SOCIAL MEDIA 101

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SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY
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DON’T:
Delete comments, filter comments or block accounts

As a public university, these are all considered violations of the First Amendment.
SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

At least two people must have access to login information, and one must be a permanent University employee.

The email address associated with UH social media accounts should be a department email.

Example: social@uh.edu
Up to 40% of Gen Z searches for things on social media before using Google, so it’s important to make a good first impression.
PROFILE GUIDELINES

Use a logo that is **current, easy to see** and **specific to your account**.
PROFILE GUIDELINES

- Profile picture/avatar
- Display name
- Username/handle
- Cover photo
- Bio
- Website/link
Avoid adding a birthday to your bio.

*If your birthday is set to a date that would make the account less than 13 years old, social networks may ban your account.*
PHOTO RELEASE GUIDELINES

In most cases, there are **two forms** you’ll need signed for permission to use a photo/video of a student:

- Individual Photo Release Form
- FERPA Authorization Form

*These forms are available at [uh.edu/marcom/guidelines-policies/photo-release/] (https://uh.edu/marcom/guidelines-policies/photo-release/)*
Photo releases are typically required if the individual:

- Is **recognizable**; the primary focus of the photograph/video shot
- Is **identifiable in a small group** setting, such as a small group of students studying in the library or congregating by the fountains. In these cases, a release should be obtained from each subject
- Has been **recruited** to serve as a model
- Is a minor **(under 18 years of age)**; a parental release is required
PHOTO RELEASE GUIDELINES

Photo releases are typically NOT required if:

- Photographed in **large group shots in a public space** or at public events with little expectation of privacy, such as sporting events and concerts
- It is a large group setting, such as **wide shots** of classrooms or campus scenic shots with no single subject
- The **subject is not recognizable**, such as silhouettes, posterior view or out of focus
- The photos/video are **not being taken or distributed by UH**. When news media is covering a story on campus or a production company is shooting content it plans to distribute, a UH photo release is not required. In many cases they will have their own releases. The “Filming at UH” guidelines outline protocols for filming on campus.
ACCESSIBILITY

UH social media accounts **must be accessible** and usable by people with the widest range of capabilities possible.

Add alt text

Add video captioning

Capitalize the first letter of each word in hashtags
CONTENT
There are four stages in social media content production:

- Planning
- Producing
- Posting
- Engaging
Consider the interests of your audience:

*Why* are they following you?

*Which social networks* are they most active on?

*How can you provide value* to them with your content?
The **format of your content** needs to **fit the platform**.

For example, posts to an Instagram feed should be very visual. High-quality photography that shows the faces, places or things associated with your account are very effective.
PRODUCING CONTENT

When you need to share a graphic on Instagram, do it as a Story rather than a post.

This will keep your feed clean and uncluttered.
Additionally, *don’t use QR codes* in social media posts.

QR codes are great for signage, but since most social media posts are viewed on a person’s mobile device, there is not an easy way to scan the code. Include the link in the post instead.
Avoid using **stock imagery** and **graphics that are text-heavy**.

*Both of these provide very little value to your audience and may cause them to scroll past your posts.*
Focus on **quality over quantity.**

Your account will perform better if you choose to **be selective** about what is worth being posted. Continue to consider what **brings your audience the most value.**

Ask yourself if the content you’re creating is content that you would interact with yourself or if it’s something you might mindlessly scroll past.
Use the platform **the way your audience does.**

Matching the usage and tone of your audience will help you fit in, get engagement and grow your following.
Interact with your audience!

Make your audience feel seen by interacting with them in the comments. A back-and-forth conversation can spark great engagement and make your account seem more human.

Additionally, commenting on other people's posts is good for the algorithm and the look of your brand.
ANALYTICS
Engagement rate is the most important metric when measuring social media success.
Any interaction with your content is considered engagement.

- Likes/reactions
- Shares/Retweets
- Comments/replies
One popular method for measuring engagement rate is taking the total number of engagements and comparing that to the total number of followers. This method is **good for drawing comparisons to your competitors**, as all of the data for this formula is **publicly accessible**.

\[
\text{(Total Engagements / Number of Followers)} \times 100 = \text{Public Engagement Rate}
\]
Public engagement rate example:

$$\frac{((7073 \times 1) + (36 \times 5))}{129,000} \times 100 = 5.62\% \text{ public engagement rate}$$

Because comments indicate more interest in the content than a simple like/reaction, they are often weighted heavier in engagement rate formulas. In this example, each comment is worth 5x as much as each like.
You will never have 100% of your followers see your post. For that reason, swapping out **Number of Followers** with **Total Reach** in the formula may give you more useful data for your post performance, as it will measure the engagement rate of those who *actually saw* your post.

\[
\frac{(\text{Total Engagements} \div \text{Total Reach})}{100}
\]

= Engagement Rate
Engagement rate example:

\[
\frac{(((7073 \times 1) + (36 \times 5)) \div 38,560) \times 100}{\text{POST’S REACH}} = 18.81\% \text{ engagement rate}
\]
RESOURCES
Visit the University Marketing and Communications website for more social media resources:

- UH Social Media Staff
- UHS Social Media Policy
- Social Media Best Practices
- UH Social Media Directory
- Social Media Campuswide Teams Group
- Photo Release Guidelines