

**COLLEGE COMMUNICATIONS POLICY**

<b>Policy Name:</b> College Communications	<b>Responsible Owner:</b> Vice President, External Relations and Advancement	<b>Effective Date:</b> 2017 Jan
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**A. PURPOSE**

This policy is designed to clarify the role and intent of official College Communications, both Internal and External; to provide a framework for understanding the processes and protocols for Communications at Douglas College (the College); and to affirm the College’s commitment to maintaining the College intranet as a collaborative, respectful forum for departments and Faculties to share timely and accurate information with all Employees.

**B. SCOPE**

This policy applies to all members of the College Community and covers official channels of Communication between the College and all members of the College Community, the Media and other external organizations, as well as Communications shared on the College intranet, *DC Connect*, as part of the daily work of and business functions carried out by College Employees.

**Limitation of Scope**

This policy is not intended to restrict routine business Communications; nor does it apply to information-sharing platforms or content access to which is restricted to members of a specific Employee group, department, unit or committee within the College (e.g., SharePoint, Microsoft Teams).

**C. DEFINITIONS**

**College Community:** Includes all Employees, students, Board members and users of the College, and any other person who is contractually obligated to comply with this policy.

**Communication(s):** The dissemination of official information related to the College, including but not limited to College activities, plans, positions or events, through any medium, to members of the College Community, the Media or the public at large.

**Crisis:** An event or events that could bring about real or perceived harm to the College, its students or Employees.

**Crisis Communications:** Communications with the College Community or with the public and/or other external agencies during a time of Crisis.

**Emergency Notification System (ENS):** A tool used to communicate with the College Community in the event of a Crisis or other significant event.

**Employee:** A person employed by the College, including administrators, contract Employees, faculty members, staff members and students when employed by the College (e.g., as student assistants or peer tutors).

**External Communications:** Communication with any individuals, groups or organizations outside the College (e.g., news media, government, other institutions, the public).

**Incident Commander(s):** The person or persons designated as the authority during a Crisis, typically a College official or police officer, firefighter or other emergency personnel on site.

**Internal Communications:** Communication within the College Community through any official channels (e.g., email, social media, signage, posters, ENS, newsletters, DC Connect).

**Media:** Tools, products or organizations used for the purposes of communicating with others; includes news media (e.g., radio, television, newspapers, blogs), social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter), and other Communications formats (e.g., newsletters, websites, intranets, broadcast emails, app notifications, the ENS and on-campus physical and digital signage).

#### **D. POLICY STATEMENTS**

1. As a public post-secondary institution, Douglas College plays an important role in society by providing an open forum for dialogue and inquiry.
2. Douglas College encourages the exploration of a diversity of viewpoints and supports the exchange of information throughout the College Community, and with the public, about important societal issues, particularly those that relate to fields of study within the College.
3. On all matters related to Communications, the College respects legislated bounds of privacy, safety, security and confidentiality, and proprietary rights with respect to intellectual property.
4. The College strives to provide relevant and timely Communications, and to disseminate information about the College to the public at large to showcase College programs, research and other activities.

5. The College encourages continuous, effective internal Communication and information-sharing among Employees and departments through the use of DC Connect, an internal website accessible to all Employees. (*For governance responsibilities and protocols relating to the use of DC Connect, see SOP DC Connect Governance and Use.*)
6. The College encourages faculty members to communicate with the public, news media and the College Community on topics within their areas of expertise. The Marketing and Communications Office (MCO) is available as a resource to help faculty members with Media training, key messaging, and the promotion of newsworthy research or other activities at the College. Faculty members are encouraged to consult with MCO in advance and to inform MCO when relevant stories are expected to appear in the Media.
7. Within the College, the External Relations and Advancement Division is responsible for the overall tone, look and feel of, and standards of content for, all Media, including the College's intranet (DC Connect), public websites, printed materials, physical and digital signage, videos, posters and social media channels, as well as advertising and other marketing materials. The Division will work collaboratively with other units/departments in the College and this responsibility may be delegated in specific instances (e.g., varsity athletics).
8. Only designated spokespersons, as directed by the External Affairs and Advancement Division or the Senior Management Team, may speak on behalf of the College.
9. MCO, within the External Relations and Advancement Division, is responsible for official College Communications with news media. Any requests for official statements on behalf of the College are to be directed to MCO; MCO will work with the appropriate faculty members and/or College administrators to provide key messages and statements to the Media through a designated spokesperson.
10. In the event of a Crisis, External Relations and Advancement will work with the Office of Safety, Security and Risk Management, the Senior Management Team, the Incident Commander and appropriate administrators and staff members to provide the most accurate, relevant and timely information to members of the College Community, other stakeholders and the public at large. To prevent misinformation, members of the College Community should refrain from sharing or spreading publicly any information that does not come through official channels.

## **E. PROCEDURES**

The following related [Standard Operating Procedures](#) are available to College Employees on DC Connect:

- *College-Wide Communications*
- *DC Connect Governance and Use*
- *DC Social Media Account – Creation and Maintenance*

- *Digital Signage – Usage Request*
- *Publishing Notifications on the Douglas App*

Information on the different sections of the College intranet, their purposes and how to contribute content is also available to College Employees through [DC Connect Self Service](#).

## **F. SUPPORTING FORMS, DOCUMENTS, WEBSITES, RELATED POLICIES**

### [Administration Policies](#)

- *Academic Freedom*
- *Acceptable Use of Computer and Information Technology*
- *Advertising and Promotional Activities on College Property*
- *Bullying and Harassment Prevention and Response*
- *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy*
- *Information Security*
- *Respectful and Inclusive Environment*
- *Use of the Douglas College Concourse and Atriums*

The following related document is publicly available on the College website:

- *The Douglas College Code of Conduct for Employees and Contractors*

## **G. RELATED ACTS AND REGULATIONS**

The following related legislation may be found on the Government of BC Laws website:

- *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act [RSBC 1996], c. 165*
- *Privacy Act [RSBC 1996], c. 373*

## **H. RELATED COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS**

N/A