**Oakland University Social Media Guidelines**

**Overview:**

As a staff or faculty member who has been charged with the exciting task of growing a social media presence for a department or organization within OU, please use these helpful guidelines as you navigate the quickly evolving world of social media.

* University Communications and Marketing department views social media as an important tool. University units, faculty, staff and students should be aware of social media and how social technologies can help create and nurture relationships, share information, advance knowledge, raise awareness, build support, participate in important conversations and collaborate on new ideas.
* OU strives to make meaningful connections all over the world through its social media networks. Social technology should work to make the excellent research, teaching, and public service taking place at the university even more accessible.
* Each school or department should evaluate which, if any, social media technologies are appropriate for its communication needs.
* By incorporating engaging social media as part of an overall communication plan, we can even more effectively tell stories about OU people, places, and programs while supporting the university’s mission.
* Social media managers are invited to browse the university’s Social Media Directory to understand how social media is used around campus.
* These guidelines are to ensure appropriate and effective use of social media and will evolve as social media continues to evolve.

**Guidelines:**

* Before debuting a social media initiative, departments are encouraged to develop a social media strategy that fits within its overall communication plan. Social media properties can be just as dangerous as they can be helpful when utilized unnecessarily or inappropriately. All departments are encouraged to contact their UCM account manager to assist in the development of a social media plan.
* A social media strategy involves an assessment of:
  + Communication goals and objectives.
  + Audience needs and interests.
  + Maintenance and content creation resources.
  + Whether a given social media technology is the appropriate channel to meet the above three essential areas of assessment.
* Based on this evaluation, if the department decides to use/implement a social media platform, the strategy created should address five key areas:
  + Listening: Find and monitor the conversations already taking place in social media platforms about your department or organization.
  + Influencing: Identify and follow key influencers in the department or organization’s target audience.
  + Engaging: Develop creative ways to provide value to your audiences through exclusive content, advice, multimedia and more on the department or organization social media platform.
  + Converting: Persuade the audience to act on behalf of the university and the department to convert your messages to reposts.
  + Measuring: Ensure the department social media effort is on the road to success by returning regularly to communicate with your audience and measure audience reaction against your pre-defined goals and objectives.
* Provide the official URL to the department or organization social media platform to UCM to be added to the Social Media Directory. Doing so encourages cross-site collaboration with all university-managed social media properties and creates a one-stop directory for the university community.
* Add your department’s UCM account manager as an authorized administrator of the department or organization’s social media platform. Doing so ensures the continuation of a platform should the primary administrator change in the future.
* Social media sites should be marked “official” in some way where appropriate.
* OU social media properties should provide contact information and a correct website URL that points to the OU website.
* All OU social media sites should be monitored daily to ensure the community is properly supporting the platform and to respond to audience inquiry.
* Staff members within a department are responsible for the content posted on university affiliated social media properties (blogs, social networks, forums, and other social media platforms).
* Social media contributors should be transparent to the audience when posting on behalf of the university and any issues related to the university. Posters should identify themselves when contributing comments and statements on a university managed social media property.
* Protect the confidential and personal information of students, faculty or staff members.
* Be aware of and follow FERPA.
* Assume conversations about OU are internal and private. Please ask prior to sharing any conversations via social media properties.
* Follow all copyright laws.

**Need Help?**

If a department or organization does not have an overall communication plan which can be aligned with a social media strategy or if assistance is needed in conducting an assessment or designing a strategy, please contact the appropriate UCM account manager by visiting <oakland.edu/amdirectory>.