POLICY NO. 21
COMMUNICATIONS

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- 398-04 February 4, 2020
- 401-06 June 10, 2020
- 419-05 February 7, 2023

Policy No. 21 - Communications

Table of Contents

ARTICLE 1 - Preamble 1
ARTICLE 2 - Objectives 1
ARTICLE 3 - Scope of Application 1
ARTICLE 4 - Roles and Responsibilities 1
ARTICLE 5 - Branding 2
ARTICLE 6 - Use of Online Social Networks 3
ARTICLE 7 - Possible Sanctions for Employees and Students 4
ARTICLE 8 - Responsibility for Applying this Policy 4
ARTICLE 9 - Effective Date 4

POLICY NO. 21 – COMMUNICATIONS

ARTICLE 1 - Preamble

John Abbott College (the "College") requires a well-structured communications strategy in order to ensure that communication plans and marketing objectives align with the overall College mission while also properly promoting its programs of study, its activities and the achievements of employees and students. Keeping with the tradition, the delivery of information must be done in a clear, honest and respectful manner.

ARTICLE 2 - Objectives

To support the College in fulfilling its mission, this policy applies to all produced media, including social media; it provides the necessary guidelines to support the transparent delivery of pertinent information to internal and external audiences while respecting the College brand in accordance with the graphic standards which outline the proper usage of the brand signature in regards to colour, font style, size, placement, etc. This policy also serves as the basis for the development of the College's annual communications plan.

This policy establishes the respective roles and responsibilities of all members of the College community with regards to communications, and sets a framework when dealing with internal and external communications, media relations, publicity and public relations.

Furthermore, this policy is intended to remind all members of the College community of their respective obligations toward the College, their colleagues and the students regarding the use of social networking sites of all types, notably when it impacts the image or reputation of the College, its employees, students and other persons.

ARTICLE 3 - Scope of Application

This policy applies to all members of the College community, including, without limitation, to all employees, regardless of status, and to all students who use social networking sites of all types.

ARTICLE 4 - Roles and Responsibilities

4.1. Director General

The Director General or a chosen delegate is the official spokesperson for the College.

4.2. Directors, Deans, Managers and Department Chairs

The above are responsible for:

- applying this policy within their jurisdiction and ensuring that their employees are informed of this policy and of all applicable College procedures and guidelines;
- supplying accurate and timely information to the Communications Office upon request;
- identifying their communications needs and presenting them to the Communications Office at the beginning of each academic year;

- involving the Communications Office in all media inquiries or requests for interviews.

4.3. Communications Office

The Communications Office will:

- ensure that this policy is advertised and easily accessible;
- make sure, with the collaboration of Print Services personnel, that the College branding is respected;
- promote the College image and engage all stakeholders by promoting programs, excellence in teaching, student services and facilities;
- prepare, in collaboration with the Registrar's Office and department or service heads, all student recruitment material;
- prepare the annual communications plan which takes into account the realities and needs of the various departments;
- identify the target audiences, the preferred communications media and measurable objectives;
- support the College community, including the College Foundation, in all their communications needs as advisory or operational support;
- manage the content of the College and the departmental websites and of My JAC Portal abiding by College Procedure No. 22: Graphic Standards Manual, the College and Departmental Websites Guidelines and the Guidelines for an Optimal Use of My JAC Portal;
- monitor the College name and reputation on social media;
- ensure that all printed or electronic material, video clips and advertisement intended for external audiences respect the College's visual identity and values;
- maintain harmonious and mutually beneficial relationships with the external community;
- promote and preserve the reputation of the College on a local, national and international scale;
- be the keeper of all signed waivers allowing for the publishing of pictures or recordings;
- ensure that this policy is maintained and updated as required;
- be responsible for all media relations.

4.4. Members of the College Community

When communicating on behalf of the College, all members of the College community are responsible for using a quality of language appropriate to the establishment, for being respectful of College Procedure No. 22: Graphic Standards Manual, for respecting the culture and the structure of the organization and for respecting the College's obligations under Québec's Charter of the French language (chapter C-11).

No member of the College community shall take public position on behalf of the College without explicit permission from the Director General, the Director responsible of Communications or the Communications Office.

ARTICLE 5 - Branding

5.1 College Branding

The College name, address, phone numbers, logo and its components are the property of the College and shall not be used without the explicit permission of the Communications Office. Without limitation, the foregoing shall not be used to promote one's personal or financial gain.

All material intended for the external community (posters, advertisement, pamphlets, etc.), other than that on official College letterhead, must be approved by the Communications Office.

5.2 Internal Logos

Departmental symbols and logos are to be used exclusively for the internal College community.

ARTICLE 6 - Use of Online Social Networks

Social networks are defined as any Internet applications that allow for interaction and the sharing of content. Social media posts, regardless of the network platform used, must directly support the Communications' Office mission and departmental objectives in positive, measurable ways. Social media use is not suitable in all situations.

Online social networks include but are not limited to:

- Social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, SnapChat, Instagram et al.);
- Video or picture sharing sites (YouTube, Flikr, Instagram, TikTok, etc.);
- Blogs, podcasts and discussion forums;
- Online encyclopedia such as Wikipedia;
- Any website or application with online publishing tools.

Official College accounts on social networks are managed by the Communications Office or its chosen delegate(s).

Social network accounts with a John Abbott College affiliation have to meet to following criteria:

- No account can be created on behalf of John Abbott College without approval from the Communications Office.
- The content must be in alignment with the College's values and mission.
- Information appearing on the College website may not be repeated: admissions information, course calendar, etc.
- When multiple administrators may be assigned to a single account, the Communications Office must be added as an administrator thereon. In cases where only one administrator is permitted by the relevant system, the credentials (username and password) must be placed in a sealed envelope and remitted to the Communications Office for safekeeping. These credentials may be accessed in an emergency or urgent situation where the administrator may not be reached. Changes to credentials must be updated with the Communications Office. The information contained in said sealed envelopes must always be up to date.

6.1 Expected behaviour from all members of the College community

6.1.1 Loyalty to the College: this obligation prohibits, among other things, the publication of information or comments that may affect the image or reputation of the College.

6.1.2 Respect for privacy and reputation: one must not breach the right to privacy and the reputation of other persons. As per applicable legislation, permission must be sought before publishing pictures or recordings of a person or group of persons; a signed waiver must be sent to the Communications Office for safekeeping. Furthermore, and without limitation, criticism of or insults to employees or students on social networking sites are prohibited.

6.2. Provisions applicable to employees only

6.2.1 Personal use of online social networks at work is permitted if the use:

- does not conflict with the achievement of the College's mission;
- is done during breaks or lunchtime; and
- does not have an impact on the employee's performance.

6.2.2 Attitude respectful of the College community: when an employee browses online social networks, they must behave in a professional manner consistent with the responsibilities related to their employment.

6.2.3 Safeguarding of confidential information: every employee has an obligation to keep information obtained, as part of their official duties, confidential. This includes information regarding employees, suppliers, students, financial information, etc. No confidential or strategic data belonging to the College can be published on social networks or divulged in any way.

6.2.4 Obligation to identify oneself distinctly from the College when giving an opinion: when the information published by an employee on an online social network (blog, forum, etc.) may reasonably be construed as representing the official position of the College, such employee must identify themselves as sole author and as being personally liable for any such published information by including a disclaimer to avoid misunderstanding, such as "This is my personal opinion and it does not necessarily represent the views of my employer".

For this reason, employees shall not use their College's email address to convey personal opinions.

6.3 Control and monitoring

If the College administration has reasonable cause to doubt an employee's compliance with the terms set out in this policy, it may monitor and audit the employee's use of online social networks.

ARTICLE 7 - Possible Sanctions

If the use of online social networks does not comply with this policy, the College may ask the offender to remove content deemed non-compliant, ask them to apologize to the injured parties, impose a penalty up to and including dismissal from the College for a student, and disciplinary actions up to dismissal for an employee in accordance with applicable laws and collective agreements, and eventually take legal actions.

ARTICLE 8 - Responsibility for Applying this Policy

The Director responsible of Communications is responsible for applying this policy.

ARTICLE 9 - Effective Date

This policy will come into effect when enacted.