8.1 PUBLIC INFORMATION

Last Revised: January 2012

Policy Statement: The Board of Trustees is committed to providing students, employees, and the general public with complete and accurate information concerning official actions of the Board and College programs, services, and activities. The Board also encourages appropriate activities that promote an understanding of the mission and values of the College and that encourage active public service and support.

Purpose/Definitions: This policy explains the College’s commitment to honest, open, and professional communications about the College.

External publications are distributed or displayed off campus, including, but not limited to, recruiting materials, class schedules, catalogs, handbooks, promotional and informational brochures, banners, billboards, newsletters, exhibits, and special reports. Major student-oriented publications such as the Student Handbook and Planner and The Pacer student newspaper are considered external publications.

Image refers to any depiction of a person in a photograph, videotape, film, artwork or other visible means.

Internal publications are distributed or displayed on campus, e.g., newsletters, brochures, flyers, programs, invitations, and on-campus promotions. Internal communications are intended for College faculty and staff and, in some cases, for students.

News media refers to newspapers, radio, television, magazines, professional newsletters, websites, blogs, and other electronic news sources.

Classroom materials include handouts, flyers, brochures, newsletters, reports, or other materials created specifically for instructional use and disseminated to students. Classroom or teaching materials are not covered in Policy 8.1.

Approval Authority/Monitoring Authority: Piedmont Community College’s Board of Trustees has approval authority for this policy. The President and the Director, Public Information have monitoring authority for this policy.

Procedure: The President and the College’s Public Information Office will provide information to the public regarding policies, administrative operation, objectives, plans, educational programs, and achievements. The Director, Public Information will oversee all external communications for the College, including marketing, advertising, media relations, and publications (Policy 2.15 Publications).

All media inquiries, requests, news releases, and story ideas should be directed to the Director, Public Information. The Public Information Office is located in Building A on the Person County Campus and can be reached through the PCC switchboard at (336) 599-1181, ext. 206.

Other Public Information procedures include the following, listed alphabetically:
Advertising

Piedmont Community College advertises its programs, activities, and services through newspapers, magazines, radio and television stations, flyers, websites, social media, and other appropriate venues within its service area of Person and Caswell counties and in other locations as appropriate. The design and placement of all advertising is determined by the size and characteristics of the target audience and by the budget available for each advertising campaign. No news releases or advertisements will be released to media outside of the College’s service area unless the President has requested and received permission from the presidents of other community colleges in the areas involved.

Branding

The College maintains an effective brand identity through the consistent and professional visual presentation of the College, thus protecting the College’s image. At the heart of the branding process is the proper use of the College logo. The College carefully manages contexts which display the logo, the professional and graphic quality of the logo, and the application of consistent regulation for the use of the logo to build the brand that distinguishes PCC in the marketplace.

The Public Information Office is responsible for managing the brand and for maintaining the integrity of any use of the PCC logo. Requests for use of the logo on any promotional products must be approved by the Director, Public Information prior to production. Persons using the PCC logo on internal publications must follow the specific guidelines in the PCC Style Guide for PCC logo use.

College Website

The College’s website (www.piedmontcc.edu) is a primary means of disseminating information to students, faculty, staff, and the public. This site is the only official website for the College. Other websites representing the College or its programs or services are prohibited. The Public Information Office is responsible for the design, development, monitoring, and maintenance of the College’s website, as well as for the training of PCC employees in using the website’s Content Management System to update website information. All areas of the College are responsible for updating their sections of the website following the guidelines established by the Public Information Office (see Policy 8.2).

Community Relations

Guided by the principles of integrity and transparent communication, the President leads the College’s community relations efforts. However, all College personnel are responsible for promoting positive community relations that will encourage understanding and support for the College and its mission among the citizens of the service area.

The College is committed to promoting cooperative relationships with others who play an important role in the education process, including local governmental agencies, community organizations, and other educational institutions, including local public school systems. The College will establish cooperative working relationships with other public and private agencies within the framework provided by state laws and regulations.
Media Relations

The Director, Public Information is the initial point of contact for all media requests. Any media requests received by College personnel should be directed to the Director, Public Information. Official spokespersons for the College are the President and the Director, Public Information. Either spokesperson may authorize employees to speak as College representatives. Employees should not initiate media contacts without authorization and should report all media requests to the Director, Public Information as soon as they are received.

The Public Information Office (PIO) staff prepares and distributes College news releases to newspapers, radio and television stations, Websites and social media, and other electronic media as appropriate. All news releases go to local media (The Courier-Times and The Caswell Messenger newspapers, Radio Roxboro and WRNC cable television), and the College Website. Some releases go to other media as appropriate.

The PIO accepts news releases and requests for news releases from the President, vice presidents, deans, and directors. News releases will be written following the College styles as specified in the PCC Style Guide. (The PCC Style Guide is available on the PCC Website and on the College’s T: drive in the folder entitled Publicity Tools.) News releases must be submitted to the PIO for editing, approval, and release no later than Wednesday of the week prior to the requested release date for local media. A minimum two-week deadline will apply for releases sent to non-local media or releases requiring interviews, fact gathering, and writing by the PIO. For clarification, consult the Director, Public Information when making these requests and to determine deadlines.

Model Release Forms

The Public Information Office requires any person whose personal image is used by the College to complete and sign a Model Release Form before the image is used for any purpose. Model Release Forms are available on the College’s T drive under Publicity Tools>Forms and on the College’s Website. Students will receive a Model Release Form to complete when they are photographed for student identification cards in the Student Development Office or as part of the intake process for students who are not required to obtain student IDs. Completed release forms will be maintained in students’ college files. Employees will receive Model Release Forms for completion when they are photographed for their identification badges. Completed forms will be maintained in employees’ personnel files. Students or employees who do not wish to have their images used by the College should state their desire to be excluded at the time images are being made, whether in photographs, videos, films or any other method. Exception: Images made during the College’s public events, such as graduation or a College-wide activity, are not subject to this procedure.

Photography

The Public Information Office uses photographs to present and promote the College when possible. The PIO provides limited photography services for major College events, particularly when the photographs have the potential for marketing or archival projects. The PIO encourages other College personnel to
familiarize themselves with basic photography principles and to photograph events and achievements in their own areas as needed. The PIO will provide advice on photographing events upon request or during staff development sessions.

Publications

Procedures for major publication development, review, and printing are the responsibility of the Director, Public Information. The Director, Public Information must approve in advance any request for the use, copying, or reprinting of any Piedmont Community College publication or part of a publication by a non-College organization (see Policy 2.15).

External publications must be approved by the Director, Public Information and must comply with all legal and institutional requirements before they can be printed or produced. The PIO oversees the development, design, and production of all external publications.

Most internal publications (those distributed on campus) and any publications generated for instructional use do not require the approval of the Director, Public Information unless they will be distributed to the general public at on-campus functions, e.g., honor society induction ceremonies, student performances, graduations. These items will be considered external publications and will require prior approval by the PIO.

The PIO will provide advice and review for any publications upon request. Requests must be made in advance to allow adequate time for review.

Required Statements

To list the College’s accreditation status, use the following statement verbatim:

ACCREDITATION

Piedmont Community College is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award associate degrees, diplomas and certificates. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of Piedmont Community College. The Commission is to be contacted only if there is evidence that appears to support an institution's significant non-compliance with a requirement or standard. In addition to this regional accreditation, individual programs have accreditation or licensing board criteria as listed in the college catalog or at www.piedmontcc.edu. Copies of these accreditations can be obtained from the Office of Research and Institutional Effectiveness (Person County Campus, Room B115).

The College is required to include a statement of nondiscrimination on its Website, job application, catalog and student handbook, student application for admission, campus publications, and job announcements. The following statement must be used verbatim:
NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

Piedmont Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Vice President, Administrative Services, P.O. Box 1197, Roxboro, NC 27573-1197, (336) 599-1181, ext. 236. For further information on notice of non-discrimination, the OCR office for North Carolina is located at: Washington DC (Metro), Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-1475; Telephone Number: (202) 453-6020; e-mail: OCR.DC@ed.gov.

Signage

The Vice President, Administrative Services and the Director, Public Information are responsible for permanent campus signage, both external and internal. Signage must meet legal requirements and must follow College style guidelines in order to reflect the appropriate public image for the College. Signage includes directional signs, informational signs, maps, legally-required notification signs, College vehicle signs, and building, room, and window signs to assist campus visitors. No permanent signs will be placed without the approval of the Director, Public Information and the Vice President, Administrative Services. Placement of signage is dependent upon needs, legal requirements, and available financial resources.

Social Media

The Public Information Office recognizes the benefit of social media sites as a means of sharing information for its constituencies and of connecting students, faculty and staff, and the community. The College currently uses Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Flickr; other social media, including LinkedIn, are under consideration. The PIO will continue to adapt to changing social media trends as they develop. All social media sites representing PCC must be registered with the PIO (Policy 8.3 Social Media).

Legal Citation: N/A

PCC Model Release Form

I hereby give Piedmont Community College the irrevocable right to use my name or personal image in all forms and media and in all manners, for editorial, promotion, advertising, trade, or any other lawful purposes.

Signature: ________________________________________________________________

Date: ______________________________________________________________________

Name (printed) ______________________________________________________________________

Address: ______________________________________________________________________

City, State and Zip: ______________________________________________________________________

If under age 18, guardian’s signature: ________________________________________________

Date: ________________________________________________