Faculty of Arts social media strategy and planning tool

Current Faculty of Arts accounts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social media platform</th>
<th>Administrator</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>URL</th>
<th>Primary audience</th>
<th>Secondary audience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook (undergrad)</td>
<td>Amy Meredith</td>
<td>AUO co-op student</td>
<td><a href="https://www.facebook.com/waterlooarts">https://www.facebook.com/waterlooarts</a></td>
<td>Current undergrads</td>
<td>Prospective undergrads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook (grad)</td>
<td>Megan Hood</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="https://www.facebook.com/waterlooartsgrad">https://www.facebook.com/waterlooartsgrad</a></td>
<td>Current grads</td>
<td>Prospective grads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>Megan Hood</td>
<td>Wendy Philpott</td>
<td><a href="https://twitter.com/uwaterlooARTS">https://twitter.com/uwaterlooARTS</a></td>
<td>Current students</td>
<td>Prospective students; faculty and staff; alumni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn (grad)</td>
<td>Megan Hood</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.linkedin.com/company/university-of-waterloo-arts-graduate-studies">http://www.linkedin.com/company/university-of-waterloo-arts-graduate-studies</a></td>
<td>Current grads</td>
<td>Prospective grads; faculty and staff; alumni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tumblr (inactive)</td>
<td>Amy Meredith</td>
<td>AUO co-op student</td>
<td><a href="http://waterlooarts.tumblr.com">http://waterlooarts.tumblr.com</a></td>
<td>Current students</td>
<td>Prospective students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>Amy Meredith</td>
<td>AUO co-op student</td>
<td><a href="http://instagram.com/uwaterlooa">http://instagram.com/uwaterlooa</a></td>
<td>Current students</td>
<td>Prospective students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>Megan Hood</td>
<td>Wendy Philpott; Amy Meredith</td>
<td><a href="https://www.youtube.com/user/ArtsFaculty">https://www.youtube.com/user/ArtsFaculty</a></td>
<td>Current and prospective students</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Goals

1. Build a collaborative Faculty of Arts social media environment
2. Support Faculty of Arts strategic priorities while strengthening brand and reputation
3. Recruit, engage, and retain students
4. Establish social media as a vibrant and engaging communications platform

1. Build a collaborative Faculty of Arts social media environment

Objectives

- Create, implement and review social media policy and social media best practices
- Monitor new and existing social media accounts or channels and provide feedback, when necessary
- Share messages from central communications
- Share insights, best practices and success stories
- Provide resources, guidance and strategies to support departmental social media efforts
- Develop consistent hashtags to be used to aggregate conversations

2. Support Faculty of Arts strategic priorities while strengthening brand and reputation

Objectives
- Integrate social media plan into overall communications strategy
- Share Faculty of Arts accomplishments and stories, particularly those that support Arts strategic objectives (e.g. undergraduate experiential learning)
- Reinforce the new branding (to be released late 2016)
- Build relationships with other Arts and UWaterloo departments/units using social media (i.e. mentions, retweets, reply to tweets)
- Monitor and respond to comments, mentions, shares, etc., when appropriate
- Increase engagement levels (i.e. schedule tweets for central, use hashtags, engage in conversation)
- Participate in Arts-relevant trends (i.e. #TBT, new memes)
- Build relationships with external organizations (i.e. news outlets) by tagging when relevant
- Increase exposure of social media accounts via other communication channels (i.e. email signatures, print material, offer letters)

3. Recruit, engage, and retain students

Objectives
- Engage prospective, recently accepted and current students using social media
- Share key news, events, accomplishments, awards, rankings, etc.
- Use keyword searches on social networks or third-party tools to monitor conversations and respond accordingly
- Direct questions and comments to appropriate departments/offices/units (admissions, financial aid, colleges, etc.) via mentions or retweets
- Include call to actions when appropriate (watch, listen, read, do)

4. Establish social media as a vibrant communications platform

Objectives
- Maintain an active presence on all accounts
  - 2x week Facebook (grad)
  - 2-4x week Facebook (undergrad)
  - 2-3x day Twitter
  - 1x week LinkedIn (grad)
  - 1x week Tumblr
  - 2x week Instagram
- Follow the style guide for social media writing
Guidelines

Account creation
- All University of Waterloo based accounts must be made by authorized representatives of the University.
- Representatives of service areas, academic departments or other units that represent the University must review guidelines, best practices and policy before creating a new social media account.
- Department is responsible for filling out the Social media strategic planning form (appendix A). A copy must be sent to the Manager, Social Media and Community Engagement (Marketing and Strategic Initiatives) and the Communications Officer (Faculty of Arts).
- By submitting your Social media strategic planning sheet (appendix A), Marketing and Strategic Initiatives can ensure that your account is added to the University of Waterloo Social Media Directory.

Naming accounts
- When possible it is recommended that any University of Waterloo account use “UWaterloo” in their username.
- It is recommended that accounts refrain from using “uw” in usernames.
- Avoid abbreviations or acronyms that aren’t already familiar to general users.
- Use the same username across platforms, when possible.
- Twitter usernames are limited to 15 characters with no spaces.
- Facebook does not have a character limit but username should be consistent across platforms (the username you chose for our Facebook account will also be your URL for future marketing and communication initiatives).
- It is recommended that you capitalize each separate word in your username to increase readability and remove confusion.

Avatars, backgrounds and cover photos
Avatars, backgrounds and cover photos are the first visual representation of your brand that your audience will see and thus should be considered an extension of your web presence. It is important that all social media branding provides a consistent feel with that of the University as a whole and your specific service area.

Due to size constraints, avatars should contain few details and limited writing. It is recommended that writing on your profile picture or avatar is less than 12 characters long.

Sizes are different on each platform.
- Facebook profile picture - 180p x 180p
- Facebook cover photo - 851p x 315p
- Twitter avatar - 400p x 400p
- Twitter cover photo - 1500p x 500p (we suggest 3000p x 1000p)
- Twitter background (no background in new layout) - 1200p x 1600p
- LinkedIn profile picture - 100p x 60p
- LinkedIn cover photo - 646p x 220p
- Tumblr cover photo - 1280p x 800p
- Instagram profile picture - 110p x 110p
- YouTube profile picture (set in Google+) - 110p x 110p
- YouTube cover photo - 2560p x 1440p

Bios
Each social media platform provides an opportunity to communicate who you are and the purpose of the account. It is important to clearly state which department/unit, faculty and university you are associated with. Character limits can affect your description but try to be as specific and detailed as possible in this space. The University of Waterloo strongly encourages bio sections to be completed on all social media platforms.

Bios should include:

- Name of University and department
- Overview of the purpose of the account
- Website, contact email and/or phone number
- (optional) Names of those managing specific account
- (optional) Hours that your account is maintained

Deleting an account
Accounts that have been inactive for more than 12 months can be deleted by Marketing and Strategic Initiatives and any available account managers. Every effort will be made to contact each listed account manager before disabling an account.

Social media managers
All official social media accounts at the University of Waterloo must have at least three employees as administrators at all time to ensure operation of the account and adherence to these guidelines.

Best practices

1. Client service
In order to utilize social media as an effective client service tool you must first develop a culture of customer focus, in which your primary audience (usually students) is you client. This can be accomplished by:

   - Dedicating proper resources to using social media as a client service portal
   - Developing a strategy for responding to posts
   - Developing metrics for responses and escalation
   - Evaluating results on a regular basis
Listening
By using social media as a listening and monitoring tool you can understand your clients and anticipate their needs. Keyword monitoring can offer higher levels of client service to those that are talking about the University of Waterloo in their own communities.

Speed and timeliness
Clients on social media platforms expect a different level of services than traditional client service models. Off hours, weekends and holidays must be covered in case of emergency. It is a general rule that you will want to respond to a social media question within 2-3 hours during business hours and within 12 hours outside of business hours.

2. Use of video and photos
Many social media platforms are heavily reliant on images and video, which can, and most often should, play a large role in your overall social media strategy. Be mindful of all campus copyright, content and confidentiality policy that exists.

Understand your platform
Make sure you read and understand the terms and services for the particular site you are using. It is also important that you understand how your audience will be accessing your content on a particular platform and how it will display.

Guidelines
It is important to ensure that your video or photography fits within the University brand style guide (i.e. style of photography, colours for created content) and the government guidelines for accessible web content (i.e. limited text on images).

Share-worthy content
Creating engaging content is the goal. Understanding your audience, their needs and the tone they prefer from messaging is important before undertaking any video or photographic projects. Video content should provide one (max. three) points in the video and have a clear call to action or message.

Keep it simple
For video content, avoid acronyms, jargon, technical information and heavy data. Keep your message clear with a single focused message and one specific call to action.

3. Monitoring followers, fans and circles
The goal of most social media platforms is to accumulate as many community members as possible to ensure your messages reach their maximum potential. However, accounts that you follow or are following you can be interpreted as endorsements and therefore should be monitored regularly.
Monitoring
Regularly review the accounts of individuals or organizations in your network and block spammers, trolls or salacious accounts. It is recommend that you do this every 3 months or you can do it as you acquire new followers.

Focus on the accounts that matter
In many cases the quantity of followers and fans is not as important as the quality. In order to obtain targeted communities, reach out to these types of accounts:

Internal to the Institution
- Other faculties and departments
- Non-academic units or services (e.g. Library, Registrar, Career Centre)
- Student governments, clubs, associations and groups
- Faculty members/researchers
- Research centres
- Staff
- Select students

External to the Institution
- Select alumni
- Select donors
- Relevant professional associations
- Canadian media outlets
- Select journalists and editors
- Researchers in relevant fields at other universities
- Select universities

Share
Social media was built on a sharing model. Using social media effectively means that you are not only broadcasting your content but sharing others’ at the university. Networks include a sense of trust by association. Reciprocate shares and links, but be aware that what you share should align with your central goals and values.

Link
It is important that you become a good source of content and get others to link to your site or account. Put out information that is reliable and useful. You can raise your search engine optimization (SEO) profile by ensuring that you link to where your content lives – this means that you will show up higher in the organic google search results.

Maintenance
Always monitor your accounts to make sure there are no dead links, expired URLs or deleted videos on your social networks. Having dead content will give the impression that the platform is not regularly maintained and frustrate your audience. It is also valuable to look back to maintain comment sections on your platforms.
Posting guidelines

Social platforms are public. Anything you post online should be something you are comfortable having your colleagues, supervisors and managers read. When posting, there are 7 basic guidelines that encompass the basics of social media posting:

1. Transparency - be open in who you are speaking on behalf of, your purpose and your agenda. Honesty is vital in social media.
2. Authenticity - be ‘human’ to your community. Provide service that you would expect from a face-to-face interaction and allow your stakeholders to understand your values and culture.
3. Conversation - create relationships and a social community by engaging in conversations and listening to your stakeholders.
4. Common sense - be a good listener, use appropriate language and providing timely content. Social media posts should be suitable for all ages.
5. Respect - all interactions on social media platforms should be respectful and positive. Avoid any content that can be deemed offensive to any particular groups or individuals. Any contentious conversations should be taken offline as soon as possible.
6. Acknowledge mistakes - acknowledge there has been an error and be clear how you plan to rectify it and how it will affect your stakeholders.
7. Tailored messages - understanding your audience is vital to providing messages that will resonate. Tell your communities about news, events and trends they would be interested in.

Style guide

Below are some tips for writing for social media. It is important to remember that each social media platform has a slightly different purpose and your style of writing/posting may need to adjust for those differences in use and audience.

Facebook is a very visual-based storytelling platform. Posts should include a visual, whenever possible, and provide a call to action (i.e. like this, share this, watch this, comment here, visit this link, etc.). Facebook user demographics are shifting, as platforms like Snapchat and Instagram become more popular with younger audiences. Facebook is considered to be an all-ages platform, with 25-34 being the most common age demographic on the site.
Boosted posts are posts that would normally appear on your page, but contain dynamic content, coming dates, or important information that audiences will feel compelled by. These posts will include a button for viewers to like your page in the top right corner. Unlike ads, boosted posts will gather both organic and paid reach and do not always register as paid advertisements with your audience right away. This paid tactic also allows you to utilize Facebook’s post-targeting features (selecting when, where, and for whom content will appear). Budget can be set at any amount. The Faculty of Arts has found that in-house videos perform best as boosted posts.

Twitter is ‘instant’ in nature and posts should be timely and to-the-point. It is a great platform for interacting with others, so try to incorporate hashtags, mention other twitter handles, retweet posts by others, and link to more information. Post high res photos whenever appropriate - these attract up to 200% more readers. Twitter is one of the only platforms in which it is acceptable to use shorthand (&, w/, prof, etc.).
LinkedIn is a platform largely used for networking, recruitment and job searching, and sharing industry news. It is best to adopt a more professional tone when writing posts for LinkedIn. Updates and news would include faculty achievements, publications, and faculty/students in the media. LinkedIn does not allow for line breaks in posts, so please keep this in mind when writing updates.

Instagram is a photo-sharing (and editing) platform. It is common practice to include hashtags in your photo posts, keeping the post trendy and searchable. Written content should be kept short as this is a visual-based platform. Instagram is increasingly becoming more popular with a younger demographic, making it a great fit for prospective or current undergraduate students. It falls just behind Facebook in usage for 12-24 year-olds, but ranks first, above Facebook, for most important social network to that
Users are more likely to like accounts that their friends like, and often search by geo location so it is important to tag your location in each post.

According to researched performed by the students of DAC 309 in Winter 2016, users would like to see more real life experiences, more campus life, more co-op experiences, and more sports and student activities. Users valued posts that were relatable, relevant, entertaining, and offered unique perspectives. Filter use should be minimal, and if used, they should have minimal impact or be part of an ongoing theme for an account (i.e. Arts orange). Research showed that high quality images are important and bright and vibrant colors caught users’ attention and encouraged engagement. Dynamic posts like illustrations are also perceived as creative and received positively, while video content did not generally perform well.

Action images and photos of outside-of-the-classroom-learning were important to students.
Many positive comments on ‘artistic’ pictures.

Students liked posts that had real life people in them. They felt it was simple and easy to identify what was happening in it. As well was relatable to them if they had been accepted to the program.

Instagram also allows for paid advertising that allows you to target posts. The Faculty of Arts have found a higher level of engagement on paid posts on Instagram vs. Facebook, for a lower cost. This is perhaps due to the fact that advertising is a newer feature and the platform has not yet become saturated with paid content. It should be noted, however, that while Instagram paid posts performed better, the ads did not result in an increase in account likes/follows, whereas Facebook did see that increase.

YouTube is a video-hosting platform. It is predominantly used to host video which can then be shared across other channels. When posting a video, accessibility guidelines suggest that you provide a written transcript of the video, or, at least, a description or summary of content. It is also advisable to use tags when posting video content so that your video will appear more often in relevant web searches.
Social media and the WCMS

Several of the WCMS content types are ideal for rebroadcast and amplification via social media platforms. Whenever you add new content to any of these ‘types’ you are providing more food (tweets, posts) for your hungry social media accounts.

**News** stories build the profile of your department or unit. Posts should be engaging stories about achievements of the department/unit, its programs and its people, new projects or initiatives, and any important external recognition. These can include a re-posted piece from Waterloo Stories or Arts News that feature members of your department (please include a link to the original story at the end of your repost). When writing a news piece, it is best practice to keep it under 500 words and include a high-resolution photo, if possible. Be sure to select the appropriate audience tags.

The **Events** content type is for sharing events within your department or unit. It is important to tag the event type so that events can be searched for and filtered by type. Types include conference, information session, lecture, open house, performance, reception, reunion, seminar, thesis defence, workshop. Be sure to select the appropriate audience tags. Include as much information as possible: host, event website, cost. Similar to news, include a listing image (photo or logo) if possible. Events can be submitted to the Communications Officer for posting on the Faculty of Arts website if they are open to the public.

The **Blog** content type functions as an internal blog – a blog hosted by the WCMS under your department site URL. It is usually nested in the left navigation menu, alongside news and events. It is good practice to add topic tags so that blog posts can be searched for and filtered by topic. The difference between postings on the news page versus blog posts is the content and style of writing. Blogs have more leeway; they can be more journalistic or editorial in style. A blog post might discuss a hot topic in the field and the writer’s opinion on the matter; a news item might announce a new research project by a faculty member on that same topic. The blog can also be used to post interviews with students and/or alumni - smaller pieces that you do not feel qualify as a full news item (the [Department of English’s external blog](#) is a great example of this). Blogs can also be used to provide more information about an upcoming event, or a review of a recent event.

**Tools and measurement**

**Hootsuite**

Hootsuite Enterprise is a tool that was introduced on campus in 2015. Communications professionals on campus are able to hold individual seats, that are part of a larger UWaterloo group. The tool allows communicators to better monitor social activity, engage in conversation, schedule posts, and measure performance. A recent update also allows for communicators to write content for other accounts and push it to them for approval and scheduling (i.e. Arts can push a research announcement to central, who can then review, edit, and schedule the message for posting). This feature is often used for
university-wide campaigns such as the release of the Waterloo Magazine, or 3MT. Arts currently holds 4 seats (Megan Hood, Amy Meredith, Wendy Philpott, AUO co-op student) and are set up as part of the Arts team within the system.

For assistance with Hootsuite, contact the Manager, Social Media and Community Engagement (Marketing and Strategic Initiatives).

**Measurement**

**Google Analytics**
Google Analytics measures the number of visits to your website from social media accounts. For assistance with accessing or interpreting data from Google Analytics, contact the Communications Officer in the Faculty of Arts.

**In-page analytics**
In-page analytics for platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc. measures the reach, engagement, and number of likes/clicks of individual posts.

**Bitly/Owly**
Bitly and Owly are both tools used to shorten links for posting on social. The tools also measure the number of visits to a page from that distinct link (links are case-sensitive and can be customized).

**SumAll**
SumAll is a free tool that measures performance impact of tweets, Facebook posts, LinkedIn posts, Instagram posts and YouTube videos.

**Content creation**

The following are good sources of content for social media:

- Arts News
- Arts Events
- Arts social accounts
- UWaterloo social accounts (list of ‘Departments’ on Twitter includes central accounts and all Arts departments, campuses, etc.)
- Faculty/staff on social
  - Emmett Macfarlane
  - Ian Milligan
  - Aimee Morrison
  - Naila Keleta Mae
  - Shannon Dea
  - Nancy Mattes
  - Doug Peers
- #IdeasStartHere
- NewsWatch emails
- The Daily Bulletin
- University Affairs online magazine and emails
- Arts theses (https://uwspace.uwaterloo.ca)
Appendix A

Social media strategic planning sheet

Account platform
Please indicate which Social Media channel your are planning to utilize

Account description
What is the purpose of your account?

Account name
Name as it will appear on Social Media site

Account manager
Primary responsibility for account

Account maintainers
Others who will help maintain site. Each site must have a minimum of 2 employees responsible for the site.

Strategic goals
What do you hope your account will achieve for your department?

Strategic overview
How does this form of Social Media fit in your overall Marketing and Communications plan? What type of content will you be featuring?

Strategic objectives
What are your measurable outcomes?

Audiences
Who are your target groups? Please include both Primary and Secondary audiences

Competitive analysis
Are there other schools using this similar platform? How will yours be different?

Measurement
How do you plan to measure the success of your account and what type of analytics will be used?

Marketing and Strategic Initiatives (MSI) requires the login and password for all sanctioned University of Waterloo social media accounts. Access to accounts will only be used in emergency situations where account managers are not available.