

Social media is an effective way to find out about events and news at University of Western States (UWS). The university recognizes the importance of social media as a means of connecting, engaging and communicating with people all over the world. UWS is committed to being innovative and forward-thinking in social media approaches.

Online platforms have a significant impact on organizational and professional reputations because they blur the lines between personal and institutional voices. UWS has created the following guidelines to clarify how best to enhance and protect the integrity of the university when participating online as a representative of UWS. If you are a UWS community member, regardless of the profile you are using, it is important to be cognizant of the reputation of the university when participating online. These best practices also help ensure that online media communications done in the name of UWS reflect respect for the fundamental principles and core values of the university.

Best Practices for Personal and UWS-Affiliated Social Media Profiles

Think Twice Before Posting: Privacy does not exist in the world of social media. If the content of a message would not be acceptable for face-to-face conversation, over the telephone, or in another medium, it will not be acceptable for a social networking site. Ask the question, "Would I want to see this message published in the newspaper or posted on a billboard tomorrow or 10 years from now?" Questions regarding the appropriateness of messages should be direct to the UWS marketing and communications department.

Protect Your Identity: Do not provide personal information while posting to social media sites. Do not list home addresses or telephone numbers.

Be Considerate and Respectful in Engagement: Content on social media often encourages comments or discussions of opposing ideas. Responses to such comments must be respectful, professional and truthful. Refrain from using ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenities, or engaging in any conduct that would not be acceptable in the UWS community.

Follow Copyright Laws: Attribute appropriate credit for non-original material.

Respect Work and Study Commitments: Remember that social networking activities are personal and should be done on your own time unless you are promoting UWS or have been assigned to perform an online activity related to UWS.

Be Accurate: Do not post inaccurate content. If an error is made, provide an immediate correction.

Photography: Written consent must be obtained from any people identifiable in posted photographs. Do not use copyrighted photos in any communications without required permission. Questions regarding consent releases should be directed to the UWS marketing and communications department.

Maintain Confidentiality: UWS students, staff and faculty are expected to maintain professional conduct in communications regarding the university, and to comply with all confidentiality laws, regulations and policies. Do not post personally identifiable information or photos about patients on social media. Make sure if you are posting about other students, they are aware and approve. If you publish online content about UWS, you are encouraged to talk about your good work and make meaningful connections with your readers, but you must accomplish this while respecting the privacy and confidentiality of partners, patients and communities.

UWS Best Practices for Social Media Use

Best Practices for Personal Social Accounts

Privacy: You are able to adjust privacy settings on social media and decide exactly how much of your information should be available to the public or to people you connect with online on various platforms. It is important that you do the research to understand and set privacy settings to ensure your online presence is showcasing only the best things about you as a representative of UWS.

Use Disclaimers and Be Transparent on Your Personal Pages: For UWS constituents posting on a personal page, clearly identify that any views and opinions expressed are of the sender and not the university.

Engage with Social Media Platforms at UWS

UWS has an audience of students, employees, trustees, parents, alumni and friends that keep in touch via social media. If you would like, tell communications@uws.edu about your personal or business blog and social media accounts so we can help expand your reach by sharing posts and collaborating. UWS does not monitor online sites. The university seeks to aggregate constituent stories and highlight UWS voices.

Facebook:

On Facebook, search University of Western States and “like” the page to receive updates and recent news.

- Participate in the Conversation: Join the conversation on the UWS page. Post thoughts and ideas directly on the UWS Facebook wall by tagging UWS or visiting the wall and posting directly to it.
- Share Your Content: Tag UWS or post content directly to the UWS Facebook wall to share stories that pertain to the university, or contact the marketing and communications department for assistance in posting content. UWS reserves the right to reject content deemed inappropriate or irrelevant.

Twitter:

Connect with UWS at the handle @UWS_news. You can also find people or follow causes by using the search feature on the platform. Twitter moves very quickly so check in frequently. Content may be designated as private. Follow and retweet UWS content. Messages on Twitter, known as “tweets,” are limited to 140 characters, including punctuation and spaces. Photos do not count toward the character limit.

- Twitter Basics: Search for @UWS_news or go directly to the URL: twitter.com/UWS_news. Click the button to “Follow” @UWS_news on Twitter.

Instagram:

Instagram is the home for visual storytelling and is a community of more than 500 million users. The platform merged with Facebook in 2012, and each time a picture is posted, it may be shared on other social media platforms. Follow @univwesternstates for more content and images. Tag photos @univwesternstates to allow the university to engage with you.

Hashtags:

Hashtags all begin with the “#” symbol and act as conversation labels on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. On these platforms, hashtags become clickable and direct the user to a stream of images or posts containing the designated hashtag. There is no official way to create a hashtag – anyone has the power to make them at any time. There are no spaces or special characters in a hashtag and any text between the “#” symbol and the first subsequent space becomes a searchable hashtag. Here is a list of hashtags to keep up with UWS:

- UWS network-related content: #UWS, #universityofwesternstates, #integratedhealthcare, #UWSlife, #TakeTheLead
- DC program: #doctorofchiropractic, #chiropractor, #chiropracticcare, #spinehealth, #doctor
- Throwback Thursday: #TBT
- Alumni news: #UWSalum
- Wellness tips: #wellnessminute, #wellnesswednesday, #wellness, #nutrition, #health, #healthymindset, #fitlifestyle, #functionalmedicine, #fitcampus, #mindfulnessmonday
- Continuing education: #academics, #highered, #education
- New student information: #welcometouws, #discover