Social Media and Internet Usage Guidelines (Recommendations):

Adapted from
http://brandresources.depaul.edu/vendor_guidelines/g_recommendation.aspx

General recommendations

The keys to success in social media are being honest about who you are, being thoughtful before you post, and respecting the purpose of the community where you are posting.

Be transparent. Be honest about your identity. If you are authorized by your supervisor to represent *Pierpont C&TC/Fairmont State University* in social media, say so. If you choose to post about Pierpont C&TC/Fairmont State University on your personal time, please identify yourself as a *Pierpont C&TC/Fairmont State University* faculty or staff member. Never hide your identity for the purpose of promoting *Pierpont C&TC/Fairmont State University* through social media. It's both poor practice and prohibited by the Acceptable Use Policy.

In December 2009, the Federal Trade Commission implemented regulations requiring bloggers and those who write online reviews to reveal if they have been compensated in any way–a free copy of a book, dinner, complementary admission–or have a relationship to a company, product or service they review. Already a "best practice" for most bloggers, such disclosure is now being enforced.

Be accurate. Make sure that you have all the facts before you post. It's better to verify information with a source first than to have to post a correction or retraction later.

Cite and link to your sources whenever possible; after all, that's how you build community.

If you make an error, correct it quickly and visibly. This will earn you respect in the online community.

Be respectful. You are more likely to achieve your goals or sway others to your beliefs if you are constructive and respectful while discussing a bad experience or disagreeing with a concept or person. In addition, the Acceptable Use Policy prohibits threats or harassment by using Pierpont C&TC/Fairmont State University's computing resources to "transmit material or data that causes or encourages physical or intellectual abuse or that causes or encourages harassment, explicit or implied."

Be a valued member. If you join a social network like a Facebook group or comment on someone's blog, make sure you are contributing valuable insights. Don't post information about topics like Pierpont C&TC/Fairmont State University events unless you are sure it will be of interest to readers. Self-promoting behavior is viewed negatively and can lead to you being banned from websites or groups.

Consider your audiences. Social media often span traditional boundaries between professional and personal relationships. Use privacy settings to restrict personal information on otherwise public sites. Choose profile photos and avatars carefully. Be thoughtful about the type of photos you upload.

Think before you post. There's no such thing as a "private" social media site. Search engines can turn up posts years after the publication date. Comments can be forwarded or copied. Archival systems save information even if you delete a post. If you feel angry or passionate about a subject, it's wise to delay posting until you are calm and clear-headed.

Maintain confidentiality. Do not post confidential or proprietary information about Pierpont C&TC/Fairmont State University, its students, its alumni or your fellow employees. Use good ethical judgment and follow university policies and federal requirements, such as FERPA, HIPPA and the Health Insurance Security/Privacy.

If you discuss a situation involving individuals on a social media site, be sure that they cannot be identified. As a guideline, don't post anything that you would not present at a conference.

Respect college/university time and property. College/University computers and your work time are to be used for college/university-related educational and business purposes. It's appropriate to post at work if your comments are directly related to accomplishing work goals, such as seeking sources for information or working with others to resolve a problem. Limited personal use of computing resources is acceptable as long as it doesn't violate any policies, but for the most part, you should maintain your personal sites on your own time using non-Pierpont C&TC/Fairmont State University computers.

Be aware of liability. You are legally liable for what you post on your own site and on the sites of others. Individual bloggers have been held liable for commentary deemed to be proprietary, copyrighted, defamatory, libelous or obscene (as defined by the courts).

Employers are increasingly conducting Web searches on job candidates before extending offers. Be sure that what you post today will not come back to haunt you.

Obviously, using college/university computing resources to threaten or harass anyone is a violation of the Acceptable Use and the Anti-discriminatory Harassment policies, which "forbids any unlawful harassment which includes any behavior (verbal, written, or physical) that abuses, assails, intimidates, demeans or victimizes or has the effect of creating a hostile environment for any person based on protected characteristics (i.e. race, color, ethnicity, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, marital status, parental status, family relationship status, physical or mental disability, military status). "