

Translation



The following guidelines, published by a vocational college in China's Jiangxi Province, describe the qualifications for and duties of "internet commentators." These individuals, who are typically Communist Party members and can be either teachers or students at the college, work part-time monitoring the campus computer network, reinforcing propaganda messages and censoring "harmful" content. Although these guidelines are specific to this one college, it is highly likely that other Chinese colleges and universities have similar teams of online commentators.

Title

Notice on Establishing Internet Commentator Teams
关于建立网络评论员队伍的通知

Author

The Propaganda (United Front Work) Department (宣传 (统战) 部) of Jiangxi Teachers College (江西师范高等专科学校)

Source

Jiangxi Teachers College website, May 15, 2017. Jiangxi Teachers College is located in Yingtan City (鹰潭市), Jiangxi Province, China.

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Etcetera Language Group, Inc.

Editor

Ben Murphy, CSET Translation Lead

To all grassroots party committees and Party general branches:

In order to thoroughly implement the spirit of the National Conference on Ideological and Political Work at Institutes of Higher Education, firmly seize the reins of online public opinion, provide a good public opinion environment for school-wide reform and development, and further promote the construction of a harmonious campus, we have decided to establish an internet commentator team (网络评论员队伍). Relevant information is provided below.

I. Fully Recognize the Importance and Necessity of the Construction of an Internet Commentator Team

Currently, the internet has become an important channel through which teachers and students throughout the school obtain knowledge and interact with others. It has a

wide-ranging and profound impact on the learning, lives, and ideological concepts of teachers and students. However, the uneven quality of information on the internet has made it harder for university students to distinguish between true and false. In particular, some people with ulterior motives use the internet as a tool for incitement and harm. They use online forums, chatrooms, [Sina] Weibo, WeChat, other virtual communities, and other means to propagate all manner of harmful speech, which has a major impact on the stability of schools and society.

Establishing a team of high-quality internet commentators is an important means to occupy the internet front with active and healthy ideology and culture and further purify the campus network environment. It is an important means to build the campus network into a platform for comprehensively serving college students, propagating advanced culture, and promoting the main theme. It is an important measure to further strengthen and improve the ideological and political education of college students, and it is also an important task in the acceleration of the construction of a harmonious campus.

2. Conditions and Requirements for the Selection of Online Commentators

1. Commentators must possess high ideological and political quality, strong political sensitivity and political discrimination, a strong ability to grasp the correct manner in which to orient public opinion, a high level of policy and theory knowledge, and a definite level of experience in ideological and political work or student education management.
2. They must understand and grasp the laws and regulations of higher education, be familiar with higher education policies and the basic situation of the school, have a strong work ethic, have a sense of social responsibility and justice, and enthusiastically serve the reform and development of higher education.
3. They must be familiar with the basic operational technology of the internet, understand the features and norms of online transmission of information, be adept in the use of internet slang, have a wide range of knowledge, and possess strong writing abilities.
4. In principle, internet commentators must be members of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Each grassroots party committee and general party branch needs to designate three internet commentators (including 1 teacher and 2 students; try to appoint students who can actively spread positive energy through online propaganda activities, such as forum moderators (吧主), thread owners (斑竹), or people with many Weibo followers) and fill in the *Internet Commentator Application, Internet Commentator Candidate Recommendation*

and Verification Form, and Internet Commentator Detailed Information Record Registration Form.

5. Internet commentators are recommended by grassroots party committees and general party branches. These recommendations must be submitted to the Propaganda Department of the [Jiangxi Teachers College] Party Committee for review and confirmation before October 5, 2013. If an internet commentator cannot continue to work as such due to job changes or other reasons, the department of this commentator shall recommend other candidates and provide a written report to the Propaganda Department of the Party Committee for confirmation.

III. Responsibilities of Internet Commentators

1. Internet commentators shall continue to strengthen their study of political theory, higher education laws and regulations, and higher education policies. They shall continuously strengthen their study of network technology and strive to improve their theoretical attainments, level of policy knowledge, and level of service.

2. Internet commentators shall actively intervene in the interactive areas (forums, bulletin boards [BBS], microblogs, message boards, etc.) of websites involving school-related content, participate in the comments on hot-button issues and difficult issues that teachers and students are concerned about online, provide positive guidance, and actively guide posts (导贴), actively respond to posts (跟贴), and remove posts (结帖) in a timely manner.

3. In emergencies, internet commentators shall promptly report to the Propaganda Department of the Party Committee by phone or email, guide online public opinion, maintain positive comments and positive voices, and, as far as possible, eliminate various negative influences to maintain school stability.

4. Internet commentators shall strengthen contact and communication in a timely manner and strive to complete various commentary tasks.

IV. Strengthen the Organization and Leadership of the Internet Commentator Team

The Propaganda Department and the Information Center of the Party Committee shall hold regular meetings to listen to online public opinion guidance work reports and promptly resolve problems that arise in the work of internet commentators. The Propaganda Department and the Information Center of the Party Committee are responsible for the selection of commentators, practical training, work evaluation, and performance-based awards for the commentator team. They shall continuously

improve the training and study mechanisms for internet commentators. In particular, they shall strengthen training on methods to effectively improve public opinion guidance capabilities and eliminate negative influences. They shall continuously improve the political and service quality of internet commentators and their capability to channel online public opinion.

The school shall regularly hold work meetings to summarize and exchange work experience. The quantity of reported information and ability to guide posts, respond to posts, and remove posts shall be used as the basis for practical performance evaluation and to select and commend excellent internet commentators. All relevant departments shall provide assurance and support in terms of workplaces, equipment, and facilities and actively create the necessary conditions to provide commentators with opportunities for training, visits, inspections, and learning, so as to improve commentators' internet commentary capabilities and computer network application capabilities.

Party Committee Propaganda and United Front Work Department (党委宣传统战部)

May 15, 2017