

SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

For Columbia SPS Programs

Social media is a constantly evolving landscape—fast-paced, ever-changing, and sometimes overwhelming. This document is intended to provide you with a map to help you plot a successful social media plan for your program.

1

Social Media 101



Social media serves to connect.

People use social media to discover new information. That can be serious (looking for news, events, professional relationships), or it can be informal (browsing social media in search of entertainment, joy, and distraction).

Each program's social media accounts are representations of Columbia University's public image.

As befits a premier educational institution, our social media content should provide educational services, attract applicants, support alumni, and promote events.

It is difficult to create content that performs well across all platforms.

Each platform has a different purpose, and is best suited for different types of content.

Each platform has a different purpose and is best suited for its own type of content

Failure to abide by these unwritten rules can result in your content being poorly distributed and can prevent your audience from engaging with it.

Quality over quantity.

While consistent posting is important, it is more important that what you are posting is well-written and engaging and provides value.

2

Need to Know



Post consistently.

At least once a week.

Tag people or other entities.

If you are tagging individuals, it is a good idea to let them know that you are doing this.

Always use an image.

If your link does not auto-populate with an image, please insert an image (photo or graphic) that is as hi-res as possible, engaging, and related to the content. When you use an image, please remember to add ALT TEXT. This is for accessibility, and we are legally bound to ensuring that our content is accessible.

Diversify your types of posts.

Post about events, thought-leadership, student trips, etc.

You can use hashtags on LinkedIn.

Here's a folder that includes potential LinkedIn hashtags and tips on how to use them.

Do not use hashtags on Instagram.

Hashtags have been disabled on Instagram.

Feel free to engage with your friendly commentators on the post.

Please only do this if the comment is positive.

NEVER engage with negative comments on your social media.

Individual Platform Tips

Channel	Purpose	Audience	Leveraging Growth	Priority
LinkedIn Post example	Showcases institutional achievements, examples of academic excellence, and faculty accomplishments.	Prospective students, alumni, current students, faculty, industry professionals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take advantage of everyone's personal network. Tag any profiles listed in your caption. When you welcome your new students, ask them to follow your LinkedIn account. When they graduate, ask them to list your program as a school they have graduated from. 	ESSENTIAL LinkedIn is the best place for connecting with current and prospective students, alumni, faculty, and other interested parties.
Instagram Post example	Instagram is the go-to for visually engaging, "fun" content. It's most effective for image-heavy posts and short-form videos that highlight vibrant aspects of student life.	Prospective students, younger alumni, and anyone interested in seeing what the program looks like.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share candid photos of events and student projects. Consider "collaborating" with another person or entity for some posts. Generally, grid posts should be shared on Instagram Stories. Many users only go to Stories for their updates. 	RECOMMENDED Instagram is one of the best platforms for engaging with your audience. Many will search for your program's Instagram grid and Instagram Stories to get an inside look into your program.
Threads Post example	Threads is a growing Meta platform and is best for quick, timely updates and for promoting calls to action.	Faculty, students, staff. Many faculty have seen success sharing their own thoughts on Threads.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be open about the work that your program is doing. Share research and promote alumni. Can share Instagram or Facebook posts on Threads. 	OPTIONAL No need to open a new account, but it is growing. Let's see what happens to it in 2026.
Facebook	Broad appeal and audience that is suitable for sharing general University updates.	Facebook is still widely used globally but has lost traction with younger audiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure your page is registered as a page, not a profile. Having a descriptive landing page with links to the program site is important. You might consider keeping comments turned off since trolls abound on Facebook. 	OPTIONAL No need to open a new account if you are not using it.
X	Users post short messages to share updates, news, and opinions and to engage with others.	A younger audience that skews male.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is important to be very vigilant on this channel. You might see growth, but it is a source of negative comments. 	OPTIONAL If you already have a channel, it is okay to keep it. However, it can also be a source of information overload, negative publicity, and even online harassment.
TikTok	It's a platform for creating, sharing, and discovering short-form videos. It allows users to express themselves creatively.	n/a	n/a	NOT RECOMMENDED While TikTok is one of the biggest social media platforms, it requires diligently posting high-quality original content. It is very difficult to maintain.

Recommended Image Dimensions (as of November 2025)

Content Type	LinkedIn	Instagram	X/Threads	Facebook
Profile picture	400 x 400	320 x 320	400 x 400	170 x 170
Landscape post	1200 x 644	1080 x 566	1040 x 512	1200 x 630
Portrait post	1920 x 1080	1080 x 1350	630 x 1200	n/a
Story post	n/a	1080 x 1920	1080 x 1920	1080 x 1920
Square post	1080 x 1080	1080 x 1080	1200 x 1200	n/a
Preferred size	Any	1080 x 1350	Any	Any

Dimensions measured in pixels. Platforms often change the dimension sizes for images. **For the most up-to-date image sizes, please refer to this page.**
 Please note that these tips are not definitive and are subject to change.