

University of Miami | FAQ's for Social Media Committee Members

The purpose of these frequently asked questions is to help University of Miami communicators navigate social media platforms and aid them as they help others in their areas understand.

Social media accounts must support and uphold the University's brand identity, integrity, and reputation. Their use must be professional, protect the reputation and brand of the University, align with University priorities, and comply with policies and applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

Please review the University's social media policy [here](#) and direct any questions to Geisha Garcia, Director of Digital and Social Media, at g.garcia11@miami.edu.

SECTION 1 // ESTABLISHING NEW OFFICIAL UNIVERSITY ACCOUNTS

1. How to address requests for new official university accounts?

Only one official social media account per platform for each school, college, and unit is allowed per university policy. We encourage all appropriate content from the college, school, or area to be shared on these accounts that are managed by an assigned staff member and have a strategy and engaged audience already in place. In the event of an exceptional situation where an additional/new social media account is needed, the following questions should be asked:

- Is there a social media strategy and execution plan in place?
- Is there an existing social media account with an established following that can help you meet your goals and share your messages?
- Who is your target audience?
- Are social media platforms the best way to reach them?
- Have you conducted research on what your peers are doing on social media?
- Do you have the resources to manage the accounts necessary to achieve your goals successfully? This includes staff to create and/or curate content specific to each platform you want to have a presence on and conduct community management daily. Repurposing the same content across platforms is not a best practice.
- Have you reviewed the University's [Social Media Policy](#)?
- Have you reviewed the University's [brand guidelines](#)?

2. Should students manage official social media accounts?

Student workers are a valuable part of the social media ecosystem at the University but they can not independently run the social media accounts for a school, college, or unit. They may be given the opportunity to contribute to the accounts as a learning and professional development experience. Supervisors of areas interested in collaborating with student workers should provide guidance, best practices, and review student work before it's published.

SECTION 2 // COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES

As an account manager, you are responsible for actively monitoring conversations and comments on a daily basis.

1. **Can comments be deleted?**

The University reserves the right to hide or delete the following types of comments:

- Vulgar, abusive, or containing profanity
- Off-topic (i.e. spam)
- Promotional – brands or individuals selling products or services

2. **How to respond to comments and/or questions?**

When replying to comments or answering questions from an official University account, please keep in mind that you are speaking as the brand and anything said should conform to brand standards. When possible, link to the information and drive traffic to a University website. If you do not have an answer, direct the person to the appropriate campus unit.

3. **How to manage negative posts.**

These are a few recommendations to handle negativity online:

- Bullying
 - Some people use social media solely to post rants or harass others (“trolls”). Do not engage with them as all communication will be public. Take a screen capture to document the comment should you need proof if the matter is contested or the issue escalates.
- Complaints or negative comments
 - Do not delete the comments or block the users, as it can be viewed as censorship.
 - Do not engage with the comments. Trust that your community will self-police with other users calling out the behavior or by ignoring it altogether until the situation resolves itself.
 - If the complaint is valid and warrants a response, acknowledge it and take the conversation offline. Sample response: “We apologize you had a bad experience. Please email us at XXX@miami.edu so we can help resolve the issue.”
 - Contact the University Communications [social media team](#) if you are unsure about how to handle a specific situation.
- Response times
 - Monitoring accounts can provide insight for your social media plans, and alert you to opportunities to engage followers and build a community. Below are general recommended response times:
 - Twitter – 2-3 times per day, check mentions, direct messages, relevant search terms and relevant hashtags.
 - Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn– 1-2 times per day, check private/direct messages, post comments, comments on recent previous posts, tagged content, and relevant hashtags.

SECTION 3 // GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The following best practices provide guidance for participating on social media with University-affiliated social media accounts.

- University-affiliated social media channels represent the University of Miami and must adhere to the University's brand – voice, message, and visual identity. Every touch point and interaction on social media should reflect the University's personality and institutional vision and mission.
- Keep the University's brand in mind when creating posts around trends. If it doesn't align with the University's values, it should not be posted no matter how tempting it may be for high engagement purposes.
- Consider campus and global contexts when sharing content. Be mindful of campus happenings and world events. A poorly timed post can be seen as offensive or tasteless.
- Use scheduling tools responsibly. Scheduling posts can be useful for spacing posts out over the course of a day. It's good practice to only schedule one day at a time to remain aware of what is scheduled – especially if an event or incident arises – and remain actively engaged in monitoring the channels and conversations.
- When communicating on University-affiliated social media channels, use the same procedures and safeguards that you would use for other forms of public communications, such as checking for errors in accuracy and writing, ensuring approval to share publicly, and ensuring clear purpose and benefit.
- Consider how a post's language and content will reflect on you, your unit, and the University. Be clear in your writing – tone and meaning can easily be misinterpreted online. Consider your audience's possible reaction to the post and the comments it may generate. Do not use language or share content that is, or may be perceived as, offensive, discriminatory, inflammatory, or biased. Act professionally, honestly, responsibly, respectfully, ethically, appropriately, and consistent with University policies and laws.
- Have a social media plan. Identify the goals and target audiences for your unit's social media efforts, and select the platform(s) that best align with them. Develop a sustainable, long-term plan for content, engagement, and monitoring for each account. Evaluate and update the plan regularly and consider partnerships with other units and/or accounts.
- When using hashtags remember to make them relevant. While they can extend the reach of posts on some social media platforms, it's good practice to use no more than 2-3 hashtags per post on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. The current hashtag limit on Instagram is 30 per post but avoid overusing them unless you have thoroughly researched them and know what the hashtag conversation and content is about.
- Do not share personal opinions or advocate for personal interests. Do not make endorsements, whether commercial, political, or otherwise. Be mindful of unintentional endorsements and posts that may be perceived as endorsements.
- Ensure you're posting the intended content to the intended account.

- Be mindful when exchanging personal or contact information. When necessary to exchange such information, it's good practice to ask an individual to privately message you their information.
- Request permission for images. Images found on the web and social media are not free to use and doing so may be copyright infringement. Ask the image creator for permission to use the image and be clear about how you will use it. This includes images from user-generated content.
- Familiarize yourself with [copyright regulations](#) around music.
- Be mindful of NCAA regulations. Athletics is a significant part of our University culture. However, an improper post about Athletics or a student-athlete could violate NCAA regulations. It's good practice to only share Athletic content that's created by University Athletics. If you're uncertain if a post is appropriate, don't post it or check with our office first.
- Use your area's account to support other University areas when appropriate. We encourage you to share relevant content from schools, colleges, and units on your unit's social media channels to show our unity and solidarity, and to support each other's efforts.