GC Social Media Guidelines
Office of Communications & Marketing
Contents

Welcome to the World of Social Media ................................................................. 3
Social Media 101: A Preface .................................................................................. 4
The Graduate Center’s Social Media Guidelines ................................................. 6
  Guidelines for Users Representing the GC in Social Media ............................ 6
  Content & Imagery Guidelines ....................................................................... 7
Best Practices & Tips ............................................................................................. 9
Social Media Quick Start .................................................................................... 10
  Facebook .......................................................................................................... 10
  Twitter ............................................................................................................... 10
  YouTube ........................................................................................................... 12
Social Media in Action: Analytics ..................................................................... 14
The Graduate Center’s Social Media Hub ......................................................... 16
Going Forward .................................................................................................... 18
Welcome to the World of Social Media

Social media communication has become a powerful tool for sharing content and interacting with academic institutions, students, stakeholders, and scholars around the world. To help you assess the potential of social media, the Graduate Center’s Office of Communications and Marketing has provided best practices, guidelines, and other resources.

This document offers basic instructions and guidelines for using Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. If you’re new to Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, visit their websites for complete tutorials. Questions about other social media networks can be addressed to socialmedia@gc.cuny.edu. For social media pros, please skip forward to page 6 for the GC’s Social Media Guidelines.

N.B.: The Office of Communications and Marketing will serve as your social media guide, but we are not responsible for creating accounts or content on your behalf. It is the sole responsibility of your office/organization to manage your social media presence.
Social Media 101: A Preface

I. If you wish to launch one or multiple social media accounts, consider the following:

- **What is the purpose of your account?**
  Defining a mission for your social media presence is key to updating your accounts on a frequent basis and interacting with your audience.

- **Who is your target audience?**
  Identifying your audiences—from alumni, faculty, staff, and students to opinion leaders and others—will help you shape your content and select resources that will measure your success as a “social influencer.”

  - Your target audience may determine which social media network best suits your needs. For example, a Facebook account is excellent for long-form communication, while Twitter is best for immediate engagement where brevity matters between you and your followers.

- **Are you listening?**
  Monitor your online community for “thought leaders” in your subject area. What are their areas of interest? What are they discussing? To effectively expand your social media community, follow individuals whose conversations and messages are relevant to you.

- **Do you have the time?**
  It’s a challenge to keep up with online communities. Some platforms may require more attention than others, and you may need to post new information more frequently. Be sure to select a social media platform that is manageable.

  - If your primary purpose is to promote a limited amount of news, please visit the GC’s Social Hub, and ask an existing GC account to share your content with their followers. Coordinating with another organization allows the social media workload to be shared, enabling participants to achieve more than they could on their own. For example, if you are
cosponsoring an event with a GC user who is active in social media, you can ask that organization to help publicize your event on Facebook and/or Twitter.

- You can also send news to socialmedia@gc.cuny.edu. We will post your information on the GC’s Facebook and Twitter accounts if appropriate.

- If your organization intends to send out news frequently, do not become a nuisance to or spam users listed on our Social Hub. Please create and manage your own social media network(s).

II. If social media is right for you, welcome to our online community! Social media is an effective medium to promote your message and build awareness of your organization and the GC.

That said, we ask our community to follow our guidelines when representing the GC. See the following page for the current guidelines and best practices.
The Graduate Center’s Social Media Guidelines

The GC’s social media guidelines apply to accounts intended to represent official GC entities. Official accounts (i.e., administrative offices, academic programs, and other organizations at the GC) must be registered on our Social Hub. We ask that social media users representing the GC follow these guidelines:

I. Guidelines for Users Representing the GC in Social Media
   A. Uphold the GC’s mission and guiding principles.
   B. Use good judgment about content and respect privacy laws.

   - Do not post confidential or proprietary information about the GC or any of our administrators, faculty, students, or staff. There is no such thing as a private social media network. Observe all applicable federal regulations, such as FERPA, which restricts the disclosure of student information.

   C. Identify personal opinions as your own and not the GC’s on your personal social media accounts. You may not use the GC name to endorse political candidates (regardless of any connection to the GC) or promote causes, opinions, products, public figures, and/or services.

   D. On Facebook, GC pages must be “fan pages,” which users “like” rather than “friend.” See page 10 of this document.

   E. Contact the Director of Media Relations, Tanya L. Domi, if a media representative contacts faculty, staff, or students about content from your social media account(s).

   - The Office of Communications and Marketing team works closely with press to identify newsworthy initiatives and promote research by our faculty, staff, and students. We arrange press conferences and help our constituents prepare for interviews.
F. Remember that content contributed on all platforms becomes immediately searchable and shared. Search engines and other web technologies make it virtually impossible to take something back.

II. Content & Imagery Guidelines

A. Account owners—including all administrative offices, centers, institutes, or programs—who would like to incorporate an official GC logo in their social media account’s design and/or their avatar/profile image should contact comms@gc.cuny.edu.

- The GC logo may be enlarged or reduced, but may not be altered in any other way. It may not be incorporated into, or combined with, any other mark, symbol, or graphic to create a new mark without permission from the Communications office. For more info, visit our web page and see our Graphic Guidelines.

B. Non-GC imagery, such as banner, cover, header, profile, and wallpaper images, is at the discretion of the account owner(s). Participants must adhere to image copyright laws.

C. The following is applicable to all social media networks, blogs, and/or web pages when gaining permission and providing proper attribution for using or posting online material you do not own or have the rights to:

- Permission must be obtained when using online material that includes direct or paraphrased quotes, thoughts, ideas, photos, music, recordings, and/or videos. Include a link to the original material if available.

- See the GC’s Model Release Form and the Personal Consent and Release Form. These release forms are to be used whenever a person’s name, picture, portrait, and/or voice will—or may in the future—be used for advertising (e.g., publicity materials) in any forum or media. If there is a clear intent on using the name, portrait, picture, and/or voice, the release must be obtained. Keep and maintain records of releases.
D. Social media users acting on behalf of the GC must adhere to all applicable GC and CUNY policies, including without limitation to those listed on the GC Human Resources Policies and Procedures page and CUNY’s policies regarding use of computer resources, intellectual property, and IT security.

E. The GC reserves the right to remove comments that are off-topic, or that violate law or any CUNY or GC policy (including CUNY’s policy regarding use of computer resources) or the policies of the social media service.

F. In addition to the GC’s social media guidelines, all content is bound by the Terms and Community Guidelines for that service. See the following examples:

- Facebook Statement of Rights and Responsibilities
- Twitter Terms of Service
- YouTube Terms of Service and Community Guidelines
Tips & Best Practices

- Please use the **preferred** GC identification:
  - The Graduate Center, CUNY
  - The Graduate Center, City University of New York
- Diversify your content! Try to include links, and vary between written and multimedia content (e.g., images, photos, videos). See next section for more information about videos.
- Social media is all about connecting, not pushing a message. Encourage open discourse.
- GC centers, institutes, and/or programs should appoint a staff member to manage and update their social media network(s), ideally with at least one other individual, so that network(s) will not go unattended.
- Don’t SPAM your audience! Limit the number of updates to about 2–3 messages a day so as not to become a nuisance.
- If it gives you pause, then pause. If you are about to say or post something that makes you even remotely uncomfortable, take a minute to review our guidelines and best practices and think about your message. When in doubt, contact socialmedia@gc.cuny.edu.
- Always proofread!
- Try to include links to relevant GC web pages, including the home page and/or the sponsoring center, institute, or program’s home page.
- Use logical, consistent, and easily searched usernames and/or page names for your social media network(s).
- If your content is inaccurate, correct it, and disclose the correction to your fans, followers, and so on.
- Use resources to analyze your social engagement. For more information, see page 14 of this document.
Social Media Quick Start

Don’t know your way around Facebook, YouTube, or Twitter? Use these quick start guides for breakdowns of each network:

I. Facebook
   A. Finding Help
      • If you’re unsure of how to navigate Facebook, embed videos, or share images, visit their Help Center.
      • Can’t find what you’re looking for on Facebook? Be sure to use Google or YouTube for step-by-step instructions, and search for “Facebook tutorial” and the current year for up-to-date guides.
   
   B. Identify a Custom URL and Page Name
      • On Facebook, you can only change your page name once! Keep your page name concise and clear, so that it’s easy to remember.
      • For further instructions, see Facebook.
   
   C. Fan Pages
      • Fan pages allow entities such as academic institutions, businesses, public figures, and others to broadcast information to individuals who would like to connect with them by becoming a “fan.” When you become a fan of a page, you will receive updates about that page.
      • Facebook does not allow organizations to create personal profiles that enable the “Friend Request” function. Personal profiles are for individual, noncommercial use.

II. Twitter
   A. Tweeting Basics
      • On Twitter, less is always more. Rather than using all 140 characters—not words—aim for 125 characters or fewer.
• By using fewer characters, you’ll give your followers the opportunity to add their own content in the form of a “Modified Tweet” (MT) or “Via.” That way, your news is amplified by your followers. See our example below.

Original tweet by @GradCenterNews:

@GradCenterNews: “Prof. David Nasaw reviews Michael Fullilove’s ‘Rendezvous With Destiny’ in #NYT: http://nyti.ms/18MPV0s”

An MT by @GCScrivener:

@GCScrivener: “MT David Nasaw is in #NYT! Share the news! Via @GradCenterNews http://nyti.ms/18MPV0s.”

B. Followers

• Followers are people who receive your tweets. Someone who follows you will show up in your followers list and see your tweets, and you can send him or her direct messages.
• In your tweet, be sure to add followers who might be interested in your message.

C. Twitter Parlance You Should Know

• @ (Username): When referring to another individual on Twitter, you can link to her or his profile in your tweet by prefacing the username with the @ symbol. A Twitter username is often referred to as a “handle.”
• RT: RT stands for Retweet. Retweets are essentially a copy/paste of someone’s tweet that you think is interesting. The proper way to retweet, for example, would be to preface a tweet with RT.
• MT: MT stands for Modified Tweet. This means that someone has retweeted someone else’s tweet, but has modified it with a comment or note that does not appear in the original tweet.
• Via: “Via” functions like an MT, wherein a user may add information to the initial tweet and then attribute that tweet to its original author, as shown above.
• **Mention**: Users may link you in their tweets. This is called a “mention.” A mention is indicated by the @ symbol. For example, @GCScrivener was mentioned by @GradCenterNews in the following tweet:

@GradCenterNews: “Thanks for the follow @GCScrivener.”

• **Favorite**: A “Favorite” on Twitter refers to topics or subjects that users are most interested in.

• **#**: On Twitter, the pound sign (#) is known as a hashtag. It prefaces terms that are referring to an event, idea, object, place, or trend.

• **DM**: DM stands for Direct Message, which is a private message sent from one Twitter user to another.

• **Twittersphere/Twitterverse**: Refers to the culture and world of Twitter.

• **#FollowFriday or #FF**: Used in tweets on Fridays, #FF suggests people who are interesting to follow on Twitter.

**D. More on Hashtags**

- To learn more about the uses of hashtags, visit Twitter’s [Wiki page](https://t.co/hashtag) on hashtag best practices.

**III. YouTube**

**A. Joining the GC’s YouTube Channel**

- When you share content with the GC’s [channel](https://www.youtube.com/c/GraduateCenter), you’ll have access not only to our subscriber base but also to the [YouTube EDU](https://www.youtube.com/edu) community, of which the GC is a member.

- If you have videos that you would like to share on our channel, contact [socialmedia@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:socialmedia@gc.cuny.edu). Appropriate content will be considered, and we’ll create a YouTube playlist on your behalf.
B. Playlists
- On YouTube, playlists make it easy for viewers to watch videos by topic with minimal effort. These lists organize videos by type or theme and can be featured on the GC’s main channel page.
- The GC creates playlists for programs, centers, and institutes to disseminate their GC-related content.
- GC playlists take the pressure off of programs, centers, and institutes to create and manage their own channels. For an example, see the Leon Levy Center for Biography’s playlist on the GC channel.

C. More on Playlists
- For an overview of playlist uses, see YouTube’s Programming Center.

D. Tagging
- Tags are used to identify a relationship between your video and a specific keyword. When users type keywords related to your tags, your video will appear in their search results. For example, if your video was about the GC’s Anthropology Ph.D. program, be sure to tag “Anthropology,” so the video appears in search results for anthropology.
Social Media in Action: Analytics

How do you know if your social media efforts are paying off? Social media isn’t just about generating content—it’s also about what you can learn from your online community. To measure and track your interactions and your audience’s interests, here are some free and user-friendly resources that will help you make the most of your social media experience:

- **Bitly** is an easy and fun way to save, share, and discover links from around the web, and track how many times your link is clicked on. Bitly links are called bitmarks, and you can use Bitly to remember, shorten, and collect data on each bitmark.
- **Buffer** is an app that manages multiple Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn accounts, with the ability to set a tweeting or updating schedule unique to each. Buffer includes detailed analytics and can “buffer” messages so that they’re published when the majority of your community is online.
- **Facebook Insights** is a built-in tool that provides Facebook page users with data about their content. This service helps you understand and analyze trends within user demographics and growth.
- **Followerwonk** will allow you to dig deeper into Twitter analytics by targeting your community’s followers and their interests, location, and tweets. Want to find other tweeters who share your interests? Followerwonk’s “Bio Search” offers users a variety of ways to find new followers.
- **Google Alerts** sends you email updates of the latest and relevant Google results (web, news, etc.) based on your queries.
- **HootSuite** is a management system that enables you to monitor and send posts from multiple social media networks from one dashboard. HootSuite includes audience identification tools and the ability to streamline workflow, shorten URLs, and create custom reports.
- **Social Mention** is similar to Google Alerts, but instead of monitoring the whole web, it concentrates on social media networks. You can also choose to focus on particular areas, such as blogs.
- **TweetDeck** is a management system designed specifically for Twitter, enabling you to tweet and track mentions, people, and keywords from one dashboard.
- **Twtrland** visualizes social footprints to help you discover new people, understand their impact, and find better ways to connect and increase your network.

- **Twitonomy** provides detailed and visual analytics on anyone's tweets, retweets, replies, mentions, hashtags, and URLs. On Twitonomy, you can browse, search, filter, and get insights on the people you follow and those who follow you around the world. Insights can be exported to Microsoft Excel or saved as an Adobe PDF.

- **What the Trend?** is a constantly updated lexicon of trending topics or breaking news shared on Twitter and allows people across the world to explain, in a few short sentences, why a particular hashtag is interesting or important to people in real time.

*N.B.:* Analytics provide a foundation for nurturing and expanding your online community. If you want to take the next step in enhancing your web presence, consider purchasing premium analytic tools from services like HootSuite Pro, SocialBro, and others to better understand the depth of social media data.
The Graduate Center’s Social Media Hub

As of January 2014, here’s a list of GC social media users on the following networks: Facebook and Twitter. For an up-to-date list, visit our online directory. Click on an icon to navigate to each social media account. For unlisted networks, contact the desired administrative office, center, institute, or program for more information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjunct Project</th>
<th>Facebook</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Research Collaborative</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center for Advanced Study in Education</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Social History Project</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center for Media and Learning</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthropology Ph.D. Program</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art History Ph.D. Program</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiology Au.D. Degree Program</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bildner Center</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brook Center</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Career Planning</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee on Globalization and Social Change</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee for the Study of Religion</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commons In a Box</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Communications and Marketing</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composers Alliance</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science Ph.D. Program</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUNY Academic Commons</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral Students’ Council</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUNY Digital Humanities Initiative</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Ph.D. Program</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Union Studies Center</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department/Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth and Environmental Sciences Ph.D. Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Center, CUNY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Center Library</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center for Humanities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive Technology and Pedagogy Certificate Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JustPublics@365</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Arts in Liberal Studies Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg Income Study Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Segal Theatre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Eastern Studies Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mina Rees Library</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music D.M.A./Ph.D. Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Media Lab</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OpenCUNY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy Ph.D. Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center for Place, Culture and Politics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provost’s Office</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Science Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Education Ph.D. Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women in STEM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writers’ Institute</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21st Century City for All</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Going Forward

Remember that social media is a dynamic medium that brings you closer to your audience. The GC encourages authentic, respectful, and open discourse between you and your social media community.

We invite comments on GC-related social media accounts. Please direct all queries to socialmedia@gc.cuny.edu.