Should I Respond Online On the College’s Behalf?  
Guidelines to help answer when and how to respond to online/social media user postings

Assess

Is a Response Necessary?  
Considerations:  
• Time to research and write  
• Likely readership  
• Priority of the issue

no

Do Not Respond  
Let it stand or remove if offensive

yes

Evaluate

Tone  
Is the post positive or neutral?

no

Correct the Information  
1. Discuss with manager or content area expert and obtain approval  
2. Consult considerations listed below  
3. Correct errors and respond

yes

Respond

1. Discuss with manager or content area expert and obtain approval  
2. Consult considerations listed below  
3. Respond

Correct the Information  
1. Discuss with manager or content area expert and obtain approval  
2. Consult considerations listed below  
3. Correct errors and respond

yes

Considerations

Be Transparent – Disclose your affiliation.

Cite Sources of Information – Use facts and cite sources by including links, policies, plans, etc.

Respect Your Time – Do not spend more time than the response is worth.

Use a Professional, Yet Genuine Tone – Respond in a tone that reflects positively on the College.

Communicate Offline – Take the conversation offline if the conversation gets lengthy or sensitive. Respond with a direct message or call.

Adapted from the Environmental Protection Agency Social Media Response Mechanism, Office of Public Affairs and the Air Force Web Posting Response Assessment, Air Force Public Affairs Agency - Emerging Technology Division