

May 2018

HOPE COLLEGE SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES



WHY WE USE SOCIAL MEDIA

Hope College inspires students to be fully alive in mind, body and spirit through an exceptional liberal arts education and a community grounded in a vibrant Christian faith. At the heart of this promise are people like you who make Hope College what it is, and the work you do to extend these values to the world. As a social media manager, you play an integral role in Hope College's storytelling through social media. Social media allows us to preserve moments, engage conversation and share enthusiasm for the work done by our students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends of Hope College.

CREATING ACCOUNTS

We encourage you to first consult with Public Affairs and Marketing before creating a new social media account for your department or office. Public Affairs and Marketing is available to provide support and learning resources for creating and maintaining social media accounts, and can make recommendations that meet the college's branding and social media best practices. When appropriate, we will add your new account to the college's social media directory.

New accounts should start with "Hope" i.e. HopeOrientation, HopeHistoryDept, etc. Avoid using underscores, uncommon abbreviations and long usernames. Other examples include:

@hopetheatredept - Hope College Theatre Department

@hopecollegebookstore - Hope College Bookstore

@hopecollegedm - Hope College Dance Marathon

ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT

Public Affairs and Marketing is the administrative manager of Hope College's institutional social media accounts. Campus departments and offices with unique social media accounts are the administrators of their accounts and are responsible for the content they publish. Faculty and staff who use social media for professional use are also responsible for their own content.

Accessing Facebook Accounts

Facebook page administrators should access their Hope College office or department's Facebook page using their personal account. Department and office Facebook accounts should have at least two Hope College employee account administrators at all times, however, you may choose to

have additional roles on your page such as editors, moderators, advertisers and analysts. Please contact Public Affairs and Marketing for assistance with toggling between personal and brand pages, as well as for help in creating user roles and understanding privacy settings.

Accessing Twitter Accounts and Other Profiles

Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, LinkedIn and other department and office social media accounts should be registered using a shared or general email address accessible by more than one person, such as *officename@hope.edu*. Passwords and login credentials should be known, accessible and maintained by account administrators and their department supervisor.

The Hope College YouTube channel is used as the primary online video-sharing service for all of Hope College. We encourage the campus community to take advantage of the large audience reach of the Hope College channel by requesting their videos be added to our channel rather than creating a unique account on YouTube or separate video-sharing service. For more information about YouTube and video best practices, please see our [Video Guidelines](#).

CONTENT

Good social media content is relevant and timely for your audience. Content representing Hope College should be engaging, friendly and supportive of the college's brand. Our brand is the total of all the experiences anyone has with Hope College. Because of this, our brand is different for each person, whether they are a student, alumnus/a, faculty, staff, parent or donor.

The content you publish should vary slightly depending on the audience you are addressing. Similarly, how often you decide to publish and the content you share should be unique to your office or department's personality, yet maintain a consistent theme that aligns with our mission and the brand of the college.

Best Practice Tips

- Always include a photo, video, or a website link to more information in your Facebook post or tweet.
- Ask yourself: Are you adding value or are you adding noise? The content you share should mean something to your followers. Consider how you can add value to your follower's timelines.
- If you have a department blog, be sure to share all blog posts on your social media channels. Additionally, if a blog post is written about your department, share that too!

AUDIENCE

Consider your audience when thinking about what to share on social media. Who are you talking to? If you are unsure who your audience is, consider the purpose of your department and the people you would most like to engage with.

While your audience likely consists of a mix of current students, alumni, faculty and staff, prospective students are utilizing digital resources including social media to vet the strength of academic programs at colleges and universities during their college search.

Current students look to interactions online to learn more about relevant news and events happening around campus. Prospective students want a preview of what they should expect to experience at Hope College. Strive to balance your audience considerations between current students and prospective students. Content that supports Hope's brand includes:

- Academic and research-related updates
- Student and faculty achievements
- Unique stories of students and faculty, past and present
- Campus culture and student life updates
- Traditions and culture throughout Hope's history
- Proper use of current logos and color palette
- Properly branded profile photos and images

Best Practice Tips

- Sharing a photo or video along with your content will help engage your audience. Whenever possible, include a photo, video and/or link to additional information found on Hope's website or credible external sources.
- Concerned about blurring the lines between professional and personal social media? Consider this: What do you want to be known for? Does your social media activity represent this?
- Public Affairs and Marketing can assist you in an audience analysis if you would like to dig deeper into understanding your audience and your presence on social media

HASHTAGS AND TAGGING OTHERS

Hashtags are used to categorize social media updates by keyword. People use the hashtag symbol (#) before a relevant keyword or phrase (no spaces) in their social posts/tweets to categorize those posts/tweets and help them show more easily in a search. Clicking on a hashtagged word in any message on Twitter or Instagram shows you other posts/tweets that include the same hashtag.

A variety of hashtags have been established for Hope College traditions and activities to engage the Hope College community online. We encourage our college community to use these hashtags, and to avoid creating arbitrary hashtags for established college events and traditions. If you're not certain whether an established hashtag exists, a simple search on Twitter will help, or you may inquire to Public Affairs and Marketing.

Selecting a Hashtag

When choosing a hashtag for your event or organization, first verify the hashtag is not being frequently used for something else. Choose a unique hashtag that is short and simple, yet relevant and memorable. Avoid using trending hashtags that are not relevant to your office or department. For assistance on selecting the proper hashtag, please inquire to Public Affairs and Marketing.

Some of the most frequently used hashtags at Hope College include:

#HopeCollege

#GoHope

#Hope20__ (Refers to the class year)

#HopeVisitDay

#SperaMagazine

Tagging Users

Tagging other departments and offices, including our institutional social media profiles (@HopeCollege) in your tweets and posts helps to create a connected campus. This may be done in conjunction with using hashtags. For example: “*So excited for @HopeOrientation and to welcome the new freshmen at Hope! #Hope2022.*”

Best Practice Tip

- You may be wondering when to use a hashtag versus mentioning a Twitter handle (@username) in your tweets. Hashtags are used for searching and aggregating content about a topic. Handles are used to identify users. Hope College often includes #hopecollege in our tweets so that others, especially prospective students, can easily find tweets about the College.

PRIVACY

You may consider creating some form of separation between personal and professional use of social media if you find your audience is a mix of personal and professional followers. This can be

done by focusing the majority of your content toward one audience type, or, another. Facebook and other social media have recently taken steps toward greater flexibility for privacy. To adjust your settings, please visit the following resources:

FERPA does not forbid Hope College employees from using social media in the classroom, but common sense guidelines should be used to ensure the protection of students. Disclosure of information that is confidential by law or regulation under FERPA is prohibited. See www2.ed.gov/ferpa/

Use discretion in how you reference third-party content or external websites. In rare cases it may be appropriate for departments and offices to explicitly state their update does not indicate an endorsement from Hope College. For more information on creating content, see the Hope College Web Content Guidelines.

POLICY

Users should understand that, when sharing to social media, they are expected to follow acceptable social behaviors and also comply with regulations set by the federal government, the State of Michigan and Hope College.

The following social media activities by Hope College accounts are not acceptable:

- Violation of any policy within the Hope College faculty and employee handbooks
- Disclosure of information that is confidential by law or regulation under FERPA - www2.ed.gov/ferpa/
- Use of obscene, threatening, harassing or discriminatory language
- Advertisements or promotions of commercial products, services, entities or individuals
- Violations of the host site's Terms of Service
- Violation of copyrights or trademarks - <http://www.hope.edu/cit/policies/copyright.html>
- Endorsement or opposition of political candidates and ballot initiatives
- Duplicative comments by the same or multiple users, or repeated deliberately offensive or provocative online posting, also known as "trolling"
- The NCAA enforces rules regarding social media interactions between any extension of a college or university with a prospective student athlete. Learn more at <http://www.ncaa.org/documents/about/resources/events/regional-rules-seminars/social-media-ncaa-strategies-and-regulations>

Additionally,

- All staff and faculty must comply with Hope College's technology policy.
- Communication through social media in no way constitutes a legal or official notice to Hope College, its offices, faculty or staff.
- Hope College social media administrators reserve the right to hide or remove user-generated content or comments in accordance with these guidelines. Content may be removed for violation of the above, at any time.

RESOURCES

Resources for social media managers are available under the Guidelines section of the Public Affairs and Marketing website, hope.edu/marketing. These include:

- Brand Guidelines
- Athletic Brand Guidelines
- Web Content Guidelines
- Web Style Guidelines
- Video Guidelines

QUESTIONS?

Please email social@hope.edu or contact Public Affairs and Marketing for questions about these guidelines.

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