

UNA Social Media Guidelines *(for UNA owned social media accounts only)*

The University of North Alabama encourages the use of social media platforms as a means to enhance communication, engagement, collaboration, and information exchange. The use of social media technology follows the same standard of professional practice consistent across the UNA campus. Use common sense and thoughtful judgement when engaging as a user on social media.

What is social media?

Social media is based on the use of Web and mobile technologies that allow for user-generated exchanges of information. With proper administration, social media can foster collaboration and communication as an interactive dialog, while enhancing the value of conversation.

Social media takes a number of forms, from social networking sites, like Facebook and Instagram, to collaborative projects, including wikis, blogs, and micro-blogs. Content communities and virtual communities are also forms of social media.

Where can you find UNA?

The University of North Alabama can be found across several of the social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, and YouTube. There is a primary UNA account for each of these; departments and colleges also have social media accounts that are managed and administered regularly.

SECTION 1: GUIDELINES FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

Conduct and ethics: As a representative of UNA, it is imperative for you to maintain the same standards of conduct expected of all UNA employees. Be respectful, positive, helpful and informative. Do not engage in negative banter, and do not take a political stand on topics or legislation.

Protect confidential and proprietary information: Do not post private, restricted or sensitive information about the university or its students, staff, faculty or alumni. Types of private information include FERPA-protected student information, Social Security numbers, credit card numbers and medical records.

Employees must still follow the applicable federal requirements such as [FERPA](#) and HIPAA, as well as NCAA regulations. Adhere to all applicable UNA [policies](#).

Respect copyright and fair use. When posting, be mindful of the copyright and intellectual property rights of others and of the university.

Use appropriate branding: Do not use the university logo or any other university images or iconography on personal social media sites. Do not use the university's name to promote a

product, cause or political party or candidate. The [Office of University Communications & Marketing](#) offers [Social Media Branding Guidelines](#) if you need assistance.

Ensure the security of your social media account. A compromise of your account can lead to malicious entities posting inappropriate or even illegal material on your behalf. This could lead to reputational risk to the university. If you post on behalf of the university to social media sites be sure to use a different password for each your official social media accounts, personal social media accounts and your university provided accounts. If you notice or hear about any abnormal activities occurring through your account or feel that it might have been compromised, contact your [IT Services](#) office.

Terms of Services. Obey the Terms of Service of any Social Media platform employed.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/legal/terms>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/tos>

LinkedIn: http://www.linkedin.com/static?key=user_agreement&trk=hb_ft_userag

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/t/terms>

SECTION 2: BEST PRACTICES

Think twice – no, three times – before posting. Privacy does not exist in the world of social media. Consider what could happen if a post becomes widely known and how that may reflect both on the subject of the post and the university. Search engines can turn up posts years after they are created, and comments can be forwarded or copied. If you are unsure about posting something or responding to a comment, ask your supervisor for input or contact [University Communications & Marketing](#).

Be consistent. Keep your social media site updated and post at regular intervals. Some basic guidelines:

- Blogs: Weekly or bi-weekly.
- Facebook & Instagram: Several times a week; no more than twice a day.
- Twitter: Daily and as often as you need to support the university mission, but without saturating the feed.
- YouTube: At least monthly, preferably more. This tool is interlinked with other publications, with embed codes being in use for online blogs, newsletters, etc., so it allows for some flexibility.

All social media sites should be checked daily for comments that require feedback. Being a quick responder helps build the university's reputation.

Strive for accuracy. Get the facts straight before posting them on social media. Review content for grammatical and spelling errors. Because many sites don't have automatic spell check, put the post in a Word document and check for grammatical and spelling errors before sharing.

Remember your audience. Be aware that a presence in the social media world is or easily can be made available to the public at large. This includes prospective students, current students, current employers and colleagues and peers.

Be a valued member. If you join a social network such as a Facebook group or comment on someone's blog, make sure you are contributing valuable insights. Self-promoting behavior is viewed negatively and can lead to you being banned from websites or groups.

These guidelines are shared with permission from the University of Colorado.