

# HUNTINGTON UNIVERSITY SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY



Social Media is to this generation what the movable-type printing press was to Gutenberg's generation: a game-changer. It is estimated that there are nearly 2.5 billion social media users worldwide, with Facebook leading the popularity contest. Business, organizations, and yes, even institutions, would be foolish to think they can ignore this communication phenomenon. Not having a presence on social media in 2017 is a nail in the coffin for an entity that hopes to engage and interact with an audience.

Huntington University is embracing this powerful tool and riding the communication wave in order to reach the next generation of Foresters, as well as to remain connected with our current students and alumni. But as Spiderman's Uncle Ben would say, "with great power, comes great responsibility."

As prospective and current students, faculty, staff, alumni, and other University audiences increasingly rely on social media to communicate, many higher education professionals are becoming interested in using it to advertise events, recruit prospective students, engage alumni, leverage fundraising efforts, and host academic conversations to name a few uses. This is great and Huntington University is happy to support those efforts on the official campus social media sites (for more information about this, email [socialmedia@huntington.edu](mailto:socialmedia@huntington.edu)). Please keep in mind, however, this is intended to supplement, not replace, the channels currently in place for press, news, events, announcements, and communication.

The Huntington University Social Media Policy is intended to guide University employees in the use of social media for personal and University-related use, as well as to establish clear ground rules for creating and maintaining HU-related social media accounts. This policy does not affect other Huntington University policies that might apply to use of social media, including but not limited to the Community Life Agreement and the Policy on Harassment. If a student or employee's use of social media would violate any of the University's policies in another forum, it also violates them in an online forum.

Also, for clarity's sake, please note that when this document refers to "social media," this includes but is not limited to YouTube, SnapChat, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest.

## **Social Media for You**

Your personal social media accounts belong to you. However, as an employee of Huntington University, you are expected to adhere to the [Huntington University Manual of Operations](#) and to abide by all [FERPA](#), [HIPPA](#), and [NCAA](#) guidelines, rules, and restriction. Also, if you identify yourself on your social media account as a Huntington University employee (faculty, staff, adjunct, coach, etc.), it should be made clear on your account that any views expressed on your page are your own and not necessarily those of the University.

## Social Media for HU

If you are the manager of an HU-related social media account, you are responsible for the content posted on those accounts (this includes content posted by you and content posted by those you have empowered to post on your behalf). Remember, any account associated with Huntington University is representative of Huntington University and therefore should abide by the following rules:

- Be thoughtful in your posts. If the content you are posting does not inspire, educate, or entertain (appropriately), then perhaps you ought not post it.
- If you wouldn't say it in person, don't say it online.
- Negative comments do not always need to be deleted or removed. People disagree; it's part of life. If a negative comment is written appropriately and is not rude, vulgar, defamatory, or racist, do not delete the comment.
- Correct mistakes (such as typos, incorrect statements, etc.) promptly.
- Do not engage with trolls (See [verb definition](#) if unfamiliar with the vernacular). Yes, it's tempting, and yes, it can seem oh-so-satisfying, but nothing good ever comes of it, so don't do it. If you find yourself compelled to respond on the off-chance that this internet-dwelling troll actually has something to say, request their contact information or send them a private message. If you have concerns about the type of content that the little troll posted, take a screenshot of the post and send it to [socialmedia@huntington.edu](mailto:socialmedia@huntington.edu) and request the involvement and/or advice of University Relations.

## Before You Create a Social Media Account

Social Media isn't an "if you build it they will come" scenario. In fact, Kevin Costner's *Field of Dreams* is quite different from the reality of social media. Social Media—good social media—takes a lot of time and creative energy. It is for this reason, as well as others, that no social media account can be created on behalf of HU (including but not limited to departments, offices, athletics, and student groups) without the approval of University Relations and the Web & Social Media Coordinator. (Note: If an account is discovered that was created without the consent/approval of University Relations and the Web & Social Media Coordinator, the responsible party will be contacted and appropriate actions will be taken.)

Please keep the following requirements for any Huntington University social media account in mind:

- University Relations and the Web & Social Media Coordinator must have all log-in credentials for the account.
- When passwords change, University Relations and the Web & Social Media Coordinator must be made aware.
- Charitable contributions to or on behalf of the Huntington University Foundation or any other 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to support Huntington university cannot be solicited, nor can they be accepted, unless approved in advance by the Advancement office.
- Remember, not all social connection is beneficial. Please carefully consider the implications of friending, linking, following, or accepting such a request from persons and individuals. Be particularly aware of any implications or possible misinterpretations of faculty-student, supervisor-subordinate, and staff-student connections online.

- Do not use Huntington University logos for endorsements or on personal accounts. Do not use the University's name or logo to promote a product, cause, political party, or political candidate.
- Social Media websites each have terms & conditions and/or policies and all Huntington university employees must adhere to these policies/terms if they choose to use the social media platforms. Not following these policies/terms may lead to the removal of your social media account and may adversely affect or reflect poorly upon the University. Please keep up-to-date on your social media platform policies/terms.

These requirements are applicable to those accounts that are currently in place and future accounts.

If your department/office/team/group/etc. is interest in creating a social media account (this includes closed and private groups) on any platform, the following actions must be taken.

Read and Review the Huntington University Social Media Policy.

Yes, University Relations and the Web & Social Media Coordinator must know that you have read and understand the policy that you are currently reading. In order to prove this, we ask that you fill out that last page of this policy document and send it to Lynette Fager in University Relations (either a hard copy via campus mail or a scanned copy via email – [lfager@huntington.edu](mailto:lfager@huntington.edu)) when you send in your proposal.

### **Write a Proposal**

The proposal must include:

- The platform you intend to use. If you are proposing multiple platforms, one proposal must be written for each platform.
- The name you intend to use for the account. You can check the availability of a name at [www.namechk.com](http://www.namechk.com).
- The first profile and cover image that you would like to use.
- The email address you plan to associate with the account. Please note that accounts associated with Huntington University should never be registered to an employee's personal email address. All accounts must be registered to a [@huntington.edu](mailto:@huntington.edu) email address.
- A strategic plan. The plan should answer questions like; What is the goal of the social media account? How does this page further the mission of your program/department/group?
- A tentative posting schedule. Provide an outline of content for the page, ideally for three to six months. This is more than saying that you plan to post about upcoming events, student achievements, and articles relating to program/department/group; this is where you create a content calendar that showcases the voice and feel of the account, as well as specific messaging you plan to post on specific days. This also is where you explain your posting plan for the summer months and other academic breaks.
- Clarification of your target audience. Who do you want to reach with your page? Be specific, don't just tell me that you want to attract students. Which students? What age? Which region? In other words, narrow your focus to your *actual* audience. No account is everything to everyone.
- A clear administrative plan. Who is in charge of creating content and posting content regularly? Who is the back-up person? If any of those individuals are students, what is the succession plan when the student(s) graduate(s)?

- Six and 12 month goals. In order to determine whether a page is succeeding, goals must be set. This should be in terms of followers and follower interaction.

Send your proposal to the Web & Social Media Coordinator ([socialmedia@huntington.edu](mailto:socialmedia@huntington.edu)). The Web & Social Media Coordinator will follow up with you and schedule a meeting to review your proposal.

Let's assume that your proposal is accepted and you are authorized to create a social media account on behalf of Huntington University (congratulations and huzzah!). Please bear in mind the following points:

- The six and 12 month goals should be met by the date six and 12 months from the date the account went live (not the date of the first post).
- You are expected to maintain the security of the account. Quite simply: don't make public or give out the log-in information for the account. A hacked or rouge account can do the University serious damage.

### **Account Activity**

Be active. Your account should have regular activity. Need a general rule of thumb for posting?

Here you go:

- Facebook – 3x per week minimum
- Instagram – 3x per week minimum
- Twitter – 1x per day minimum

Stagnant accounts are dead weight to the University. For that reason, University Relations and the Web & Social Media Coordinator reserve the right to delete or temporarily unpublish any account associated with Huntington University that is dormant (no posts and/or no activity) for three months.

### **Using Media on Social Media**

This may shock some of you, but just because you find something online doesn't mean it's free for you to use. Crazy, right? Wrong. This isn't crazy. This is reasonable. It's a fair assumption that you don't want your work stolen, why would you steal someone (either a person or a business) else's work/property. Even if you don't see it as theft, the University does. We are a Christ-centered institution and should, therefore, be above reproach. If an account that you are maintaining on behalf of Huntington University is caught using unapproved/stolen media, disciplinary measures will be taken. This includes photos, videos, and other online media.

If you are in need of photo and video content, contact University Relations ([socialmedia@huntington.edu](mailto:socialmedia@huntington.edu)). They might be able to hook you up! If you are in need of stock images to use, University Relations recommends iStock.com or Pexels.com (free). If you would like to use an image that you find online, specifically an image taken or of an HU student, request the permission of that student prior to posting the image. In that same vein, if you take an image of a student that you intend to use on social media, ask that student's permission before posting. If they object, don't post it. If they approve, post it! And, if appropriate to do so, tag the student.

**What Happens Online...**

Whether you are posting on your personal account that identifies you as a Huntington University employee, or you posting on an HU-related account, be aware that there is no such thing as social media privacy. Deleting a post is no longer good enough to ensure that a post is gone for good. In fact, a simple online search can turn up photos, videos, comments, etc. from years gone by. It is for that reason, as well as your own personal respectability, that you are cautioned to think before you post. Is your blood pressure boiling from a comment on a Facebook page? Walk away (metaphorically, if necessary) and wait until you have a calmer, more level head before you post a response. Also, only post photos that you would be completely OK showing to your 98-year-old grandma and your 5-year-old nephew. Would you be embarrassed for either to see a photo? Then don't post it. Remember, you are responsible for the content you publish on any and all social media. Individuals have been held liable for commentary deemed to be proprietary, libelous, copyright infringement, defamatory, or obscene (as defined by the courts); don't be one of those people.

**Branding and Social Media**

Every HU-related social media account, either for good or bad, is part of the Huntington University brand. In order to keep that brand strong, please make sure that every element of your social media account adheres to the [Huntington University Brand Guide](#).

---

HUNTINGTON UNIVERSITY  
SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY AGREEMENT

I \_\_\_\_\_ (printed name) have read and understand the  
Huntington University Social Media Policy.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date