

FY20 Social Media Guidelines– Oakland University

Introduction

Oakland University's social media presence is used as a strategic communication and customer service tool. Oakland University embraces the responsible use of social media for communication and to build relationships with prospective/current students, alumni, faculty, staff and community members. OU's institutional goals directly align with all messaging on social media, and are backed up by survey data, analysis of post metrics and industry best practices. These guidelines consider all needs for content, community engagement and customer service.

Getting Started

Ask yourself

- What do I hope to accomplish by starting a social media presence for my school, program or organization?
- Where is my demographic? (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or LinkedIn)
- Do I have the professional full-time staff and content to sustain a social media presence?
- Do I have enough content to post on social media to be active?

Establish Administration

Each social media site must have no less than one (1) full-time staff member administrator. Oakland University social media accounts should be affiliated with an **oakland.edu email** address already established for customer services (e.g. a **department's general email**). Passwords and logins should be known and maintained by page administrators, as well as direct leadership. If you do not have a department general email please request one from University Technology Services. Please note to have a backup full time administrator and update your contact information to the Social Media Coordinator.

Form a Strategy and Set Goals

Write a Content Strategy

All successful social media accounts are backed by a social media strategy that is reviewed annually. Social media strategies are crucial in that they are a road map for how your account(s) should be managed, ensuring it can successfully continue should the current social media manager leave OU.

Your social media strategy should include your purpose, content pillars that reflect the OU brand and take into consideration your own organization's goals, account(s) that will be in use defined, a messaging map and annual Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relative and Timely (SMART) goals.

Contact University Communications and Marketing

Contact your Account Manger

Before creating social media accounts affiliated with Oakland University, you must contact your [UCM account manager](#) with your social media plan and strategy. Once your account manager is aware that you are interested in creating a social media presence associated with Oakland University, the UCM Social Media Coordinator will respond to your request in a timely matter with a meeting request.

Meet with UCM Account Manager and UCM Social Media Coordinator

The final step will be a meeting with your UCM account manager and the UCM Social Media Coordinator to review your social media strategy and plan for sustaining the account(s). Bring a written copy of your social media plan and strategy.

Be Active

Social media requires you to be active and post content with meaningful stories and visuals. Make sure that you're posting frequently on social media and be able to interact with different departments. Posting high-quality content weekly can help your engagement rate. If you're unable to commit to the social media platform, it is best to close the page than to leave it inactive. You can always contact the Social Media Coordinator Nykiera Hill at nhill2@oakland.edu for posting on the main account and questions regarding social media.

Engage

Make sure you have time to engage with your audience. Social media goal is engaging with multiple users. Answer any questions that people ask, have conversations with community members and interact. Don't make your answer robotic, but make it more personal. Regularly monitor and respond to comments and report any inappropriate comments.

Guidelines and Best Practices

Our brand is a combination of our logo, mission, identity and the authentic stories we tell. Our brand is our students, faculty and alumni experiences as they help define Oakland University. Social media is an opportunity to tell these stories.

All social media content, whether built into a campaign or a single post, should align with OU's institutional priorities and goals. It is a culmination of experiences that make up our story.

Social Media Administrators Responsibilities

- Maintaining active dialogue between your department's social media manager(s) and your UCM account manager. Meet regularly with your account manager and the UCM Social Media Coordinator.
- Ensuring best practices are in use based on UCM guidelines and industry best practices.
- Keeping inventory of account(s), passwords, emails used and contact information of account administrators.
- Creating engaging content, maintaining and monitoring respective social media sites.
- Contacting UCM and Social Media Coordinator in a timely manner to communicate any pending or predicted crisis or emergency situations.
 - Be available in a crisis or emergency situation pertaining to social media (example: classes are cancelled)
- Deliver timely customer service and respond to questions and inquiries.
- Responses should be professional and conversational. Use language that is friendly and encourages follow-up conversation.
 - Good rule of thumb: read every response out loud as if it was going to be read on the 5 o'clock news.
- Adhere to established content strategies, goals and objectives established by your organization, UCM and corresponding leadership.
- OU affiliated accounts are **PROHIBITED** from:
 - Posting content that violates any city, state, or federal laws or regulations.
 - Commenting on or posting anything related to legal matters or litigation.
 - Using the University brand or name to endorse private or personal views, opinions or beliefs regarding any product, business, or political cause or political candidate.
 - Representing private or personal views, opinions or beliefs as those of the University, or that the University endorses those private or personal views, opinions or beliefs. Only those officers of the University with specific delegated authority to do so may speak on behalf of the University.

Posting Content

Create a social media content calendar with planned posts. Content calendars should be planned out for at least a month with your core posts, but understand that "here and now" content does come up, so your social media calendar is fluid.

Content calendars should include post pillar (or purpose/goal), date, platform(s), written content or plan and media associated with the post. When posting and responding: be authentic, be accurate, be respectful, be positive, encourage open conversation and allow dialogue (yes, even negative).

Accessibility

When posting images for social media make sure that your image includes alternative text (alt text). Alt text describes images to people who are unable to see them. Each platform allows you to add alt text to make the images accessible to everyone. Learn how to add alt text to each platform in the Social Media Best Practices PowerPoint.

Analytics

When posting content, you want to keep an eye on what content is working well. Tracking your monthly analytics will help you determine what content is getting the most engagement. Each social media program allows you to pull analytics from their platform. Once you gather your analytics, create a social media goal for what you want your engagement rate to be on each platform.

Style Guide

Graphic standards are required with any affiliated Oakland University organization in the digital space; social media is not exempt to this requirement.

[Oakland University Brand Guidelines](#)

Work with your account manager to determine what creative assets are necessary when representing Oakland University on your affiliated social media site. Collaborate with your UCM Account Manger well in advance for a creative package that includes social media graphics. This is achievable if you have a well-planned social media strategy and content calendar.

Use of the OU logo without approval from University Communications and Marketing is prohibited per [policy 488](#). Using images found through a Google image search may infringe upon the copyright and subject you or the University to legal liability. Always use pre-approved and original media to avoid copyright infringement. Work with your UCM Account Manager to ensure proper use of images.

Hashtags

Hashtags are words or phrases preceded by a pound sign and used to identify messages on a specific topic. If you think your initiative would benefit from a hashtag, work with your UCM Account Manager on a strategy to be officially recognized by the central OU social media accounts.

OU Recognized Hashtags

#ThisIsOU – All things Oakland University. Influencers use #ThisIsOU to share OU pride and pictures, promote events and student orgs, show what's happening in the classroom, and other musings that Golden Grizzlies would appreciate. This is your OU story. You live it, you tell it, and Oakland University shares it.

#WearTheBear – Spirit and pride. Generally associated with athletics related posts.

#FutureGrizzly – Declaring commitment to OU. Primarily used by Undergraduate Admissions.

General – #OaklandU and #OaklandUniversity. Primarily used on Instagram and Twitter

Media Inquiries

Anyone responding to media inquiries must first contact the Director of Media Relations from University Communications and Marketing, Brian Bierley at bierley@oakland.edu

Oakland University Content Pillars for Reference

If you are considering partnering with the central social media accounts instead of maintaining your own sites, below are the Oakland University social media content pillars. They are used as a guide for determining what content is posted. All posts should be purposeful and efficient, and should fit into a category below that aligns with our institutional goals.

Recruitment - Oakland University cultivates success through high-profile programs and a continual quest for new opportunities. OU appeals to future students who are competitive, pioneering, experiential, determined, tenacious and proud.

- Undergraduate and graduate recruitment specific posts, academic visit days, events, brag posts

Retention / Student Service - Oakland University stands confident in who we are, creating a firm foundation and steady vision. OU develops strong roots that anchors influence and grows students into an accomplished and eminent leader.

- Current students, and their experience at OU, reminders, events, brag posts (what's changing / happening around campus) and student stories

Academics and Research - Oakland University is a strong and stable contender effectively pursuing academic excellence, including research. The possibilities to grow and push the boundaries of knowledge is limitless is OU.

- Research brag points, academic highlights

Spirit / Pride - Oakland University students are proud, proud to be a Golden Grizzly, proud of their work and proud of their roots.

- Athletics, non-academic events (Homecoming, Grizzfest)

Culture of Philanthropy / Community Engagement - Oakland University is a gateway to adventure in Detroit and beyond, opening doors to diverse opportunities and meaningful collaborations with the surrounding community.

- Community service, community engagement, scholarships, and fundraising

Alumni Engagement - Oakland University's determination to achieve and help others achieve continues to drive progress and expand our roots and impact for the betterment of all.

- Alumni events, alumni spirit, alumni stories