



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
College of Liberal Arts

A black and white photograph of the Texas State Capitol building, showing its large dome and classical architectural details. The image is overlaid with a dark red horizontal band containing the title text.

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDEBOOK

A black and white photograph of the entrance to the Texas State Capitol building, featuring a large tree on the left and a person walking on the steps. The image is overlaid with a dark red horizontal band containing the subtitle text.

VISUAL & EDITORIAL STANDARDS GUIDE

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While this guide is designed to help you with various social media projects, we know that questions can come up.

The staff in Strategic Communications (StratComm) are also available to assist with any writing, editing, website development and/or creative needs. For general questions or support, please contact the appropriate representative below.

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DEFINE YOUR GOALS

Creating clearly defined goals can help you decide which social media channels are the best fit for your overall objectives.

PLATFORM SELECTION

Create accounts only on platforms you have a sensible use for and can produce content for on a consistent basis.

DECIDE ON A MANAGER

Choose who will be responsible for managing and updating social media accounts. This will help with consistency of posting and keep passwords secure.

SOCIAL MEDIA BIOS

Allow your bio to speak to who your department is. Be informative but concise. Tag TAMU in your bio to create a connection between the university and your account. Tag or link to your other social platforms in all bios.

TWITTER BIO TEMPLATE

The official Twitter account for the Texas A&M University (@TAMU) "Insert Department Name Here" Department of the College of Liberal Arts (@tamuliberalarts.)

FACEBOOK BIO TEMPLATE

Welcome to the official Facebook page of the Department of "Insert Department Name Here" in the College of Liberal Arts at Texas A&M University.

INSTAGRAM BIO TEMPLATE

*Follow along with the happenings of Texas A&M University's "Insert Department Name Here" in the College of Liberal Arts! Keep up with us on Facebook & Twitter, too: *link to Facebook page* *twitter handle**

POSTING FREQUENCY

TWITTER

- Post on Twitter at least once per day
- Space posts out by at least 30 minutes

FACEBOOK

- Post on Facebook least 2-3 times per week
- Do not post more than twice per day

INSTAGRAM

- Post on IG at least once weekly
- Do not post more than twice per day
- If you have several photos to post, take advantage of the IG carousel tool that allows you to post up to 10 photos at once.

IMAGE QUALITY

- Use high resolution photos and graphics that are clear and sharp
- Avoid fuzzy or pixelated images



AVOID HEADSHOTS

- Headshots are not as engaging as candid photos
- Candid photos are captured without creating a posed appearance
- Candid photos give a natural look and feel and prompt more engagement

LET PHOTOS BE PHOTOS

- Allow photo/graphic to speak for itself
- Don't use flyers or posters as your visual
- Save text for captions

CATER IMAGE SIZE TO PLATFORM

- Each social platform has different dimensions for images
- Use this guide to cater your timeline photos, profile pictures, header images and more:
 - [Social Media Image Sizes: A Quick Reference Guide for Each Network](#)
- Use photos and graphics with dimensions best fit to each platform to enhance appearance on timeline and increase engagement

LINKS

- Links are a great way to push users to more in-depth content and track your clicks and engagements
- Use link shorteners to avoid long links and analyze traffic to link
 - [Tx.Ag](#)
(If you are not a Former Student, you can request to create an account by clicking [here.](#))
 - [Bit.ly](#)
 - [Owl.ly](#)

SHARES & RETWEETS

- Sharing and retweeting posts is a great way to pass along a relevant message that is related to your brand.
- Shares and retweets can point your followers in the direction of useful resources.
- Sharing and retweeting can also develop a relationship with the accounts you are sharing and retweeting.

TEXT IN POSTS

- Keep your text short and concise.
- Use captions that grab a follower's attention and make them want to engage with the post.
- Add a call-to-action or link in the caption when appropriate and possible. Use a live URL.

MEANINGFUL CONTENT

- Post content of value.
- Don't just post things for the sake of having something to post.
- Be sure that what you are posting is relative to your account and to your audience.

CHOOSE A GOOD USERNAME

Choose a username that is as easily identifiable as possible. Your username should be easy for users to search. For example, the college's Facebook page is titled Texas A&M Liberal Arts and the URL is facebook.com/TAMUliberalarts.

BE ENGAGING

Talk to your audience. Don't just post and run. Interact with your audience, respond to their comments and questions.

BE CONSISTENT

- Give your audience something to look forward to each day/every few days.
- Be a “familiar face” on your audience’s timeline.
- Post regularly and consistently.

LISTEN

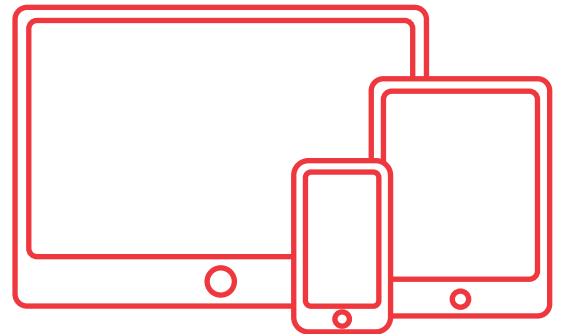
Pay attention to what your audience is saying and posting about. This will help you connect with them and understand what type of content to produce to best reach them.

BE TRANSPARENT

Being open and honest with your audience is ALWAYS the best of best practices.

FOLLOW & CONNECT

- Follow and connect with other people, departments and organizations! When possible, tag/mention the necessary people and or departments when posting. This will not only generate impressions with your audience, but with their audience as well!
- Following official university accounts is also a way to gain followers.
- The [TAMU Social Media Directory](#) is a great resource to find social media accounts of other departments and which platforms they each use.



KEEP UP WITH TRENDS & BE TIMELY

- Most social platforms do the work for you and tell you what is trending each day.
- Try to peruse through what is trending, do some research to make sure all trending topics are appropriate for use and determine if you can create content around the topic.
- If there are hashtags related to the trending topics, integrate them into your posts to attract a variety of users and increase engagement.
- Setting up [Google Alerts](#) is another great way to keep up with the world.

BE A VALUED PART OF THE TAMU COMMUNITY

Refrain from *only* posting about your department. Keep your content fresh and exciting by posting about interesting news, current events and facts that would interest your audience.

TAMU HASHTAGS

The official hashtag for TAMU are **#tamu** and **#12thMan**

Using these hashtags in posts will connect you with the entire TAMU community.

LIBERAL ARTS HASHTAG

The official hashtag for our college is **#tamuliberalarts**

Using this hashtag in your posts will allow us to see your posts, help with promotion and increase engagement for your department.

DEPARTMENT HASHTAGS

- Departments may create their own hashtags.
- All hashtags should be short and easy to read.
- Hashtags should easily distinguish your department and create a sense of relation with the university. For example:
 - #tamuecon
 - #tamuanthropology
 - #tamucomm

USE HASHTAGS CONSERVATIVELY

When possible, work the hashtag into the sentence to provide a natural flow of reading.

- Example: *One of the great things #tamu is known for is its tradition! @tamu prides itself in being home of the #12thMan.*

Refrain from using an overload of hashtags.

- 3-4 hashtags in a post is the absolute maximum.
- Using too many hashtags can confuse the follower and also create inconsistency in the true message and owner of the post.

HOOTSUITE

- Hootsuite is a social media management platform that allows you to schedule posts in advance.
- Offers analytic tools to track the engagement and impressions of posts.
- Allows you to monitor all platforms in one interactive dashboard.
- Basic plan is FREE.

COPYRIGHT

- Social Media is a world of sharing. Photos, videos, articles, posts and other works are shared at a viral rate every day.
- It is important to always give credit to the owner of work when possible.
 - Tag/mention owner when possible.
 - Provide links to the original works of the owner in posts.
- Here is what you should know:
 - According to the [Copy Right Act](#), posts are likely fair use if:
 1. Character of the use is nonprofit, educational or personal.
 2. Nature of the work is factual published content.
 3. The work in its entirety is not published.
Example: Posting a quote form a book is OK. Posting 4 chapters is not.
 4. Impact made by using the material is small and does not affect them marker for or value of the copyrighted work.

ANALYTICS

- Measuring posts is the only way to know if your content is effective.
- Every platform provides its own tools for measuring post interaction.
 - [Twitter Analytics](#)
 - [Facebook Insights](#)
 - [Instagram Insights](#)
- Hootsuite also provides options for analytics.
 - [Hootsuite Analytics](#)
- Use analytics to measure your audience's online behaviors as well as the time and day of the week of your most successful posts
 - Create a posting schedule around this.
 - Remember, each platform will have a different demographic of audiences so each posting schedule should vary.
- StratComm can provide you with an analytic dashboard to measure changes from month to month and year to year.

Assume everything you are posting is public, will be available online forever, and will spread further than you may intend.

Be careful and accurate. Always fact-check and review spelling and grammar before posting

Know privacy policies and protect your private information.

Protect your passwords. Only allow those who are posting on the page access to passwords.

Review your accounts and posts on desktop, tablet and mobile devices.

Use a call-to-action: ask followers questions, send them to links.

Monitor your posts & respond to questions and comments.

Social media is all about being social, think of it as a two-way conversation. Invite audience participation with games, trivia question, user-supplied content, etc.