4.21  KCTCS Faculty/Staff Media Relations Policy

4.21.1  Statement of Authority

This policy was established to clarify procedures for interaction with the media at colleges within the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS).

KCTCS is committed to open, honest communication with the public, and one important way we communicate is through the media. The colleges and System Office maintain Marketing and Communications Departments (MCD) that are staffed with professionals who are trained to work with the media. This department is the designated contact point for the media and is the source of official information to the media.

4.21.2  Media Calls/Inquiries

All requests for media interviews received by faculty or staff members must be forwarded immediately to the college MCD along with basic information about the reporter, the news outlet, the information requested and the reporter’s deadline. MCD will decide who the appropriate spokesperson is for the situation. Although faculty, staff and students may speak with media, they do not speak FOR the college/KCTCS unless designated by the president and/or MCD staff.

Reporters have strict deadlines that must be met, so it is important we respond quickly to media calls. Media inquiries must be responded to as soon as possible, preferably within one hour.

College personnel approached by the media off-site also are responsible for informing the MCD, if possible before, or immediately upon the conclusion of, the interview. Key details from the interview should be provided, including the reporter’s name, the media outlet represented, the questions asked and the responses given.

If media contact faculty or staff for an interview regarding a subject matter NOT related to KCTCS or a particular college, the MCD staff should still be notified, if the interview will take place on campus. The MCD staff will make sure no information identifying the college is seen in the background or b-roll (video footage/stock video of campus, classrooms, college signs etc. used during television news story).

If you are contacted by a member of the media, immediately refer the call to the MCD. The staff is available 24/7 to consult with administrators, directors, program chairs, faculty and staff about the most effective ways to work with the media.
4.21.3 News Releases/Media Interviews

College departments or programs must coordinate all media events with the MCD. All news releases, media advisories and other story pitches must go through the MCD. The staff strongly encourages faculty and staff to share ideas for possible stories, especially good news, such as awards, student success, events on campus, etc.

If you are seeking publicity, you must provide the MCD staff with as much information as possible so they can draft a release or promote via another communication tool. If you are contacted by the MCD staff for additional information needed in the development of news stories, please respond by the deadline requested. News releases submitted for approval of quotes and program information should be approved within one business day, except in cases where earlier deadlines demand a more immediate response.

Many times the MCD staff are not made aware of newsworthy events until after they have occurred. Usually, that is too late to get publicity. Please contact the MCD staff at least two weeks in advance of your event – sooner if you want to schedule an interview on a morning or noon TV program or a radio talk show.

4.21.4 Media Spokespeople

Generally, someone from the MCD staff or the president serves as spokesperson for the college, but there may be times when it is beneficial to have others serve in that role. All media spokesperson designations are coordinated with the president and/or MCD so that the college speaks with one voice providing consistent messages.

Communications liaisons will assist the MCD staff in its efforts to respond to media inquiries in a timely manner. Communications liaisons should be prepared to meet immediately to discuss media strategies in crisis situations. Individuals selected should have clearance from the president’s office to speak on behalf of the college.

Although faculty, staff and students may speak with media, they do not speak FOR the college/KCTCS unless designated by the president and/or MCD staff. Any interviews given by someone who is not a designated spokesperson must include a disclaimer that the interviewee is NOT speaking on behalf of the college/KCTCS.

4.21.5 Media Procedures on College Property

Media are permitted to enter public areas of the campuses, but first should contact the MCD so that the staff can help facilitate visits to campus. To shoot photographs or video, record audio and/or conduct any interview inside college facilities, members of the press must be accompanied by a MCD staff member.

Access to classrooms and offices is not allowed without prior permission from the college. Media personnel who interrupt normal operations or do not comply with KCTCS policy may be asked to leave.
During emergencies, college or other officials may require media to remain within a designated media area for safety reasons.

### 4.21.6 Crisis Communications

KCTCS has a crisis communications plan in place that clearly defines roles and responsibilities for communicating with various audiences. The college MCD should be contacted immediately in any type of crisis situation on campus. Anyone who has knowledge of a smoldering (potential) crisis should make the department aware immediately.

It is important to limit social media posts during a crisis so that rumors and unconfirmed information are not reported. Official information that has been confirmed by first responders and/or the KCTCS crisis team will be disseminated from the MCD. Please see the KCTCS Social Media Policy for more information.

### 4.21.7 KCTCS Information Requests

Colleges must consult with the System Office’s MCD before responding to media requests for information relating to presidential searches, legal action, social media crises, academic misconduct, identity theft, security breaches, major campus crimes, allegations of fiscal mismanagement and any issues related to open records requests.

Media requests for public records under the Kentucky Open Records Act should be referred directly to the KCTCS General Counsel. In turn, the Office of General Counsel should inform the KCTCS MCD of any opens records requests originating from the media. [http://www.kctcs.edu/News_and_Events/Marketing_and_Communications/For_the_Media/Open_Records.aspx](http://www.kctcs.edu/News_and_Events/Marketing_and_Communications/For_the_Media/Open_Records.aspx)

Also, questions regarding the Fire Commission, Kentucky Board of Emergency Medical Services, Kentucky Coal Academy and AMTEC should be referred to the System Office’s MCD.

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