

LEHMAN COLLEGE/CUNY

Social Media Guidelines Web Policy and Content Committee Approved by Lehman Cabinet, 6/11/12

I. Purpose of these Guidelines.

The Web Content and Policy Committee has developed this document to provide information for those departments or offices of the College considering or developing social media sites primarily for interacting with an external audience, i.e., other than current students or employees. The Lehman Portal (Lehman Connect, based on Microsoft SharePoint) has more attractive tools for use with internal audiences, though, of course, other tools may also prove to be useful.

Currently the social media most likely to be used (and most or all of these are being used by offices and departments now) include Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, iTunesU (public side), Lehman iPhone App, and blogs. The IT Division Web Team will offer a few templates for creating a Lehman blog. A list of existing Lehman College social media sites can be found at www.lehman.edu/itr/web/social-media-sites.php.

These guidelines are addressed to developers of official Lehman College sites. Section IX offers some recommendations for personal sites, primarily to distinguish them from official College sites.

II. Existing Web Site Policies.

Official college Social Media sites are expected to adhere to applicable Lehman and CUNY policies, and branding guidelines, including the following:

- 1) Lehman College Web Policy, at http://www.lehman.edu/lehman/about/policies_pdf/WebPolicy.pdf
- 2) CUNY Policy on Acceptable Use of Computer Resources, at http://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/CIS/security/pnp/computer_policy.pdf
- 3) IT Security Procedures – General (March 26, 2009), at <http://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/CIS/security/pnp/SecurityProcedures032609.pdf>

III. **Why use social media?**

Social media provide a means to reach and communicate with the large and growing population of social media users in a proactive way, and thus attract persons to Lehman College as students, employees, funders, supporting/collaborating community members and organizations, who otherwise might not have made the Lehman connection.

Alternative approaches can be used for social media sites. One approach would be to feature rich intellectual content, including, for example, lectures, recitals, art exhibits, faculty research projects, and/or virtual conferences. Another would be to focus on marketing activities, such as student recruitment or fundraising. Both have their place, and may be the model of choice for your office.

Key to creation of a successful site is to have a clear understanding of the purpose for the site, and the resource commitment that will be required to keep the site dynamic and engaging.

Three strategies that could be used for creating a social media site are:

1) *For Marketing/Syndication*: a site intended to reach new prospects and drive them to the Lehman website, where they will find additional information and learn about Lehman. The use of this social media strategy is really an extension of the Lehman website, providing another way to steer the inquirer and provide a link to the Lehman website for further content.

2) *For Networking*: a site designed to offer the opportunity to request and obtain additional information from Lehman contacts, using staff in the sponsoring office to assist in providing the information that may lead to a further interaction with the College. This is a more dynamic way to initiate a dialogue with the inquirer — a person-to-person interaction — that requires a regular time commitment on the part of Lehman staff. This strategy might be most appropriate for service offices such as Career Services or the Admissions Office.

3) *Community-Building/Outreach*: a site intended to create ongoing interaction with community residents and/or organizations. Such a site would be organized around a theme or issue of community interest or service, in the expectation of leading to longer-term collaborations and relationships among respondents and with the sponsoring office. This strategy might be most appropriate for sites such as Friends of the Library, the APEX, the Art Gallery, or the Multimedia Center.

IV. **General Guidelines.**

Following are some guidelines and best practices applicable to any social media site.

1) Naming of the site: the site name should include both “Lehman College” and the name of the sponsoring office. Individual staff names should not be used, except as the name of the site administrator, which may change over time. The Media Relations and Publications Office can advise on appropriate site names, and may draft more specific naming conventions to be followed, as needed, for the various social media platforms.

2) Use of person's name, portrait, picture or voice: you must have proper authorization, including, when appropriate, copyright permissions; see the CUNY Model Release Form at <http://www.lehman.edu/itr/documents/CUNYModelRelease.pdf> and the CUNY Podcast/Video Release Form at <http://www.lehman.edu/itr/documents/PodcastRelease.pdf>. The relevant release form is to be used whenever a person’s name, portrait, picture or voice will, or may in the future, be used for trade, advertising (e.g., publicity materials) or other commercial purposes in any forum or media. As a general guideline, plan on obtaining the release whenever practicable. If there is a clear intent on using the name, portrait, picture or voice, the release must be obtained. Maintain the releases in your department or office records.

3) Don't SPAM your audience: keep content fresh and current, but limit the number of updates so as not to become a nuisance to your audience, consistent with the purpose of your site.

4) Include Lehman College in the metadata (e.g., "tags" in Flickr, "hashtags" in Twitter, etc.).

5) Include link(s) to relevant Lehman Web pages, including the College home page and/or the sponsoring office’s home page.

6) Make available a clear statement about the purpose or intent of the site, including posting policy, interactivity, and frequency of posting.

7) In all postings, be accurate, respectful, and transparent. There should be clarity in every posting about the information being provided, the intent of the posting, who is posting, and your role with regard to the site. Consider that your postings are public information, and may be used or repeated in situations you may not anticipate.

8) If in doubt about the choice of language or content for a posting, consult with your supervisor before proceeding.

9) Have a designated staff person responsible for managing and updating the site, with at least one backup, so the site will not go unattended due to the absence of one key staff member.

10) Where there are standard icons available for specific types of social media, e.g., as used on the Lehman website, use those for any equivalent use on your social media sites.

V. Guidelines for a Marketing/Syndication site.

A Marketing/Syndication site will have relatively little interactivity. It will be designed more to guide readers to the Lehman website than to encourage interaction with others, whether Lehman employees or other site visitors.

1) A primary source of material will be the Lehman website. Most content will be cut and pasted, or fed (RSS – Really Simple Syndication), from the Lehman website. ADC (Active Data Calendar), Lehman Today, and Lehman Connect are some of the possible Lehman Web sources for RSS feeds.

2) WordPress is used on the Lehman website for newsletters and flyers. Content from such sites can be included automatically (syndicated) on social media sites, e.g., Facebook. The standard for syndication on the Web is RSS (Really Simple Syndication), which provides a means for sharing content from a source site to the subscribing site(s).

3) The site will need regular maintenance; it is suggested that it have at least weekly updates. Syndication may help with updating, requiring less direct intervention on the part of the sponsoring offices' staff.

4) You are encouraged not to create a site if you are not able to commit resources (staff) to monitor, and when appropriate to respond to, comments posted by visitors to the site.

VI. Guidelines for a Networking site.

A Networking site is perhaps the most interactive of the strategies described. Since the intent is to provide a more personal interaction with the College, regular attention to the site will be required.

1) Update the site at least daily, including responses to any comments or queries posted. Postings should be brief.

2) Comments and queries need prompt, courteous, and accurate responses in order to preserve and enhance the reputation of the site.

VII. Guidelines for a Community-Building/Outreach site.

These sites are intended to develop a community of participants who will collaborate (whether through discussion or action) around a topic or activity of common interest to participants, and consistent with the goals and objectives of the College. Significant contributions from, and sharing among, site participants are expected.

- 1) Update the site regularly, a few times a week, if not daily.
- 2) Requires regular (daily on workdays) monitoring so as not to leave issues unresolved/unanswered, and to keep the discussion or interaction properly focused.

VIII. Guidelines for Official Lehman sites.

- 1) Use of the Lehman Logo is expected for all official sites – whether on the home page or in a posting that describes the site – and must be obtained from Media Relations and Publications.
- 2) The Lehman Logo may not be used on any site other than official Lehman College sites.
- 3) Any official Lehman site must be identified to the Lehman Webmaster, including the url, the sponsoring office, the site administrator (owner), the account name, and password.
- 4) A link to official social media sites will be included on the sponsoring office's Lehman Web page. A list of all official Lehman sites can be found on the Lehman website at www.lehman.edu/itr/web/social-media-sites.php.
- 5) Official Lehman sites that become inactive will be deleted by the Webmaster, upon approval by the Director of Media Relations.

IX. Personal or other than Official Lehman sites.

Many of the guidelines and best practices described above are also useful considerations for your personal site.

The Lehman logo may not be used on personal sites or on any site other than an official Lehman site.

Consider whether or not to subscribe to official Lehman sites, since the connection to personal sites may provide access to your personal pages to other Lehman site subscribers. You may or may not wish to do this.

X. Help for Building an Official Lehman Site.

1) Look at existing Lehman social media sites, and consult with their site administrators. A list of these sites can be found at www.lehman.edu/itr/web/social-media-sites.php. There is a Team Site in Lehman Connect for all social media site administrators to share questions and information.

2) See the material on the IT Division Web Team site at <http://www.lehman.edu/itr/web/>

3) There are many documents on the Web, including other college/university Web policies, and various organizations' ethics guidelines for proper use of social media, which you may find helpful. Two useful sites, with a higher education orientation, are <http://higheredexperts.com/edu/> and <http://doteduguru.com/best-of>

4) Contacts:

For content related issues, contact Yeara Milton at Media Relations and Publications, yeara.milton@lehman.cuny.edu, 718-960-7963

For technical issues, contact David Stevens at IT Division Web Services, david.stevens@lehman.cuny.edu, 718-960-8745