Eastern University

Social Media Policy & Guidelines for Use

University Marketing

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Table of Contents

Eastern University and Social Media

Social media tools allow us to communicate our Eastern University message and brand with the world, while allowing our community to reach us with what is important to them. These conversations are essential to helping us build and maintain strong relationships with fans and followers.

Eastern University was an early adopter of utilizing social media to directly interact with our community in new and fun ways. We've grown our online community so that it can serve as a resource to faculty/staff, current students, parents, alumni, and prospective students. Eastern University can be found on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Tumblr, Pinterest, LinkedIn, and YouTube. These accounts are maintained by University Marketing. To help us share Eastern's story with others, we encourage you to interact with these accounts as much as possible and share its content with others.

Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of using any of these platforms is to support the University's mission and goals and present the University in a positive way to our many constituents. This policy has been created to ensure that any account created in the University's name is used properly and to assist in the posting of content and managing of accounts. This policy applies to all University employees, departments, programs and locations.

Personal Social Media Use

We ask that anyone engaging in social media for their personal use refrain from discussing, speculating or giving personal opinions on anything related to the University that might be considered confidential or sensitive. We will not monitor personal accounts, but if needed we will address any violations of this policy and any HR policy violations related to a personal social media account.

In order to be consistent with Eastern's mission as a Christian institution, University Marketing also reserves the right to remove any comments or posts to University accounts that include inappropriate , obscene, hateful, or slanderous language. For more information or questions regarding personal social media use, please contact the University Marketing Team.

How to Get Started with your University Account

The University already has established active social media accounts and communities with thousands of followers. Before you decide to start a new account for your department, please ask the following questions:

1. Does your department have the resources and capabilities to maintain this account forever?

2. Is use of the main University social media account a better option to reach a larger audience?

If you still feel that your department can and wants to maintain its own account, please consult University Marketing before carrying out the following steps:

Step One: Strategize

It's important to understand what you are trying to achieve with your social media account, so establish goals. It's equally important to identify and understand the audience you are trying to reach. Spend time strategizing how you plan on reaching that audience and with what content. Finally, decide how you will measure your success and evaluate your efforts after 6 and 12 months. You may find that you need to adjust your strategy after your evaluation as things are constantly changing in social media. See *Appendix A* for a worksheet to assist you in your efforts to strategize.

Step Two: Decide on a Platform

Deciding which platform will help you achieve your goals is the first step. Each of these platforms has its own style and rules. You should be familiar with them and consider how they fit in your overall strategy before you decide to engage.

Step Three: Assign Two Administrators

There should be at least two people assigned to maintain your account so there is always a backup. When creating a Facebook account, you must create an Eastern University profile account and then create the fan page account. If you do not, the Facebook fan page will forever be linked to your personal Facebook account and if you should leave you will have to deactivate the fan page. A student is NEVER PERMITTED TO BE AN ADMINISTRATOR of a University social media account. A student is permitted to author a blog, but may not post content utilizing a Twitter, Facebook or other page. A student may write content, but only an official administrator of the account may post it.

Step Four: Register Your Account

Register your account with University Marketing. See *Appendix A* for the registration form and strategy worksheet. After the registration form has been received, official approval will be sent to

the account administrators. All registrations MUST be received and approved by University Marketing before the account is created. Marketing reserves the right to deny approval if the account does not support the overall social strategy of the University.

Guidelines for Posting Content

- Keep in mind that social media is constantly changing. Try to stay on top of changes in platform policy or layout when managing your social account. Any questions should be directed to University Marketing.
- Official University accounts must adhere to the Eastern University Style Guide and Editorial Standards.
- Remember that all who administer an officially recognized account are representing Eastern University. Thus, your interactions should reflect the University mission statement and its values and should respect all audiences. All content is subject to review by University Marketing.
- Respond in a timely manner. Social media users expect to get an answer immediately. Your account must be monitored daily and your users should get a response within 24 hours.
- Be respectful in your interactions. Do not engage in arguments or disagreements. Exercise discretion, thoughtfulness and respect for your colleagues, University staff and faculty, and your social media community.
- Discussing internal policies and operations is not permitted. Refrain from speculating or giving an opinion on University topics that are sensitive or confidential.
- Personally identifiable information that can be used to locate someone offline, including but not limited to phone numbers, home or local addresses, birth date, and email addresses, should not be posted. When trying to get a user in touch with an individual at the University, utilize private messaging on the social media platform to transfer that information.
- Remove only inappropriate or offensive comments. In most cases, negative comments should not be removed; they should be responded to in a professional manner. If someone has a problem and posts about it on a platform, find a solution for that user and post the solution publicly so that those who are part of our online community will feel they can come to us with their issues.
- Correct your mistakes if you make them. Be upfront and quick in making your corrections.
- Respect copyrights and fair use; always try to give people proper credit for their work.
- Be thoughtful about how you present yourself on your social media accounts. What you put online is forever. It's also important to remember that the lines between private and

public are becoming increasingly blurred, so proceed with caution when posting anything online.

Types of Content

Photos

- Always give credit to the photographer unless the University photographer took the photo.
- Photos should be high quality. Posts that include photos usually generate the most engagement. Make sure your photo is both relevant to the post and professional quality. Blurry or dark photos should not be used.
- Photos with inappropriate content are prohibited.

Video

- Always give credit to the videographer who filmed the video.
- It is suggested that videos be between two and three minutes long for optimal viewership engagement, unless the video is a live stream.
- Videos need not be of professional grade quality IF they are student produced and meant to be viral videos. Videos produced to promote a program, school or department must be of professional grade quality. Blurry or dark videos with poor sound quality are not permitted.
- Program videos must receive prior approval from University Marketing before being posted.

Facebook

Facebook fan pages allow you to post text posts, photos, video, events and links. You can have multiple administrators on a fan page so that any of the administrators can log in and make a status update. When a status update is made, it will appear in all of your followers' news feeds.

Tips for Posting

- Create a customized URL for your fan page so that your URL isn't a long list of numbers and letters. For example, the main FB fan page URL is www.facebook.com/easternuniversity. Go to https://www.facebook.com/username/ for your customized URL.
- Avoid over posting.

- Don't just post news and events. You want to encourage interaction, and it's hard to interact with a post about a news release. Posting photos and video or highlighting student/faculty accomplishments in your department will always result in more interaction than a news or event posting.
- Always try to drive traffic to the Eastern University website. Include a link to eastern.edu in the contact information portion of your page profile.
- Remember to check your page every day. Followers expect an immediate answer. All users should get a response within 24 hours.
- Delete posts that include personal attacks or are offensive. Don't delete comments just because they are critical; instead try to find a solution for the problem or an appropriate response that might diffuse the expressed anger or frustration.
- Utilize Facebook's tagging, sharing, and highlighting features on your posts. Interacting with other Eastern accounts will broaden your reach and help maintain connectivity.
- If your account should fall dormant (if there are not at least two posts per month or users are not getting a response from you) you will be asked to deactivate the account. Once again, all content is subject to review by University Marketing. If the account is being misused in any way (inappropriate content that does not align with the University mission or conform to this policy) we will ask that it be deactivated.

Twitter

Twitter allows text-based posts of 140 characters or fewer. You can post links, photos and links to videos, all of which must be no more than 140 characters.

Tips for Posting

- Your strategy should evaluate whether you have enough content to engage on this platform, as posting daily is acceptable and encouraged on Twitter. Try posting at least 1-5 times per day.
- It's good practice to re-tweet others and thank others for re-tweeting you.
- Don't just use this platform as a megaphone. News and events are great content, but you want to create two-way conversations, so tweet about things that may be of interest to your audience and that will encourage those conversations.
- You can schedule your tweets utilizing an app or online program like Hootsuite or Sprout Social.
- Respond to mentions within 24 hours.
- If your account should fall dormant (if you are not posting at least twice per week or users are not getting a response) you will be asked to deactivate the account. Once again, all content is subject to review by University Marketing. If the account is being misused

in any way (inappropriate content that does not align with the University mission or conform to this policy) we will ask that it be deactivated.

- Utilize hashtags (#) to help categorize and organize your tweets and start conversation. Try to use no more that 1-3 hashtags in each post.
- Tag the main Eastern University account whenever possible by using #easternuniversity or @EasternU

Instagram

Instagram is a mobile app that allows users to take, edit, and share photos and videos with their friends and followers. It is a great tool to share unique and creative visuals of campus, cureate student generated content, and connect with past, present, and future students. There is currently one main Eastern University Instagram account and several department accounts. If you have your own personal profile, we encourage you to interact with the Eastern account whenever possible by following us and using #easternuniversity or #MyEasternU in comments and photos. When running a University account...

- be sure that your photos are of the highest quality possible
- remember that inappropriate content in both captions and photos/videos are prohibited
- always try to tag the main EU account through mention or by listing Eastern University as the location
- utilize the bio section of your profile to describe your department and link to your website
- utilize Instagram stories to feature live content. This is especially helpful if you are trying to portray student life
- Have fun! Instagram is heavily sued by current undergrad students and prospective students. Feel free to use a more casual tone in your posts but be sure to maintain a certain level of professionalism since you're representing the University

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a business-oriented social networking site for making professional connections with colleagues and other professionals around the world.

- Include your employment at Eastern University in your profile and follow the Eastern University page so you can connect with colleagues/alumni and make connections with others who might be interested in the University.

- Please feel free to utilize the University logo on your LinkedIn account. All logos must be received from University Marketing

YouTube

- YouTube is a video-sharing website where its hundreds of millions of users can upload, share, and view videos. Eastern University has one main YouTube account with multiple playlists that display videos for various departments. All videos should be uploaded to the University's main YouTube account. Contact University Marketing for assistance in uploading to the University account. The benefit here is that individual offices will be able to share their content with a much larger audience. The benefit to the user is that he/she has access to a much larger library of videos and can become familiar with other parts of the University. For example, a parent of an undergraduate student might want to see videos from our College of Arts and Sciences, but after seeing a graduate video may become interested in a program in our Graduate and Professional Programs.
- All videos must be approved by University Marketing before being posted to the Eastern University YouTube channel.

Pinterest

Pinterest is a web and mobile based platform that allows users to "pin" images to virtual pin boards on their profile. Images are usually linked to the website from which they came. Users can like, comment, or "re-pin" photos that they find interesting or appealing. Eastern University primarily uses Pinterest as a way of reaching out to prospective students and providing a visual representation of what Eastern is all about. For any questions about Pinterest or how it is being used by Eastern, contact University Marketing.

Department Blogs

If you circulate a weekly or monthly newsletter, please consider a Department blog as a better avenue for the distribution of your news. It can be more widely distributed than a newsletter and can be updated more quickly. If you still decide to produce a newsletter, please share that content in a Microsoft Word document to University Marketing so that the content can be shared on University blogs.

Faculty and Staff Blogs

Blogs, micro-blogs or other personal websites that do not identify the Eastern University employee, do not discuss Eastern University and are solely for personal purposes, fall outside of the policies conveyed in this document.

- When Eastern University wants to make a public statement, we have very well established means and processes to do that. Official news is issued from the Communications Office and posted on our Web site as news releases in the News and Events section.
- Understand that the things you say online can be perceived as representing the University. If you are identifying yourself as a faculty or staff member on your personal blog, you should identify yourself as a "Higher Education faculty member" or "Higher Education employee".
- If you are writing a blog as a faculty member or staff member of the University, you must first inform Eastern University Marketing. You will be asked to include a disclaimer that reads: "This blog reflects my personal views but not necessarily those of Eastern University."

Student Blogs

Student blogs exist to give readers a chance to hear the unique perspectives of current students at Eastern University.

- Student authors must agree to write in their blogs only content that represents behaviors in compliance with Eastern Standards of Conduct.
- Content in student blog posts will be reviewed by supervisors and is subject to change at the supervisor's discretion.
- Students must give credit or cite sources used when posting pictures, video or text that is not their own or not University produced.
- Your blog must be consistent and ongoing.
- If you are writing a blog as a student of the University, you must first inform University Marketing. You will be asked to include a disclaimer that reads: "This blog reflects my personal views but not necessarily those of Eastern University."

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Appendix A

Social Media Account Registration and Strategy

This form will serve to register your account with University Marketing. It should also prove useful in helping you develop a strategy for your social media account. This form MUST be completed and reviewed by University Marketing before the account can be created. Please complete this worksheet, make a copy and send it to Elyse Garner (egarner@eastern.edu). University Marketing reserves the right to deny approval to any account that does not fit the overall marketing strategy of the University. All accounts will be monitored by the Marketing Office. If an account falls dormant or fails to meet University standards, it will be deactivated.

Type of Social Media Account You Wish to Create (i.e. Facebook):

Name of Department:

Who will be responsible for maintaining the account? Please provide contact information for this individual.

Who is the 2nd administrator responsible for maintaining the account? Please provide contact information for this individual and any others who may be administrators on the account.

What audience are you are trying to reach?

Define your goals:

How will you measure your success?

How will you communicate with your audience?

What type of content do you plan on sharing (i.e., photos, video, campus events, etc.)

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