2021. This policy was revised on 2/23/2026.