Social Media Standards

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the quality and appropriate use of approved/official AUA social media channels for promotion and information at AUA.

Everything you do in your role as an AUA employee reflects on your unit, college, and the institution, including interaction through social media — even privately. Remember to remain professional and respectful and avoid engaging in mean-spirited conversations on social media. Our audience does not understand the internal organizational structure of the University. What you post on your personal, unit's, or college’s social platforms reflects on AUA as a whole. The AUA community should be aware that innocently intended comments posted on social media may be misconstrued.

You should be aware that any communication you make may not remain private and should not be assumed as such. In all cases where a private social media account is used that identifies with the University, it must be made clear that the views expressed on or through that social media account do not represent the views of the University. Your accounts should include an appropriate disclaimer such as: "The views expressed here are my own and in no way reflect the views of the American University of Armenia”

**The Policy**

AUA recognizes that social media platforms like Facebook, X (Twitter), YouTube, Instagram, and LinkedIn are important and influential community communication channels.

The purpose of using social media channels on behalf of the University is to support AUA’s mission, goals, programs, and information, including University news. Therefore, when using approved/official AUA social media channels identified with the University, it is critical that AUA community members recognize that they are representing AUA to the world at all times.

To assist in posting content and managing these platforms, the University offers the following policies and guidelines for official use of social media. These policies and guidelines apply to all AUA community members using approved/official University social media. These policies and guidelines are not intended to govern or restrict personal presence or expression on the web. Also, they are not guidelines intended to restrict employee rights to engage in concerted, protected activity related to the terms and conditions of their employment.

**General Guidelines for Approval of Official AUA Social Media Accounts**

Employees who wish to set up approved/official University social media accounts and speak on behalf of AUA through social media must receive permission from the head of their respective units/Colleges and obtain approval from the Office of Communications prior to setting up the social media account. The Office of Communications will ask to see a content plan and social media strategy to consider the approval. Units/Colleges should consider their messages, audiences, and goals, as well as a strategy for keeping information on social media platforms up-to-date. The Office of Communications can assist and advise with social media planning.

Upon the launch of an approved/official social media account(s), employees must submit their username(s), password(s), and the email address linked to the account to the Office of Communications. This will ensure that, if account managers are unable to fulfill their duties, the account can be transitioned to a new manager.

The Office of Communications will also share AUA’s official [Social Media Guidelines](https://communications.aua.am/files/2022/05/AUA_Style_Guide_May_2022.pdf) for the employees to follow. Social media platforms provide varying degrees of flexibility in allowing account holders to style pages in line with the University’s guidelines. All official University social media pages are reviewed, monitored, and approved by the Office of Communications. At the Office’s sole discretion, the University reserves the right to deny the posting of any content deemed inappropriate or misaligned with the University branding guidelines.

**Quality matters**

Correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar are of the utmost importance — even on platforms like X (Twitter), which affords you only 280 characters to share your message. Make every effort to be clear, complete, and concise.

Common abbreviations for specific words may be used. Remember that internal acronyms may not mean anything to our audience, so consider spelling out those that are uncommon.

Care should be taken not to mislead or exaggerate information in a clickbait manner or in ways that could be considered spam.

**Social Media Dialogue**

Many social media platforms promote commenting and online dialogue, the tone of which is generally informal. Despite its informal tone, all online dialogue is public. Remember that anything you write can and will be viewed by current and future AUA community members and constituents, as well as other colleagues and possible future employers.

When engaging in dialogue on official University social media platforms:

● Remember that your statements and responses represent AUA to the world at all times.

● Consider refraining from discussing or expressing opinions regarding AUA policies, operations, and personnel. Such comments may be removed at the University’s discretion.

● Exercise discretion, respect, and thoughtfulness toward all dialogue participants.

● Maintain professional language and tone.

● Confidential or proprietary University information or similar information about third parties who have shared such information with you on the University’s behalf must not be shared publicly on official University social media channels.

● Official University social media accounts may choose to post University-related social media content generated by the Office of Communications and other official University pages.

**Video**

Videos that are filmiled/produced by unit/College should be reviewed by the Office of Communications prior to posting on official social media channels or pages representing AUA. If a unit/College wants to film a video, the script or concept should be shared with the Office of Communications for confirmation.

### **Crisis Communications Policy**

Do not post new information on your own channels. If you receive questions regarding a crisis, direct the inquirer to either aua.am or the University’s social media channels. If you have posts scheduled to be shared, please pause them immediately when notified by the Office of Communications.

Refer to the complete AUA Crisis Communications Policy below:

https://policies.aua.am/policy/178

**Advertising Budget on Social Media**

Recognizing the role of social media in shaping the institution's image and engaging with audiences, AUA allocates a dedicated advertising budget to promote its initiatives, events, and academic achievements across various platforms. This budget is centralized by the Office of Communications. Employees submit an ad request to the Office of Communications to run an ad through MyAUA Intranet. The Office of Communications manages the budget and is responsible for allocating the funding for different advertising.

If any unit, college, or program receives funding from third-party organizations for advertising, it should be discussed with the Office of Communications in order to facilitate an internal transfer.