

Saint Peter's University Social Media Policy & Considerations Guide

Definition

The term social media refers to websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking. Saint Peter's University utilizes social media as a communications and marketing tool to reach prospective students, current students, alumni, parents, faculty, staff, and the greater community, among others. The official social media accounts of Saint Peter's University are also a crucial means of reaching the general community and public in times of crisis.

Purpose

This policy provides guidance for employees and students who create or share content that may represent the University through unofficial social media channels. The goal is to maintain a consistent and authentic online presence that reflects our Jesuit values and Saint Peter's mission.

Official vs. Unofficial Social Media Account

The following are the only official social media accounts of Saint Peter's University and maintained by the Office of Communications & Marketing:

Instagram: [@saintpetersuniversity](https://www.instagram.com/saintpetersuniversity)

Facebook: [Saint Peter's University](https://www.facebook.com/SaintPeter'sUniversity)

LinkedIn: [Saint Peter's University](https://www.linkedin.com/company/SaintPeter'sUniversity)

TikTok: [@SaintPetersUniversity](https://www.tiktok.com/@SaintPetersUniversity)

YouTube: [@SaintPetersUniversity](https://www.youtube.com/@SaintPetersUniversity)

All other accounts associated with Saint Peter's University are considered unofficial as their content has not been reviewed or approved by the Office of Communications & Marketing and may not reflect the views and opinions of Saint Peter's University. We highly recommend the following be added to any biographies ("bios") or account descriptions associated with unofficial University accounts: *"Views are our own and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Saint Peter's University."*

Individual **schools, majors, and/or programs** are not permitted to have their own official or unofficial social media accounts. As a small university, this is to ensure and maintain clear affiliation between Saint Peter's University and its programs.

Members of the University are welcomed and encouraged to submit content to the University's

official social media accounts. Please reach out to Grace via email goddo@saintpeters.edu with content ideas or events to potentially cover. All content will be vetted through an editorial process and posted at the discretion of the Office of Communications & Marketing. This includes accepting any collaboration posts, used to maximize impact, that are not coordinated ahead of time with approval of the Office of Communications & Marketing. This feature is typically only reserved for significant moments or achievements unless otherwise discussed ahead of time. Only University-wide information deemed relevant to various Saint Peter's audiences is shared. The University will delete any posts or comments it deems inappropriate in its sole discretion, including posts and comments which contain profanities or are offensive, off-topic, irrelevant, or unprofessional. The University will also delete solicitations and advertisements pertaining to external businesses and organizations. Repeat offenses may result in users being blocked from the University's social media channels without prior notice.

Employees

Please familiarize yourself with the personal use of social media information in the [Employee Handbook](#) provided by the Office of Human Resources.

If you are an advisor for a student group, below are some best practices to know and help your student leaders manage unofficial social media accounts:

- The Office of Student Involvement and The Office of Communications & Marketing recommends that IT create an email account associated with the student group name and avoid using a personal email to create the social media account. This ensures that the account can be passed along should the students graduate or the group disbands and wants to be reestablished in the future. All these requests should be centralized through the Office of Student Involvement, ensuring that they also have access for any transitions or other needs that may arise to help manage the account.
- Any published content or accounts are subject to the policies of the University. The removal or revision of any content can be requested if it violates the Social Media Policy, University brand guidelines, the code of conduct or any other university policies/guidelines. A member of the OSI or Comms & Marketing team will reach out via email or direct message to the account to request removal if something does not meet a University policy. A page can be terminated if it is not updated for three months or more. If a group is deemed inactive, it will be up to the Office of Student Involvement to retain the account for potential future use or be deleted entirely.
- Be familiar with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and respect students' right to privacy and confidentiality in accordance with federal law.
- Any content that is created, maintained, and/or stored on any University affiliated social media page as well as the passwords for University social media accounts, shall belong to the University.
- You are encouraged to share the social media handle for the student group with the Office of Student Involvement for reference and so the student leaders are notified of any related training offered to help run and manage social media accounts.
- The Office of Communications & Marketing has [brand guidelines](#) and a [branding and logo standard policy](#) that you are encouraged to read.
- Grace, Social Media Specialist in the Office of Communications & Marketing, is available to provide information on best practices, content suggestions, and how best to partner with us in using social media.

Students

Please familiarize yourself with the Student Handbook and [Nexus Student Org Handbook](#), particularly the section on Online Social Networking Groups and Posts.

The Office of Communications & Marketing has [brand guidelines](#) and a [branding and logo standard policy](#) that you are encouraged to read.

Grace, Social Media Specialist in the Office of Communications & Marketing, is available to provide information on best practices, content suggestions, and how best to partner with us in using social media.

Considerations, Best Practices, Content Ideas

The below was created by Grace Oddo, Social Media Specialist, for help to both employees and students in creating social media content.

I. Representing the Saint Peter's Brand

1. **Be Authentic and Professional.** Your voice should be genuine, positive and respectful. Speak as a proud member of the Peacock community, but remember you represent the University in every post.
2. **Stay On Mission.** Align your content with [Saint Peter's values](#); a commitment to academic excellence, ethical leadership, compassionate service, and justice.
 - a. Also, feel free to browse the [University's new strategic plan](#) to serve as inspiration and think about ways to align your content with its pillars. (When relevant)
3. **Keep It Accurate.** Share verified information. When in doubt, check facts or confirm details with the Office of Marketing and Communications before posting.
4. **Respect Privacy.** Never post private student, faculty, or staff information. Obtain permission before photographing or tagging individuals.

II. Building a Social Media Presence

1. **Know Your Purpose.** Before posting, consider:
 - Are you showcasing student life, academics, or campus events?
 - Are you building awareness, encouraging engagement, or sharing achievements?
 - How does this support Saint Peter's goals or community pride?

2. Know Your Audience.

- Speak to prospective and current students, alumni, and the community.
- Use language that's inclusive, welcoming, and aligned with the University tone.

3. Know Your Platform.

- **Instagram & TikTok:** Showcase student life, energy, and creativity.
- **X/Facebook:** Share updates, news, and broader community stories.

4. Be Yourself, and Have Fun!

- Hop on TikTok trends, be creative, and have some fun- that's what social media is all about. When in doubt, ask Grace.

III. Content Guidelines

1. **Content Pillars:** Highlight University values, student success, events, academics, athletics, and service.

2. Tone and Style:

- Approachable and mission-driven.
- Avoid inside jokes, negativity, or content that could harm the University's reputation.

3. Visual Standards:

- Use clear, high-quality photos and videos.
- Include University logos or colors only when approved by Communications & Marketing.

4. Posting Frequency:

- Consistency matters more than quantity. Plan content weekly or biweekly with guidance from the Communications & Marketing team. (If you wish)
- To keep track of planning/posting content, please consider using a separate Google calendar or another social media planning calendar template, [like this one on Asana](#)

5. Approvals:

- All **branded** (anything with the University logo) content must be reviewed by the Office of Marketing and Communications before posting.

IV. Engagement and Conduct

1. **Be Respectful. Do not** engage in online arguments, political debates, or controversial discussions while representing Saint Peter's.
2. **Respond Thoughtfully.** If asked a question you can't answer, direct the user to the University website. If asked to provide comments on behalf of the University, direct them to the Office of Communications & Marketing.
3. **Credit Creators.** Tag and acknowledge peers, departments, or organizations appropriately.
4. **Monitor Comments.** Report any inappropriate or harassing comments to the Communications/Marketing team immediately.

V. Compliance and Accountability

1. **Brand Integrity:** Misuse of Saint Peter's name, logos, or imagery may result in removal from content roles.
2. **Policy Violations:** Posts that include offensive language, discrimination, misinformation, or harassment will be addressed under University conduct policies.
3. **Support and Training:** Student leaders and employees are encouraged to attend future workshops on branding, storytelling, and digital professionalism.

VI. Measuring Success

It is important to track engagement (likes, shares, comments, saves, reach) to evaluate what resonates with audiences. Share insights with the Communications & Marketing team to guide future campaigns and storytelling.

VII. Questions and Support

For clarification, approvals, or content guidance, contact:

Grace Oddo, Social Media Specialist
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