

Social Media Guidance 2020

Social media always carries with it a chance for intense, stressful, sometimes ugly conversations. That's never been more true than it is during this unique, uncertain time. The key to managing our online platforms during the COVID-19 pandemic will be patience, empathy, and more patience.

There is a substantial contingent of people who are not pleased with campus re-opening, and they will be looking for opportunities to call us on perceived mistakes.

Unfortunately, this semester (and beyond) may be more about what we should not do rather than what we should do.

Here are some tips:

PHOTOS

- Do not post photos of anyone who is not wearing a mask.
- Do not post photos of relatively large groups of people close together, even if they are wearing masks. Make sure social distancing is being observed in all photos that feature multiple people.
- If you need photos of students, faculty, staff, etc. for the purpose of social media content, please contact Brett Dalton at bdalton@pittstate.edu. PSU Photographer Sam Clausen recently snapped some awesome images of our beautiful campus. [You can access those here.](#)

ENGAGEMENT

- There will likely be an unusual amount of negative comments on our social posts, as many will be more than eager to criticize our actions.
- Do not engage with negative comments unless you can answer a question about your specific area of the university.
- If you receive questions regarding overall university policy, please encourage them to email their questions to social@pittstate.edu.
- Do not engage with online trolls – those being negative and trying to get a rise out of you or others. Again, unless there is a specific issue that can be addressed, it's best to ignore negative, hateful comments.

SO WHAT CAN YOU DO? (Fair question.)

- Showing our “new normal” is totally cool. That means people in masks, social distancing, etc. Be real, honest about it.
- Show how your area is adapting to this unique challenge.
- Engage with positive comments. Express gratitude for support.

- Pretty photos of campus are always nice. Again, the University Marketing and Communication Office can help with this. Contact Brett Dalton at bdalton@pittstate.edu
- Share positive vibes as much as possible. That means try to ensure that the vast majority of your social content is positive, engaging, and aimed at evoking a positive response from our audiences. Because of the university's importance in our community, we do have a responsibility to help keep things as "normal" and positive as possible.
- Share content from the university's main social accounts.

MISC. TIPS

- It can be a bit of a buzzkill, but always have our current situation (pandemic) in mind when posting content. This is a very delicate time for everyone, especially schools and universities.
- Be especially thoughtful about your social content. Do you need to post this? What are you trying to achieve with the post? What are the potential negative reactions?
- Please be aware of university policy regarding masks and all things pandemic-related. Do not post any content that would show people in violation of these policies. (This is important always, but especially now.)
- Be thoughtful about how you use your personal social media accounts. We all represent PSU, even in our personal time. Try to avoid posting anything on your personal account that is or could be perceived to be in contradiction to university policies and procedures.

As always, do not hesitate to reach out for help. The University Marketing and Communication office is here to assist and answer questions. If you're unsure about a post or about how to respond to a comment/question, please talk to us.

We'll get through this time together, so feel free to reach out anytime.

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