



## 2.16 Media Relations Policy

Category: Administration

Name of Responsible Office: Community Relations

Title of Responsible Executive: Vice President, Institutional Advancement and Executive Director, MCC Foundation

Date Established: December 5, 2016

Date Last Approved: August 6, 2024

### Summary

Monroe Community College aims to effectively communicate with the public and to convey and support the College's mission and positioning via strategic messaging. In the interest of releasing consistent and accurate institutional information, this policy sets forth who is authorized to speak for and about the College with the news media.

### Policy

#### *Policy Statement*

As a public institution, the College has a fundamental responsibility to inform the public about its mission, priorities, initiatives and accomplishments and to do so in a manner consistent with its values. In fulfilling this responsibility, the College is committed to accuracy and timeliness in the dissemination of information about its programs and activities through the news media and other mainstream communication channels. Additionally, the College recognizes that its reputation is an institutional asset worthy of continuous development and safeguarding.

By designating who is authorized to speak for the College and outlining the process by which others may be authorized to speak about College programs and initiatives, the College strives to ensure accuracy, consistency and coordination of communication among all units of the College.

#### *Spokespersons*

The spokesperson for the MCC Board of Trustees is the board Chair and/or his/her designee.

The spokespersons for the College are the President of the College and, via authority given by the President, the Director, Community Relations.

The President may designate other spokespersons as situations warrant.

In the College's regular efforts to convey its mission, priorities and messages to the public, the College Officers and members of the Community Relations Department may be granted authority to serve as spokespeople. This authority is situational and limited, and is granted by the Director for Community Relations, the President, or the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

In keeping with policy 2.5 Shared Governance, leaders of the Faculty Senate, Support Staff Planning Council, and Student Government serve as spokespeople for their respective constituencies; they do not speak for the College. The Faculty Association, CSEA Local 7402, MCC Foundation and MCC Association do not speak for the College but may speak for their respective organizations. In granting media interviews, all of these individuals should make clear for whom they are speaking.

### ***Speaking about the College or from One's Area of Expertise***

Employees of the College may speak to the news media about their area(s) of responsibility (e.g. their programs or departments) with prior authorization from the Community Relations Department. Obtaining that prior authorization is the responsibility of the MCC employee, not the news media representative. If authorization is denied, the requestor will be provided with the rationale surrounding the decision.

When the topic is related to an employee's area of professional expertise and not about the College, and when that commentary would not be perceived by a reasonable person as representing the College's position, employees are not required to obtain authorization prior to granting the interview. For example, a professor of history commenting on voting rights history is not required to have authorization prior to an interview. However, an enrollment management professional commenting on college admissions, even in general, is required to have authorization prior to granting the media interview because a reasonable person would perceive the enrollment management professional as speaking from his/her position at the College.

When speaking publicly on a topic not related to MCC or their area of responsibility at MCC, MCC employees should not use their MCC title or highlight their MCC affiliation. It is understood that news media representatives sometimes ask for or know of an interviewee's place of employment; in such a situation the employee is responsible for indicating that they represent them self and not the College.

In all cases, the taking or sharing of photos or video of the College to accompany news coverage is to be managed by the Community Relations Department. Employees are to direct news media representatives to the Community Relations Department to discuss imagery.

All employees are encouraged to coordinate with and seek any necessary assistance from MCC's Community Relations Department, and to bring all interviews to the attention of the Community Relations Department in advance or as soon as is practical following the interview.

College employees are reminded that communication via social media may reach news media representatives (depending upon privacy settings, followers, etc.). All aspects of this policy apply to exchanges with news media representatives via social media.

### ***Applicability***

This policy applies to all members of the College community.

This policy is not intended in any way to abridge academic freedom or freedom of expression.

### ***Definitions***

- **Affiliated Organizations:** The MCC Foundation, MCC Association, student clubs and any group that represents MCC and its affiliated organizations.
- **Area of Professional Expertise:** A topic or field in which a person's experience, education, research, etc. has contributed to his/her extensive knowledge and in which that person is employed at MCC. For example, a teaching faculty member's area of expertise may be nursing.
- **Area of Responsibility:** The position or role a person holds at MCC. For example, an employee's area of responsibility may be MCC's nursing program.
- **College:** Monroe Community College.
- **College Community:** Includes Monroe Community College students, faculty, employees, volunteers, and members of recognized and affiliated MCC organizations.
- **College Officers:** The College's administrative leaders as defined in the College's Administration Policy 2.14.

- **News Media:** [Mass media](#) organizations that focus on delivering [news](#) to the [general public](#) or a target public. For the purpose of this policy, the definition includes only organizations not affiliated with the College (i.e. external to the College).
- **President:** The College's chief executive officer as defined in the College's Administration Policy 2.14 or an individual appointed to act as such in the President's absence.
- **Speaking to the News Media:** To communicate in any way with journalists.
- **Spokesperson:** A person who speaks for an organization (e.g. MCC or the MCC Board of Trustees) in its entirety.

### ***Responsibility***

Community Relations Department

### **Related Information**

#### ***College Documents***

- 2.14 College Administration Policy
- 2.5 Shared Governance

### **Contact Information**

Community Relations Department