

An aerial photograph of Curry College, showing a large, multi-story building with a prominent central tower and steeple. The building is surrounded by lush green trees. The entire image is covered with a semi-transparent purple overlay.

CURRY COLLEGE

# A GUIDE TO SOCIAL MEDIA BEST PRACTICES

PREPARED BY  
THE OFFICE OF MARKETING AND  
COMMUNICATIONS

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CURRY COLLEGE

1071 Blue Hill Ave, Milton, MA 02186



## INTRO

The utilization of social media by colleges and universities is no longer seen as an option but a **necessity**. For institutions of higher education, social media provides a unique opportunity to engage with various constituent groups, particularly prospective students and families, current students and families, and alumni.

Consistency across all social media channels of the College is crucial for establishing our overall brand and message, as studies show that inconsistency within a brand causes your audience to react negatively.

We've created the following guidelines and best practices to help you understand your role in enhancing and protecting the reputation of Curry College. These guidelines apply to Curry College faculty and staff, as well as anyone else acting on behalf of the college such as student workers, and are used in connection with various social media platforms.

Click on each icon below to view the college's official accounts.



**OFFICIAL  
COLLEGE  
ACCOUNTS**

# BEST PRACTICES AND TIPS

## Creating An Account

- Be sure to ask yourself/your office why you're creating a social media account. Who is your audience? What is the account's overall purpose? What are your competitors doing? And most importantly, what is your content strategy, and does that strategy produce a consistent flow of material for the account?
- Assign dedicated social media administrators/content creators. Be sure to include Curry College in full in the account name. Example: Curry College Alumni Association vs. Curry Alumni Association.
- Register for a new social media account, and log it with respective information in the Curry College Social Media Directory.

## General Best Practices

- Have clearly defined goals.
- Be accurate in your posts-make sure you have all the facts before publishing.
- Track analytics. This will help determine the type of content that best engages your audience. Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram all have built in analytics reporting.
- Be respectful. You are more likely to achieve your goals by being constructive, respectful, and transparent.
- Use visuals-posts with visual representation not only perform better, but they also help the reader clarify and comprehend information which avoids misinterpretation.

## Hashtags

Consistent use of appropriate hashtags helps us further promote the Curry College brand. Hashtags are also a great way to engage your audience and participate in meaningful conversations.

### *General/Everyday Use-Approved Hashtags*

#CurryCollege  
 #CurryStudents  
 #WeAreCurry  
 #ColonelsLiveHere  
 #BleedPurple (All Athletics)  
 #GoColonels (All Athletics)

## Engagement Style

Engagement is simply another term for creating conversations with your followers. This includes answering questions/inquiries about Curry, creating conversations with current and prospective students, alumni, and more. When it feels authentic, incorporating the Curry brand personality into your engagement is a great way to spread our message. One of Curry College's attributes is that it is a close-knit, friendly community where professors know their students and the students in turn know their professors and know that they are approachable and dedicated. You can internalize these brand attributes and others and in doing so ensure a consistent and friendly social voice that is symbiotic with what Curry represents.

Take a look at an example of a good social media engagement below.

# BEST PRACTICES AND TIPS



*Example of good user-generated content (UGC)*



*Example of good social media engagement*



## Other Tips for Social Media Engagement

- Use neutral skin tone emojis. This helps avoid any unintentional bias in your social media writing.
- Answer questions as quickly as possible. Having an auto-response set up or saved so you can quickly copy and paste for frequently asked questions will help your response time and engagement rate.
- Make a mistake? Correct it ASAP. Everyone makes mistakes. Whether it's a typo or inaccurate information, always be sure to correct your posts as soon as possible.
- Posting on Instagram? Go vertical! While Instagram allows landscape and square photos, the ideal post will be in portrait dimensions (4:5, 1080px x 1350px), as it takes up the most real estate on the reader's timeline.
- User-generated content (UGC) is key. The first step to receiving great UGC is to encourage your followers to share it with you! This can include a memorable hashtag and/or a personal call to action.

# BEST PRACTICES AND TIPS

## Answering Questions

**Be informed and empowered.** Discuss with your supervisor about how you are empowered to respond directly to users and when you may need approval. [Click here to download the Curry College Engagement Style Flowchart](#) to help you decide if/how to respond on social media.

**Examples of a question that requires approval**

*"Hey Curry College, how come your financial aid office sucks?"*

*"Hey Curry College, how do I best get in touch with your financial aid office concerning my aid award?"*

**Examples of a question that does not require approval**

## Link Back

**We encourage departmental social media sites to link back to Curry College's institutional sites.**

- Marketing website: [www.curry.edu](http://www.curry.edu)
- Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/currycollege>
- Twitter: <http://twitter.com/CurryEdu>
- Instagram: [www.instagram.com/currycollege](http://www.instagram.com/currycollege)
- YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/currycollegevideo>

## Ensure a consistent, personable and brand-enhancing tone or voice.

**One of Curry College's main attributes is that it is a close-knit, friendly community.**

You can internalize these brand attributes and others and in doing so ensure a consistent and friendly social voice that is symbiotic with what Curry represents.

## Link your strategy to the Strategic Plan

### Vision in Action: A Focus on Student and Institutional Success

- Showcase student success inside and outside of the classroom and in their careers
- Promote our rigorous and relevant academic programs with career-focused success

*“Student success is at the heart of all we do, and the success of the College is a derivative of the success of our students and alumni.”*

# ACCOUNT MAINTENANCE & GOVERNANCE

## Social Media Policy

The following policy is in place to ensure that Curry College is being represented in a cohesive, strategic way on social media when the College's name or brand is used.

Social media accounts created by such groups must be approved by MarComm and follow the Social Media Policy to remain active.



- MarComm must have full administrative access to all social media accounts that represent the College officially. Usernames, passwords, and administrative roles must be shared.
- If a username or password has been changed, MarComm must know immediately.
- All primary social media accounts are required to have new, relevant, and updated content posted at least three times per week. Note the industry standard for post frequency per channel
  - Facebook: 3-6 posts per week
  - Twitter: 2-4 tweets per day
  - Instagram: 3 posts per week; preferably once per day, every day
- Accounts should be regularly monitored, and engagement should be added.
- All social media accounts are required to have at least two dedicated content creators to manage the account. Content creators can be faculty, staff, or students.
- Any new hashtags created for events or campaigns should be well thought through. Consult with the social media specialist prior to creating any new hashtags.
- If there is no activity on your approved primary account for more than **one month**, we reserve the right to shut down your account. Inactive accounts with Curry College's name reflect negatively on the institution.

## Political Speak and Engagement Policy

**The College and its affiliated groups is prohibited from the following activities:**

- Endorsing candidates
- Making campaign contributions
- Engaging in fundraising
- Statements of position (verbal or written) made on behalf of the College in favor or in opposition to any candidate for public office

# PERSONAL ACCOUNTS

## Recommendations for personal social media activity

### Be authentic.

Be honest about your identity. If you choose to post about Curry College on social media sites on your personal time, please identify yourself as a Curry faculty or staff member. Never hide your identity for the purpose of promoting Curry College through social media.

### Protect your identity.

While you want to be honest about yourself, don't provide personal information that scam artists or identity thieves could use against you. Don't list your home address or telephone number or work telephone number or email address (\*although, in some situations the relationships and connections you make on your personal time in social media can and should carry over into your professional work. It is also recommended that you use a separate email address to create your social media accounts.

### Add a disclaimer.

Please be clear that you are sharing your views about a given topic as an individual, not as a formal representative of Curry College.

*"The views expressed on this site are mine alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of my employer."*

### Be aware of liability.

You are legally liable for what you post on your own site and on the sites of others. Individual bloggers have been held liable for commentary deemed to be proprietary, copyrighted, defamatory, libelous or obscene (as defined by the courts).



# VISUAL IDENTITY GUIDELINES

## *Image Size Specifications*

### **Facebook**

Profile Photo: 180 x 180 pixels

Cover Photo: 820 x 312 pixels

Event Page Cover Photo: 1920 x 1080 pixels

Story Photo: 1080 x 1920 pixels

### **Twitter**

Profile Photo/Avatar: 400 x 400 pixels

Header: 1500 x 500 pixels

Image Post: 1024 x 512 pixels

### **Instagram**

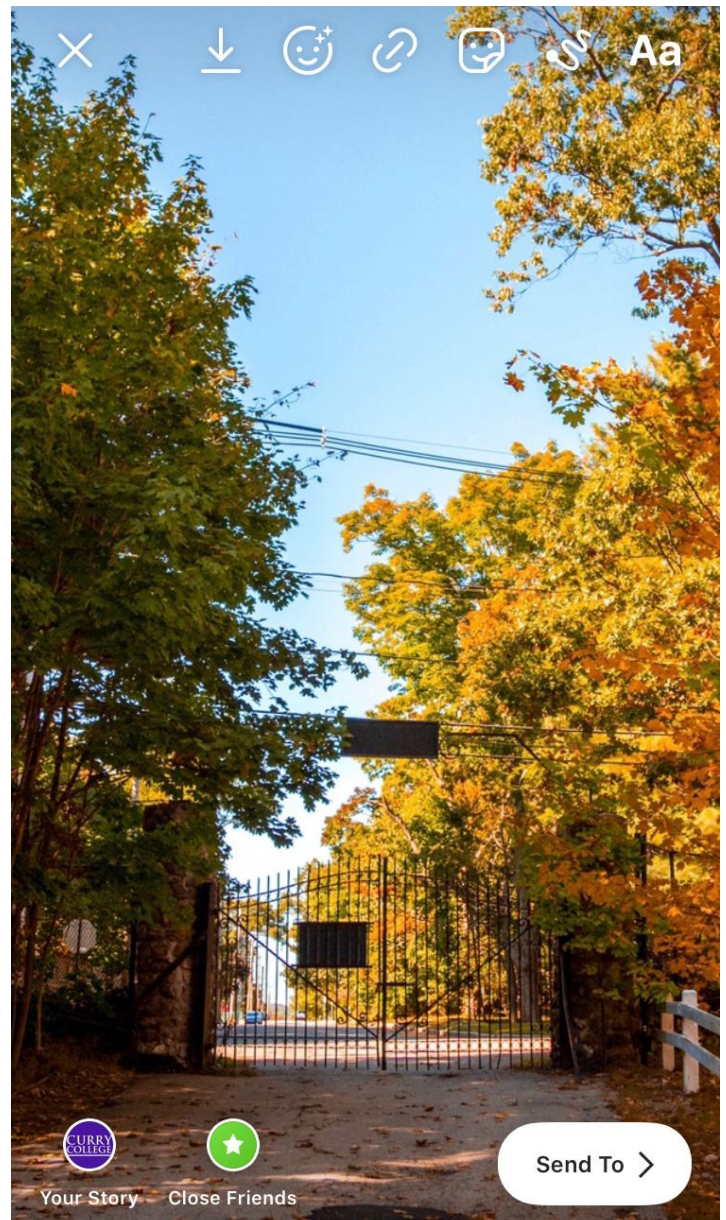
Profile Photo: 110 x 110 pixels

Feed Image: 1080 x 1080 pixels (square)

1080 x 608 pixels (landscape)

1030 x 1350 pixels (portrait)\*

\*A portrait image on Instagram takes up the most space on a timeline, thus, giving you the opportunity for maximum exposure.



Instagram Story Photo (1080 x 1920 pixels) or 9:16 ratio)



Facebook Cover Photo (820 x 312 pixels)

**Need Help? Don't know where to start? Email Social Media Specialist Emily Machado at [emily.machado@curry.edu](mailto:emily.machado@curry.edu) to schedule an appointment.**



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