



Our Social Media GUIDELINES



SOCIAL MEDIA AT SWU

Southern Wesleyan University has established a presence in social media for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is a valuable two-way conduit of communications with all constituencies. Because social media is constantly growing and changing, we at SWU Marketing and Communications realize that it is impossible to address this subject in detail, but are committed to maintaining a proactive approach to maintaining and monitoring the university's diverse social media presence.

We see social media as a tool. There is a general rule that applies to all tools, whether it's a hammer or Facebook: Choosing the right tool and using it properly results in great benefits. Misusing a tool can cause damage or injury.

CRITERIA

Who can set up a social media account?

We strongly recommend that creation of social media accounts is for departments or university-sanctioned organizations. A social media account using SWU branding (logo or name) must be approved by the Office of Marketing and Communications. Athletic team accounts must be reported to Sports Information. It is also important to designate more than one person to maintain that account and to have login credentials.

If an employee or student responsible for the account leaves the university for any reason, another person must be designated in his or her place. If it becomes necessary to change a password or any other information, the department or organization should notify all who maintain that account. If the name or URL of an existing account changes, contact the Marketing and Communications Dept. For a listing of departments and organizations with a social media presence, go to <https://www.swu.edu/about/social-media/>.

What is the purpose of the social media account?

Knowing your purpose sets the tone for how you will use social media and the nature of the posts. Just because somebody is friending or following your social media account does NOT mean they are necessarily viewing your content or care about what you are posting. In the noisy, cluttered social media environment, posts must be engaging and considered valuable by your intended audience.

We strongly suggest planning a strategy for social media content. Think about:

- The best way to promote your content
- Posts that consistently support your brand (public perception of your image)
- Social media platforms that work best for a particular kind of post (also: page vs. group)
- Types of posts that work best
- Expected outcomes (specific actions of audience)

Your page or group may be a great place to share valuable resources and articles relevant to your department. Examples include current events, stories, trends, and information of value to your audience. Being relevant in your posts helps engage your audience and shows your department as a thought leader in its relevant industry/social network.

If you are already making university-related posts to personal social media accounts, consider double posting or sharing to a department account. The more positive buzz we create around Southern Wesleyan University, the more we can boost brand awareness as well as perceived value of the university and its employees, graduates, and degree programs.

Think about social media content that you engage with the most!

Who can post?

Individuals posting for a department approved to do so by the department head/ leadership of an organization.

What about proofing?

We recommend that content creators establish an additional staff or team member for proofing.

How often should I post and when?

Studies show that inactivity adversely affects visitors' interest in a Facebook page or other social media. Routinely checking analytics in Facebook and other social media sites can give insight as to who is interacting, when most of them are logged in, how they are interacting and with what type of content (i.e., text posts, links, photos, event invites). Holders of accounts with limited activity will be notified by the Marketing and Communications Dept.

Posting Do's and Don'ts:

Do's:

- Know your audience.
- Think things through before posting.
- Double check for grammar and spelling, then have another individual proofread before posting.
- Add value (i.e., useful information, pleasurable to read, concise). Consider the type of posts most likely to be shared.
- Post with the goal of engaging the reader (i.e., open-ended question, call for photos, call to action).
- Be consistent with your posts. Visitors should see new content each week or they will lose interest. A general rule of thumb: Instagram 3-5x per week, LinkedIn 2-4x per week, Facebook 3-5x per week, Twitter 2-5x per day
- Post visual content (photos and videos) whenever possible.
- Tag people (with permission)/organizations/accounts mentioned in your posts. Examples may include sponsors, bloggers, alumni, etc.
- Respect the privacy of others.
- Promote your events and cross-promote other university events and programs that are relevant.
- Applaud achievements of alumni, students, faculty, staff.
- Share the latest news/happenings.
- Monitor your social media pages consistently.
- When using Twitter, remember the 280 character limit and shorten URLs, using bitly.com or within a social media management platform such as Hootsuite.
- For posts about student-athletes or recruits, it is strongly recommended you consult the Director of Compliance Services and/or Sports Information Director.

Don'ts:

- Don't post confidential information about student, faculty, staff or any individual that invades privacy and has potential to do harm to person or reputation.
- Don't post content that causes the public to view Southern Wesleyan University in a negative light, including content that violates university or Biblical standards.
- Don't post personal messages not meant for other eyes.
- Don't use copyrighted material of any kind without permission or wrongly attribute authorship of a post/article.
- Don't make profanity-laced posts or include links to sites with questionable content.
- Don't defame persons or groups.
- Don't post political views, regardless of the ideology.
- Don't make inappropriate comments.
- Don't post inappropriate photos/videos or provide links to sites that feature such content.
- Don't misrepresent your personal views as official views of SWU.
- Don't use poor grammar and misspelled words.
- Don't load posts with excessive or irrelevant hashtags. For guidelines on hashtags, see appendix at the end of this document.
- Don't publicize the recruitment of a potential student-athlete, including details about his/her campus visit. If you have questions concerning posts about student-athletes (both current and prospective), please contact the Director of Compliance Services.

HANDLING COMMENTS

Questionable comments will be handled on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the intent of the individual posting the comment and its potential for harm to the university, any of its students or employees.

Sometimes negative comments are left by “trolls” who are looking to stir things up with their random rants. On the other hand, a comment or complaint is sometimes indicative of a serious issue or misunderstanding. In the case of the latter, an appropriate individual monitoring the social media posts would need to respond or refer the post to someone who can best address an issue and clear up any misunderstanding.

All communications should be evaluated based on the potential for harm to individuals or the reputation of the university or one or more of its departments or organizations. One way a post can become harmful is if it goes “viral,” resulting in widespread distribution and unintended consequences.

In certain cases, it will become necessary for an appropriate administrator to intervene. From that point a decision is made on appropriate responses (i.e., contact the individual/group making the post, taking down the post, further monitoring).

FACEBOOK EVENTS

Facebook contains excellent resources for promoting events and extending an opportunity for your audience to interact. Creating a Facebook event is a simple process that can engage your audience with videos and images, while giving you immediate feedback to gauge their interest.

- Although it's easy to start, Facebook events should be planned with the same attention to details as you would give while planning the actual event.
- Use an appropriate header image that captures the purpose of the event. Contact the Marketing Department if you need assistance with photography, design, or advertising campaigns.
- If your event is a concert or guest speaker, posting video clips provides your audience with a great sampling of what to expect.

MONITORING

Monitoring of university social media shall be done by an appropriate member of the Marketing and Communications staff on a consistent basis (minimum – daily/more often if a situation warrants). This staff member notifies supervisor (and affected dept. head) of misuse, unusual activity or of inactivity on a social media page.

It is vital to our campus community that all who are involved in social media become aware of social media accounts set up by individuals or organizations not sanctioned by the university. Marketing and Communications makes every effort to monitor these social media accounts and determine if contact or action should be taken, should content be considered harmful in any way to the university, its students, or its employees.

PROFILE/HEADER IMAGES

An institutional profile picture should contain brand-consistent text and/or graphics designed or approved by the Marketing Department.

Header images should be high-quality and contain text, graphics, or images relevant to SWU. Examples might be photos of campus, faculty interacting with students, relevant events, etc. Facebook also allows for video headers. If you need assistance designing and creating graphics or videos for profile or header images, please contact the Marketing Department.

TRAINING

Marketing and Communications encourages employees of other departments who engage in social media to pursue educational opportunities on how to effectively work with social media. The department serves as a resource, consulting as well as providing information and website links devoted to social media best practices. Marketing and Communications can also consult on ways you can measure your social media effectiveness.

We encourage you to seek out social media accounts elsewhere that are effective and also web articles related to effective use of social media.

Lunch N' Learn

Be on the lookout for scheduled “Lunch N’ Learn” sessions dealing with social media and other communications-related topics at the University Dining Commons building.

ADVERTISING

Social media advertising is a highly effective method of reaching target audiences to increase brand awareness, RSVPs, ticket sales, or page likes. The Office of Marketing can help your group/department create and launch social media ads based on the budget provided by that group. Funds are to be transferred to the Marketing account the month following the start of the campaign. Social media advertising campaigns utilizing SWU branding must be created or approved by the Office of Marketing.

GROUPS, PAGES, AND ROLES

LinkedIn and Facebook allow users to create online communities called “Groups” or promotional accounts called “Pages.” According to Facebook, Pages were designed to be the official profiles for entities such as celebrities, brands or businesses; while Facebook Groups are the place for small group communication and for people to share their common interests and express their opinion.

If you want to do the following, consider starting a Page.

- make announcements and updates about your organization
- primarily produce your own content and post updates
- establish an official, public presence for your organization

If you want to do the following, consider starting a Group.

- create a place where people yearning to connect have a place to network and have public discussions
- have a space mostly populated by member content
- establish a friendly image of your organization to your supporters

Keep in mind that Groups and Pages must be consistently monitored and maintained over time. These are not to be confused with Events.

Roles must also be taken into consideration. The creator of a page or group is automatically an administrator who has full editing permissions. Consider adding at least one additional administrator to the group or page in case of turnover. Other roles such as moderator or editor can be assigned to additional team members.

APPENDIX

Hashtags

Initially used in Twitter, hashtags are now widely used in other social media, especially Instagram, to enhance the “findability” of the short posts. Below is the definition provided by Wikipedia:

- A hashtag is a word or a phrase prefixed with the symbol #. It is a form of metadata tag. Short messages on microblogging social networking services such as Twitter, Tout, identi.ca, Tumblr, Instagram, Flickr, Google+ or Facebook may be tagged by putting “#” before important words, as in: #College is the perfect place to collect knowledge and professional #connections.
- Before using a hashtag, see how it’s already being used and examine the content that pops up. Check out Instagram, Twitter and Facebook and avoid a hashtag that tends to point to questionable content.
- Hashtag Holidays offer great opportunities to maximize post reach and engagement. Complete calendars can be found through marketing agencies such as HubSpot or Sprout Social. Add a holiday hashtag to the end of your post to gain impressions beyond your current followers. Ex. “Can’t wait to host our 20th Annual Jazz Camp this summer! Who is your favorite #jazz musician? #JazzDay”

Main SWU Hashtags

#TeamSWU
#onelifeSWU
#SWUlife
#weareSWU

SWU Academics

#SWUfinearts
#SWUscience
#SWUstudyaway

SWU Athletics

#OneWarrior
#confcarolinas
#ncaad2
#nccaa

SWU Spiritual Life

#SWUchapel
#SWUpalmsup
#SWUerves

Other

#MySWUstory

Generic Higher Ed Hashtags

#activelearning
#campus
#campuslife
#community
#classroom
#education
#handsonlearning
#HigherEd

Geographic Hashtags

#andersonsc
#centralsc
#discoversc
#exploresc
#pickens
#southcarolinaliving
#upstatesc
#visitclemson
#oconeecountysc
#yeahthatgreenville



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