

Georgian Court University Social Media Guidelines

In an effort to ensure consistent messaging and brand identity, Georgian Court University will maintain a single presence for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Vine, etc. These official social media channels will be maintained through the Office of Marketing and Communications. The various social media channels that have been maintained by other departments or offices on campus will be removed, and if need demonstrates, moved over to a Facebook group. Each group will have a departmental or office representative serve as a group administrator, as well as an administrator from the Office of Marketing and Communications.

Definition of Social Media: For the purposes of these guidelines, *social media* includes the various online technology tools that enable people to communicate easily via the Internet to share information and resources. Social media can include blogs, social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Tumblr, SnapChat and LinkedIn. Any Web application, site, or account maintained by Georgian Court University that facilitates an environment for staff, faculty, students, and alumni to share information and opinions in an interactive way is included in this definition.

Target Users: The main target audience for GCU social media channels are those students/families who are interested in attending GCU in the future. current and past GCU students, faculty, and staff. Beyond that target should also be current and past students, faculty and staff or those interested in GCU events open to outside community members.

Purpose: It is Georgian Court University's intention to use social media as a way to reach out to the GCU community by providing useful information—not limited to just news and events—but on any topics that may be of interest to our unique population.

Goals: It is the goal of our social media presence to keep our users informed, and to give them multiple, convenient methods of communicating with the university and providing feedback. Furthermore, it is our goal to increase the reputation of GCU by establishing our social media channels as a source of timely and trusted information.

Responsibilities: The marketing specialist, assistant editorial director, and Web administrator will serve as the points of contact for the university's social media channels via e-mail to facebook@georgian.edu. It is the job of these individuals to keep current on trends and technologies in social media and assess the potential usefulness of new technologies for the university.

It is the role of these individuals to oversee the creation of new social media accounts, grant and monitor access to various social media accounts, ensure consistent branding and messaging across social media channels, and ensure that all social media accounts and posts are in accordance with the university's branding and identity guide, *Representing Georgian Court University*.

The GCU official social media channels will be the official social media voice of Georgian Court University. These pages and accounts will announce all Georgian Court University news when the information is approved for release to the public. If there is any question as to where information should

be released, please check with the Office of Marketing and Communications, as they are charged with maintaining the integrity of the GCU brand and managing how the university is represented to a very broad audience. For university-wide events, design and content creation should always be done in collaboration with a representative from the marketing team.

Guidelines for Social Media accounts: Web sites and/or accounts that purport to represent information as Georgian Court University (including the colleges, schools, departments, divisions, offices, centers, institutes, programs, series, etc.) on any publicly available Web site must be coordinated, approved, and administered by the Office of Marketing and Communications. This office will provide appropriate logos. Web sites/providers that host unauthorized accounts using identification as Georgian Court University or its subdivisions—in name or image, including logos—will be contacted for immediate removal of accounts. The Office of Marketing and Communications maintains social networking Web pages that serve as official gateways and resources to our students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents, and friends who want to connect to GCU.

Facebook

Facebook is a ubiquitous and rapidly growing platform for social networking and for sharing updates and information. The Office of Marketing and Communications works with GCU departments/offices to extend their reach to a general interest mass audience (undergraduate and graduate admissions, M.B.A. program, arts and cultural programming, alumni association, etc.) via the Georgian Court University Official Facebook page. Departments, programs, and offices of the university with a demonstrated need for a Facebook group should contact the Office of Marketing and Communications at facebook@georgian.edu for more information.

Creating Facebook Pages/Groups

Georgian Court University will no longer create Facebook pages for various departments and organizations affiliated with GCU; rather GCU will utilize one Facebook page, the Georgian Court University Official Page for communication about the university as a whole. GCU Admissions, GCU Athletics (including individual athletic teams), the GCU Alumni Association, the GCU Library, and GCU Office of Career Development will be the only exceptions to this rule, as all reach very large, specific target audiences. However, the following pages should take their cues from the GCU official page, and “share” university-wide news from that page, rather than publish the news as a primary source.

GCU Facebook groups, which must be created by the Office of Marketing and Communications, will contain “Georgian Court University” in their title text. This allows potential followers to find the university's presence on Facebook. Approved groups receive a blurb and link from the main GCU Facebook page.

YouTube

The Office of Marketing and Communications maintains the official Georgian Court University YouTube.com presence (www.youtube.com/georgiancourt). The GCU department of Dance and the GCU

Office of Athletics is the only exception to this rule. If you wish to suggest a video for the collection, contact the Office of Marketing and Communications at facebook@georgian.edu.

Twitter

Twitter is a limited communication method that allows you to post a message of up to 140 characters for viewing by those who also have a Twitter account and have chosen to follow your postings. This method is very specific and requires the cultivation of an audience. Because of these limitations, it is not an optimal tool for university departments. The Office of Marketing and Communications maintains an official Twitter account. GCU Athletics, the GCU Alumni Association, GCU Office of Admissions, and GCU Office of Career Development will be the only exceptions to this rule, as they reach very large, specific target audiences. However, the following accounts should take their cues from the GCU official page, and “re-tweet” university-wide news from that account, rather than publish the news as a primary source.

Instagram

Instagram is a way to communicate through a series of pictures and videos for viewing by those who also have an Instagram account and have chosen to follow your postings. This method is very specific and requires the cultivation of an audience. Because of these limitations, it is not an optimal tool for university departments. The Office of Marketing and Communications maintains an official Instagram account. GCU Athletics will be the only exception to this rule, as they reach a very large, specific target audience. However, they should take their cues from the GCU official page, and “re-post” university-wide news from that account, rather than publish the news as a primary source.

SnapChat, Tumblr, and Pinterest

The Office of Marketing and Communications will maintain an official SnapChat, Tumblr, and Pinterest account.

Blogs

Blogs, short for “Web logs,” are online journals in which users share their perspective and expertise. Georgian Court University maintains a multi-user WordPress account that allows faculty, students, staff, and administration to blog about their GCU experience and interests. However, like Facebook and Twitter, a successful blog depends on cultivating and maintaining an audience. That means blogs should be useful, interesting, and updated regularly.

When administering or responding to a GCU blog, remember that all users take responsibility for their own words and for the comments they allow to be posted. GCU is committed to the Civility Enforced Standard: Users will not post unacceptable content, and any such content that is posted will be deleted.

As an institution on higher education in the Mercy tradition, we insist all users of GCU social media sites refrain from sharing or participating in unacceptable content in any way. Those who do may be subject

to university sanctions as outlined in student and employment handbooks. We define unacceptable content as anything included or linked to that:

- is being used to abuse, harass, stalk, or threaten others;
- is libelous, knowingly false, or misrepresents another person;
- infringes upon a copyright or trademark;
- violates an obligation of confidentiality; or
- violates the privacy of others.

Furthermore, we define and determine what “unacceptable content” is on a case-by-case basis, and our definitions are not limited to this list. If we delete a comment or link, we will say so and explain why. We reserve the right to change these standards at any time with no notice.

GCU blogs do not allow anonymous comments. We require commenters to supply a valid e-mail address before they can post, though we allow commenters to identify themselves with an alias, rather than their real name. Additionally, all comments will require approval prior to being posted within any blog.

GCU does not respond to nasty comments or other online attacks. As long as comments don’t veer into abuse or libel, users should ignore nasty posts. Responding to negative posts only encourages and escalates the situation. Ignoring public attacks is often the best way to contain them. Finally, online communications have a tendency to foster a sense of anonymity in which one may express things that one would never say in a face-to-face encounter. It can be tempting to use these tools to address conflict or express criticism with a sense of impunity; however it is important to remember that when one engages in university-sanctioned social media sites, one is acting as a representative of the university and should therefore uphold the Mercy core values of respect, integrity, justice, compassion, and service in all interactions. Some rules of thumb for appropriate social media interaction:

- Don't say anything online that you wouldn't say in person.
- Connect privately before responding publicly. If you encounter conflicts and/or misrepresentation online, make every effort to talk privately and directly to the person(s) involved—or find an intermediary who can do so—before publishing any posts or comments about the issue.

Guidelines for social media posts and strategies: Posts will be created through the Office of Marketing and Communications. When a group, department, or office would like to reach the GCU social media audience, they should e-mail the information to be contained in their post to facebook@georgian.edu, (this e-mail address will also serve for Twitter, YouTube, etc.). Once the information is received by the Office of Marketing and Communications, they will ensure that the information is in line with the messaging and brand identity of Georgian Court University and create a post that will reflect the voice of Georgian Court University when appropriate. When a department, office, or club would like to develop a social media strategy (planned posts, etc.), they should contact facebook@georgian.edu, and a member of the Office of Marketing and Communications will help them develop a strategy.

In specific circumstances, the Office of Marketing and Communications may deem it necessary to grant access to the official social media channels to other members of the campus community; this will be determined on a case-by-case basis.