

Guidelines for Use of Social Media for Shawnee State University Accounts

1.0 OVERVIEW

Shawnee State University's social media presence directly reflects our identity, or brand. The Shawnee State University brand is evident in our style of writing, type of photography, design of materials, trademarked logos, colors, and in our interactions with others.

To support our brand on social media platforms, it is important that all who represent Shawnee State University are unified when it comes to content strategies. The following guidelines were developed to help us consistently communicate with our audiences.

2.0 BEFORE CREATING A SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT FOR YOUR PROGRAM

Contact the Office of Marketing & Communications before creating an online social media presence that represents your office, department, program, club, or service to discuss your goals, desired platform, name, graphics, and strategy. The account should be created using a Shawnee State address, with access granted to the Office of Marketing & Communications. Some questions to ask before launching include:

- What type of content do you want to share, and how often?
- Who is your audience?
- Who will be responsible for maintaining your site?
- How can you work with other SSU accounts to coordinate information?
- What is your primary communication goal?
- Can your goals be accomplished with existing social media accounts?
- What platform will serve you and your audience best?
- How will you ensure that the Shawnee State University brand is reinforced?
- How do you plan to monitor and measure your social media activity?

3.0 MAINTAINING A PRESENCE: TIPS FOR CONTENT

- **Know your platform.** Understand the rules of the platform you have chosen and best practices for using it.
- **Know who you are.** Use Shawnee State University in your name to make it easier to find your site. Keep your goals in mind and have a planned strategy. Become familiar with branding guidelines and identity. Remember that your site represents Shawnee State University.

- **Assign an account manager.** It's wise to have more than one person responsible for providing content for your platform, but one person needs to be responsible for maintaining your consistent identity. The Office of Marketing & Communications should have administrative rights to your site, in addition to your designated account manager.
- **Speak with one voice.** Understand your audience and make sure your posts are consistent in style, personality, and tone.
- **Use visuals, but know the rules and keep branding in mind.** High quality photography is a vital part of the Shawnee State University brand. Use of photography and visuals is important in social media to engage your audience. Make sure you have the right to publish photos that you did not take, observing copyright and trademark laws. Pictures of students may require a signed release. Shawnee State University logos are trademarked and their use must be coordinated with the Office of Marketing & Communications.
- **Engage your audience.** If you are going to have a presence, be present. Post consistently, answer questions asked on your site, provide accurate and timely information, keep watch of the site 24/7 and be ready to react. Inactive accounts reflect negatively on the university. The Office of Marketing & Communications may ask that an inactive account be deleted.
- **Don't delete comments unless they "break the rules."** Social media is about having a conversation and sharing viewpoints and opinions that are sometimes different or controversial. All comments are respected, valued, and encouraged. Only comments that are off-topic; represent advertisements or spam; constitute or encourage illegal activity; infringe upon someone's rights; contain nudity, obscenities or threats will be removed, in compliance with the SSU Social Media Policy.
- **Know your area of expertise.** Avoid reporting, speculating, discussing, or giving any opinions on university topics that are outside your scope and area of responsibility, including internal policies and operations. Avoid presenting yourself as the University spokesperson. If a comment or question is outside your area of expertise and intended purpose of your site, respond with the contact information of the department or area that can provide assistance. "Jamie, our Office of Admission will be able to help you. I'll message you contact information."
- **Do not engage in behavior that could be considered a conflict of interest.** Do not use the university site for personal gain (enhancing or promoting personal social media profiles, promoting personal businesses or related vendors, accepting unsolicited gifts)
- **Do not endorse commercial partners.** Use of Shawnee State's name or marks for corporate promotion, regardless of whether or not the information is in the public domain, is not permitted. Any information

about institutional partners must originate from the Office of Marketing & Communications, in coordination with the Vice President for Advancement & Institutional Relations.

- **Do not express political opinions or engage in political activities outside your individual capacity.** Avoid the appearance that you are speaking or acting for the university in political matters.
- **Do not respond to or share rumors in media about Shawnee State.** Unsubstantiated rumors or content from other sources about university personnel, events or internal business should not be shared or retweeted. Upon discovery, these should be reported to the Office of Marketing & Communications. All official announcements will be designated as such and will come from the university through main Shawnee State accounts maintained by the Office of Marketing & Communications.
- **Respond professionally and responsibly.** Refrain from engaging in dialogue that could disparage colleagues, competitors or critics. Never comment on anything related to legal matters or pending litigation. Do not share confidential or proprietary information.
- **Assist in spreading accurate, official news in times of emergencies.** In times of emergencies (weather, crime alerts, etc), the Office of Marketing & Communications, in coordination with the Department of Public Safety and the SSU Emergency Response Team, will distribute alerts. Emergency and crisis communications should always originate through the main Shawnee State University sites managed by the Office of Marketing & Communications. Because your audience may look to your site, share official alerts as they appear on the Shawnee State University feeds.

4.0 RELATED POLICIES

Your online activity may be subject to other Shawnee State University policies, including but not limited to:

- SSU Ethics Policy
- Media Information Policy
- Student Conduct Code
- Student Education Records Privacy and Release
- Human Resources policies, including restrictions on disclosure of confidential or proprietary information
- Nondiscrimination, harassment and bullying policies
- Campus Computer and Network Use

5.0 PERSONAL ACCOUNTS

As employees of Shawnee State University, what we do and say, including our activity on social media, directly reflects on the institution. While we like to

think that our personal accounts are private, it is often hard for others to distinguish the difference between our own online personal and professional opinions, especially when our personal accounts make reference to our employers. Please be mindful of these perceptions when making public posts, particularly if you are in a position where you may appear to officially represent the institution.