## Policy 116: Social Media Use

Category: Administration

Covered Individuals: All CEI Employees

##### Approved: 2/25/2025

Formerly Approved: 09/20/2017

### **116.1 Policy**

The College of Eastern Idaho (CEI) recognizes and respects the free speech rights afforded to all individuals by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. We encourage our community to engage in constructive dialogue on social media while fostering a positive online presence that reflects CEI's values and mission. This policy applies to both CEI-sanctioned social media accounts and employees' personal social media use.

Our goal is to protect the reputation of CEI, safeguard confidential information, and promote respectful and professional interactions online. By following these guidelines, employees and representatives of CEI can support a respectful, inclusive, and secure online environment.

### **116.2 Procedures**

**Guidelines for CEI-Sanctioned Social Media Accounts**

**1. Institutional Representation**
Employees managing CEI social media accounts are expected to uphold the institution's mission, values, and voice in all online interactions. When representing CEI, maintain professionalism, accuracy, and objectivity in all posts.

**2. Positive Engagement**
Encourage constructive interactions that highlight CEI's achievements, community events, and student success. Avoid language or topics that could be perceived as profane, vulgar, polarizing, abusive, discriminatory, harassing, disrespectful, violent, threatening, or otherwise unprofessional.

**3. Crisis Communication**
In times of crisis, official statements on social media should come solely from CEI's administrative team. Do not speculate or share unverified information, as this could impact public perception and CEI's credibility.

**4. Cybersecurity**
Practice cybersecurity by using strong passwords, being cautious of suspicious links, and avoiding the use of CEI credentials on personal social media accounts.

**Guidelines for Personal Social Media Use by CEI Employees**

CEI employees are encouraged to participate in social media responsibly and with awareness of their association with the college. This policy respects employees' rights to personal expression but sets standards for posts related to CEI or that could impact CEI's reputation.

**1. Distinction Between Personal and Professional Views**
If discussing CEI-related topics on personal accounts, employees should clearly state that their views are their own and do not reflect the position of CEI.

**2. Respect and Inclusivity**
Employees are expected to uphold CEI's commitment to treating every community member with respect and dignity, while valuing different perspectives and creating a welcoming and supportive environment for all on social media. Avoid any language or posts that could be seen as discriminatory, harassing, disrespectful, violent, threatening, or otherwise unprofessional.

**3. Confidentiality**
Do not share any confidential or proprietary information about CEI, its students, or its staff on personal or professional social media. Ensure that FERPA guidelines are followed when discussing any student-related information.

**4. Digital Footprint Awareness**
Employees should recognize that social media content is often permanent and publicly accessible. Be mindful of how personal posts could reflect on CEI. Any social media content that could be perceived as overly sexual, pornographic, graphic, obscene, mature, etc. should be kept to private accounts. Employees should always be mindful that they work at a public institution and while employees have a right to free speech, their social media posts should further strengthen the trust and respect placed on CEI by members of the public and the students who attend CEI.

**5. Institutional Integrity**

Any CEI-sanctioned social media post with statistics must be checked by Institutional Research before posting to ensure that CEI represents itself clearly, accurately, and consistently.

**116.3 Usage of College Resources**

College resources, such as devices and work time, are to be used primarily for college-related social media activities. Personal social media use should not interfere with job responsibilities or productivity.

**116.4 Policy Compliance**

Non-compliance with this policy may result in corrective actions, including the loss of access to CEI social media accounts or other disciplinary measures including up to dismissal.