

TITLE: SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Date of Approval: May 28, 2014; May 2, 2017

Mandatory Review Date: May 2, 2020

Approved By:

- Board of Governors
 Executive Committee
 Senate

Effective Date: May 2, 2017

1. Purpose

The Sheridan College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning (“Sheridan”) recognizes that Social Media (as defined below) offer new and exciting opportunities to express creativity, share knowledge, build a sense of belonging and community, and engage in ongoing conversations with students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents, colleagues, friends and fans about common interests.

Sheridan supports the use of Social Media by employees to achieve the benefits of global information sharing and gathering. This policy is intended to help accurately portray, promote and protect Sheridan and its reputation. It is also intended to assist all areas of Sheridan to create and manage their own Social Media accounts to directly engage with their audiences and showcase the depth and breadth of their people or programs.

Sheridan’s Social Media Policy provides guidelines for respectful, relevant use of Social Media to empower people to use social media channels responsibly and confidently. It is also intended that Social Media users communicate in a manner consistent with Sheridan’s Code of Conduct and/or Student Code of Conduct (as applicable), Acceptable Use Policy, Conflict of Interest Policy, Canada’s Anti-Spam Legislation, and other relevant policies, practices, guidelines and laws.

2. Scope

This policy applies to Sheridan employees, students, contractors, consultants, and volunteers whose Social Media use involves Sheridan resources, expresses or suggests an affiliation with Sheridan, or otherwise engages Sheridan’s interests. Although the policy does not apply to personal Social Media accounts that do not indicate an affiliation with Sheridan or otherwise engage Sheridan’s interests, the Acceptable Use Policy continues to govern employees’, students’ and other users’ access to and use of Sheridan’s computer network and information resources. To the extent a conflict exists between this policy and Sheridan’s Acceptable Use Policy, the Acceptable Use Policy shall govern.

Sheridan recognizes that Social Media accounts can be separated into two distinct categories – ‘institutional’ accounts that represent the entire institution in an official capacity and ‘affiliated’ accounts that have a clear connection to Sheridan but that do not represent the institution as a whole. Both categories are officially-recognized by Sheridan.

3. Definitions

- a. “Affiliated Account” means a social media accounts (including but not limited to channels such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Flickr, Instagram, SnapChat, Pinterest, Blogs and Wikis) that has a clear connection to any of Sheridan’s programs, departments or units but that do not represent the institution as a whole.
- b. “Affiliation Brief” is the form available in the Marketing and Brand Strategy section on Access Sheridan.
- c. “Designated Social Media Communicator” means a Sheridan employee who has been appointed as the manager of the new social media channel pursuant to the Procedure to Establish and/or Maintain Social Media.
- d. “Institutional Account” means a corporate social media account (including but not limited to channels such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Flickr, Instagram, SnapChat, Pinterest, Blogs and Wikis) which represents and speaks on behalf of the institution in an official capacity and that is managed by administration.
- e. “Digital Strategy Team” means a designated subset of the Sheridan Office of Marketing and Communications.
- f. “Personal Information” has the meaning ascribed to it by section 2(1) of Ontario’s Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, as amended. Personal Information includes but is not limited to information relating to the education history of an individual.
- g. “Post” or “Posting” means anything uploaded to the Internet via Social Media, or the act of such uploading.
- h. “Social Media” means a broadly accessible Internet-based communications platform used to interact with other users and share content among a network. Examples of Social Media include but are not limited to Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Flickr, Instagram, SnapChat, Pinterest, Blogs and Wikis. Social Media does not include private correspondence such as e-mail. Note, however, that Sheridan’s Acceptable Use Policy governs the users of Sheridan’s information resources, including with respect to Sheridan’s e-mail access and accounts.

4. Policy Statement

The following principles form the framework for this policy. Please refer to the Procedure to Establish and/or Maintain Social Media regarding the establishment and maintenance of Social Media activities deemed to represent Sheridan. Please also refer to Sheridan’s Code of Conduct and Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use policies for guidance on appropriate conduct, generally, at Sheridan, and to the Acceptable Use Policy and Conflict of Interest Policy regarding use of Sheridan’s information resources. General tips and guidelines regarding social

media etiquette are provided in Sheridan's Social Media Tips Sheet. This Tips Sheet can be accessed in the Marketing and Brand Strategy section on Access Sheridan.

Individuals to whom this policy applies may not create an Institutional Account or Affiliated Account or otherwise publish information on the Internet on behalf of Sheridan unless authorized pursuant to Part I of this Policy and the Procedure to Establish and/or Maintain Social Media at Sheridan.

I. ESTABLISHING AND REGISTERING SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

Sheridan's Institutional Accounts adhere to the Sheridan brand standards manual to communicate to fans, followers and viewers that content found in these locations is official Sheridan information. These Institutional Accounts speak on behalf of Sheridan at large. Mainstream media inquiries received via Social Media must be referred to the Manager, Media Relations.

Many of the Affiliated Accounts created by Sheridan's departments and programs are similarly branded to help communicate that the information they are sharing is reliable. Account administrators of Affiliated channels speak on behalf of their units, programs or departments.

Sheridan's Digital Strategy Team is responsible for helping to promote the growing numbers of Social Media accounts that have an affiliation with Sheridan by creating and maintaining an online directory to help visitors to Sheridan's website to find the accounts. To register an Affiliated Social Media account, please refer to the Procedure to Establish and/or Maintain Social Media at Sheridan and complete an Affiliation Brief.

Designated Social Media Communicators within Sheridan shall be accountable to their Department Managers. Should a Designated Social Media Communicator leave Sheridan for any reason or, if permitted, no longer wish to be a Designated Social Media Communicator, it is the academic or administrative department's responsibility to designate another employee and remove the former employee's administrative permissions to use the site. Sheridan employees identified as a Designated Social Media Communicator are responsible for managing and monitoring content of their social media accounts and are responsible for removing content that may violate Conduct Policies. By posting content to any social media site, Designated Social Media Communicators declare that they have all of the rights necessary to lawfully use that content or that the use of the content is permitted by fair use. Designated Social Media Communicators also agree that they will not knowingly provide misleading or false information and that they will indemnify and hold Sheridan harmless for any claims resulting from any such content. Designated Social Media Communicators agree to post in a manner that is AODA compliant.

Sheridan reserves the right to remove or cause the removal of any content for any lawful reason, including but not limited to, content that it deems threatening, obscene, a violation of intellectual property rights or privacy laws, or otherwise injurious or illegal.

II. SHERIDAN PRINCIPLES MUST DIRECT APPROPRIATE USE

Employees to whom this policy applies are not permitted, in their expression of personal opinions on Social Media sites that do not belong to them (such as external blogs or forums) to indicate an affiliation with Sheridan unless the proper authority has been granted. Personal Social Media accounts are dealt with below in Section IV. Employees authorized to use Social Media in a way that engages Sheridan's interests must clearly state, in their Social Media use, their employment relationship with Sheridan. Further, in all such Social Media use, employees must abide by Sheridan's Conflict of Interest Policy and Code of Conduct, and ensure their claims and statements are respectful and accurate.

III. CONFIDENTIALITY MUST BE MAINTAINED

Sheridan's official Social Media presence must be consistent with our obligation to protect confidentiality. Social Media users to whom this policy applies must be vigilant to ensure their use respects Sheridan's Privacy Policy and Acceptable Use Policy. Social Media users must have written consent to post photos or videos of employees, students and student work, as may be applicable. Video and Photo Consent forms can be found in the Marketing section of Access Sheridan website with directives about when written consent is required.

IV. USE OF PERSONAL ACCOUNTS AND POSTINGS

In their personal use of Social Media, employees must take all reasonable steps to ensure that readers do not confuse their personal statements and opinions with the statements and opinions of Sheridan, including by posting a disclaimer that indicates that the views expressed are their own on any personal Social Media site that regularly includes content related to the individual's job duties or that identifies the individual as an employee of Sheridan. Employees must not use their affiliation with Sheridan to advance interests that conflict with Sheridan's.

Although Sheridan respects individual autonomy, Social Media users to whom this policy applies are accountable for personal Social Media use that negatively impacts Sheridan's interests. The Sheridan logo and other Sheridan branding must not be used on personal sites without prior written authorization from Sheridan.

V. TRAINING AND INSTRUCTIONS ON USE

Training may assist members of the Sheridan community on how best to achieve the goals of this policy. Training procedures are set out in the Procedure to Establish and/or Maintain Social Media, found in the Marketing and Brand Strategy section on Access Sheridan.

VI. SHERIDAN'S RIGHTS IN THE EVENT OF NON-COMPLIANCE

Employees who violate or attempt to violate this policy are subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal. Student conduct is addressed in the Student Code of Conduct and the Student Conduct Process and Appeals Procedure. Others individuals and/or entities who deal with Sheridan are governed by Sheridan's Code of Conduct.

Note: Some violations of this policy are also covered under existing legislation, including but not limited to the Criminal Code of Canada and the Copyright Act, or under other Sheridan policies, such as the Harassment and Discrimination Policy.

VII. ADVERTISING

Advertising by external vendors is prohibited on all Sheridan 'institutional' and 'affiliated' Social Media presences.

Any Sheridan Social Media account wishing to purchase advertising services from other social media sites, or from any type of publication, must follow all applicable rules and policies governing the procurement of contracting considerations related to such services. Account holders who require frequent or recurring use of online advertising services should work with Sheridan's Marketing Department to take advantage of existing knowledge and expertise and to potentially achieve economies of scale.

VIII. AUTHORITY TO IMPLEMENT

The Department of Communications and External Relations and the Department of Marketing and Brand - Digital Strategy Team shall jointly have authority to implement this policy.

5. **Related Documentation (Procedures/Additional Policies/Forms)**

[Acceptable Use Policy](#)

[Code of Professionalism and Civility](#)

[Student Code of Conduct](#)

[Conflict of Interest Policy](#)

[Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures](#)

[Procedure to Establish and/or Maintain Social Media](#)

[Social Media Affiliation Brief](#)

[Social Media Tips Sheet](#)

[Free Speech Policy](#)