

EMPLOYEE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MEDIA

Title: Employee Relationship with the Media -	Number: 5.02-1.1116.2
Approved by the Board of Governors Date: June 20, 2017	Implementation Date: June 20, 2017
History: New Revised Approved by the Board of Governors: Scheduled Review Date:	Origin: Draft Employee Code of Conduct prepared by a Special Committee of the Board

RATIONALE

From time to time, employees of College may find themselves, as a result of their duties at the College, positioned to provide statements to the media and the public that call for explanation concerning departmental activities. In this capacity, such members should carefully consider whether it may not be more appropriate to appear in a personal, rather than in an official capacity, especially if they are likely to be asked to comment on matters which fall within their area of responsibility.

DEFINITION

Public comment - A remark concern a political or social issue during a public speaking engagement, radio or television interview, in letters or via electronic media, public blogs, social media, to the press or in other situations where the possibility exist that the comment may reach the community at large.

POLICY

1. Public Discourse Concerning College Matters

Employees should exercise care when they speak publicly concerning internal College matters. In the following situations, public comment may be deemed improper:

- Where an employee is making a public comment in a private capacity, but has not made this clear to listeners, who may be under the impression that the employee is speaking on behalf of the College or one of its departments;
- Where an employee is directly involved in advising on, directing the implementation of, or administering College policy, and the public comment could be seen as compromising his or her ability to continue to do so in an unbiased manner;
- Where a public comment, though it has little or no connection to the College duties of an employee, is so harsh in its criticism of the government or its policies, that it suggests that the employee may be impartial in performing his or her duties;
- Where public comment amounting to strong criticism of the College's administration could cause serious disruption in the workplace. In keeping with their responsibility to contribute or to work toward harmonious working relationships, staff members should attempt to resolve matters concerning department or institutional matters internally. This may be done either by informal discussion with a supervisor, by using grievance mechanisms or by seeking advice or assistance from the Human

Resource office.

2. Public Discourse Concerning Community and Governmental Matters

Employees should exercise care when they speak about Government and community matters. In the following situations, public comment may be deemed improper:

- As public servants, employees of the College should be guided by the conduct appropriate to their station. The decision to write, speak or otherwise publicly oppose governmental policy is incongruent with the status of a public servant and may result in disciplinary action which will not exclude the termination of their employment.
- Where public comment, though it has little or no connection with an employee's responsibilities at the College, is so harsh in its criticism of the government or its policies that it suggests that the employee may be impartial in performing his or her College duties;

PROCEDURE

1. All statements made to the media concerning matters that pertain to the College should be made only by the Chairman of the Board of Governors or the College President.
2. Any requests to employees for information or public comment concerning College matters should be referred to the Director of Communications, Marketing and Public Relations for disposition, or in his or her absence, directly to one of the two persons noted above.

Reference

Draft HLSCC Code of Conduct prepared by a Special Committee of the Board