RUTGERS

Social Media Guidelines

Account Owner Contact and Sign-Up Information

Account Contact Information

To make social media account creation, management, and continuity an easier and more secure process follow these guidelines.

Never use personal or individual email accounts or phone numbers for a unit's social media account(s). Using a departmental email address, socialmedia@[department.rutgers.edu], for example, and a phone number ensures that if the person managing the account is unavailable the account can still be reset if the password is lost.

Creating New Accounts

When establishing new accounts, it is crucial to consult with the leadership of the respective school, college, department, or unit. Deliberate consideration should be given to selecting the most effective channels for brand representation and audience engagement. Only initiate social media accounts that can be consistently maintained.

1. All Rutgers social media accounts must have a statement of purpose or mission statement that outlines the primary reason the account is being established and desired outcomes/goals.

    Example:
    The purpose of [Insert school/college/dept./unit] [Facebook/LinkedIn/Instagram] account is to share [research findings] of [faculty and students] in [The School of X] and to [facilitate discussions about the importance of research and its impact on the world].

2. All social media accounts, and their associated mission/purpose statements, must be approved by unit leadership prior to establishment.

3. All social media accounts must clearly indicate the school, college, department, or unit they represent. Consistency in handles, names, and profile photos is essential to accurately portray the affiliation. It is preferable to use the full name for identification purposes.

It is essential that social media managers for Rutgers-affiliated accounts be well-versed in current best practices.

Each account needs at least two administrators for seamless operation.

Distribute these social media guidelines to all staff responsible for account maintenance.

For additional guidance and resources, reach out to the Social Media Manager, and inform University Communications and Marketing about the creation of any new Rutgers-affiliated social media accounts.

Before Creating a New Social Media Account

Before creating a new account, follow these steps:

1. Review the Rutgers Social Media Playbook
2. Decide if social media is the correct tool for your unit
3. Develop a plan for how this account will be used in the context of your unit's overall marketing and communications strategy
4. Reach out to the Social Media Manager if you have questions and to alert them to your plan to the launch a new social media channel

Page Roles

All units should establish page roles for all members who will be accessing the account(s). Some social media channels and social media management tools, like Hootsuite or Sprout Social, have predetermined user or page roles that can be used to control who has the authority to manage or post to the channels.

If you have questions about establishing page roles, contact the Social Media Manager.

Continuity Plan and Approval Authority

In addition to developing page roles, it is important to develop a continuity plan, establish levels of reviews, and determine who has top-level approval authority of published content.

A continuity plan will help with succession when there are personnel changes within the unit. Consider who will take over the account when the main operator leaves or how responsibilities get transferred when student managers graduate. Put this plan in writing and share it with the appropriate members of your team and your unit's leadership.

In day-to-day posting, it is helpful to develop a system of reviewing posts to ensure quality and accuracy. These levels of review will also be helpful when approaching and responding to comments and messages sent to the page. Additionally, determine who has final approval authority in case of the need to respond to emergency situations or other sensitive matters via social media.

Access List

For the unit's records, keep an updated list of all personnel who have access to the social media accounts and their role for each account.

Statement of Confidentiality Agreement

Students who will manage social media accounts for your unit should sign a statement of confidentiality agreement. You can use the agreement available through the Rutgers Office of Student Employment and amend it as necessary.

Security

With the growing risk of cyberattacks and account hacking, the following social media security guidelines have been created to help mitigate avoidable incidences of account compromise.

Passwords

Passwords serve as the primary defense for safeguarding social media accounts. Frequently, account administrators persist in using identical passwords for extended periods, often opting for overly simplistic ones. Strong passwords that adhere to Rutgers Information Technology policies should be set and updated either at the conclusion of each semester or upon the departure of any individual with access to the password.

If possible, passwords should not be shared with anyone via electronic communication methods. Whenever passwords need to be exchanged, do so in person or over the phone. Additionally, avoid storing passwords online or on shared drives.

Community Engagement

Social media by its nature allows members of the community to come together to share ideas, thoughts, and concerns. While these interactions usually will be positive, in some cases the comments and interactions community members have with your account may be negative or inappropriate.

Statement of Use

In the About section of your Facebook page, and any other applicable accounts, post a statement of use. This statement of use sets the ground rules for individuals posting content or replies to your page and allows the unit to set stipulations for what kind of posts will be removed from the page if necessary.

> Example:
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> *We want you to share information, ideas, and opinions on this page, but we reserve the right to remove posts containing personal attacks, threats, blackmail, defamation, obscenity, pornography, fighting words, solicitations to commit a crime, incitement of lawless action, perjury, plagiarism, commercial promotions, political campaign materials, and irrelevant information. The comments posted by followers of this page reflect the opinions of the individual poster and do not necessarily reflect the views of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.*

When postings violate your statement of use, report the content using the tools provided by the platform. This action will usually result in the content automatically being hidden or deleted depending on the platform.

For post spammers, those who copy and paste the same message on various posts, some social media platforms will automatically detect this behavior and hide or delete this content for you; however, if they miss these posts, report these posts as spam.

If a post or message contains a direct threat of violence against an individual or group, take a screenshot of the material, hide it from other followers of your page, and report the post/message via the Rutgers Internet Police Reporting System. Do not delete these messages or posts in case they are needed for investigation.

Branding, Content, and Posting

Account Name, Profile Pictures, and Cover Photos

When choosing the name for the unit's page, profile picture, and cover photo, follow university branding and visual identity standards. The social media page should clearly identify that your unit is a part of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, so "Rutgers" must be included in the page name.

Use High-Quality Visual Content

Use high-quality photo, video, and design content on your unit's social media pages. The page reflects Rutgers, and as such the content should be finely curated and of the highest quality. If you need help capturing high-quality photos, creating videos, or designing quality visual content, consult the communications office for your department, division, or chancellor-led unit, or contact the experts at University Communications and Marketing.

Posting Guidelines

- Use proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Review the Rutgers Editorial Style Guide for assistance with style and the use of inclusive language.
- Review Artificial Intelligence at Rutgers when considering the use of generative AI.
- Be transparent when incorporating AI-generated content by utilizing social platform labeling features that denote its use. Acknowledging the contribution of technology in content creation safeguards credibility, sets a standard for its responsible use, and fosters trust in the university's digital presence.
- Do not use vulgar language or profanity.
- Do not share information that is confidential, proprietary, or not public.
- Do not plagiarize or steal visual content. When sharing content from another creator, obtain permission and credit the source.
- Utilize the Rutgers Digital Asset Library for visual content when applicable.

Assessment

Perform an assessment of the unit's account activity at regular intervals. Focus your assessment on:

- The net change in followers/subscribers/likes for your unit's account(s)
- The number of impressions the account has or the account's total reach
- The number of engagements your posts earn
- The most popular posts
- The least popular posts
- Consider what social media ads were created or what posts were promoted
- Note any surprising occurrences on the account

Use this assessment when reviewing what content was effective for the account(s) and how to better plan content and use social media in the future. If you have more questions about assessing the performance of your account(s), contact the Social Media Manager, University Communications and Marketing.

Related Rutgers Policies

Social media administrators should follow all applicable university policies when posting and responding to content on Rutgers' social media accounts, including but not limited to:

- Rutgers Code of Ethics: General Conduct
- 70.1.1 Acceptable Use Policy for Information Technology Resources
- 80.1.2 Rutgers University Trademark Management and Licensing Policy
- 80.1.3 Purchase of External Advertising
- 80.1.4 Endorsements, Sponsorships, and Advertising in and on University Assets and Communication Materials
- 80.1.5 University Visual Identity
- 80.1.6 Communication and Relations with the News Media

Policies can be found in the Rutgers University Policy Library.