

University of Vermont Housing Services: Social Media Guide



University
of Vermont

University Housing and
Dining Services

A guide to posting on accounts associated with UVM Housing Services, including but not limited to: UVM Housing Services, Learning Communities, UVM Residential Engagement Council, and affiliated residential experience accounts. It is expected that professional staff, student workers, or anyone posting has read through these guidelines.

Purpose of Social Media Accounts

UVM Housing-affiliated social media accounts exist to:

- Inform students about opportunities, events, deadlines, resources, and campus life
- Build community and belonging within residential spaces
- Highlight the student experience at UVM
- Support recruitment and retention by showcasing campus culture
- Promote safe, inclusive, and welcoming environments
- Celebrate student involvement and creativity

Content should reflect the University's Common Ground Values:

- Respect
- Integrity
- Innovation
- Openness
- Justice
- Responsibility

And additional values of Housing:

- Wellness
- Sustainability
- Community engagement
- Student success
- Authenticity

General Guidelines

Appropriate Content

Posts should:

- Inform, educate, entertain, or build community
- Be appropriate for both current and prospective students and families
- Reflect positively on UVM Housing and campus life
- Highlight campus opportunities, traditions, student experiences, and resources
- Maintain accessibility and inclusivity whenever possible

Whenever possible:

- Use clear captions
- Add text descriptions of images in captions/comments
- **Use captions/subtitles on videos (Required on all videos by UVM)**
- Ensure graphics are easy to read

Prohibited Content

Do not post:

- Photos or videos depicting alcohol, drugs, smoking, vaping, or illegal substances
- Content that violates UVM policies or community standards
- Harassing, discriminatory, explicit, or offensive material
- Private student information
- Content that promotes unsafe behavior
- Political endorsements or partisan advocacy from university-affiliated accounts

If discussing civic engagement or current events:

- Remain educational and nonpartisan
- Avoid endorsing candidates, parties, or political movements
- Ensure balanced and university-appropriate messaging

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Usage

- AI may support content development, including generating ideas, refining captions, and maintaining a professional tone in responses. It must **not** replace student artistry, be used to create social graphics, appear in marketing materials, or be used for **voice-overs** in any university-affiliated content.

Do Not Use AI For:

- **Student artistry** – replacing original student design, illustration, photography, or creative work
- **Social graphics** – creating posts, templates, icons, or branded visuals
- **Marketing materials** – promotional content, campaigns, or recruitment messaging
- **Voice-overs** - narration, audio scripts, or spoken content representing the university

Branding & Tone

The branding goal of these accounts is to reflect the University of Vermont and University Housing and Dining Services. It is not aimed to reflect any individuals.

Account Branding

- Keep profile photo as up-to-date logo
- Regularly check the links in your bio to make sure they are up to date

Accounts should maintain a tone that is:

- Friendly
- Student-centered
- Inclusive
- Professional
- Authentic
- Positive and community-oriented

Avoid:

- Excessive sarcasm
- Bullying-style humor
- Posting trends that may quickly become inappropriate or controversial
- Overly corporate or overly informal language

Humor and trends are encouraged when:

- They align with UVM values
- They are accessible and understandable
- They do not target or embarrass individuals or groups

Student Privacy & Consent

Before posting identifiable students:

- Obtain verbal consent when possible
- Respect requests to remove photos or videos
- Avoid posting students in vulnerable or embarrassing situations

Do not:

- Tag students' personal accounts
- Share room numbers, schedules, student IDs, or personal information
- Reveal private conduct or disciplinary matters

Account Management Expectations

Professional Staff

Who can be logged in?

- The only staff who should be actively participating and post on any social media associated with UVM LCS are program directors, program coordinator, program assistants, ADs for RLAE, or members of UHDS Strategic Communications Teams . We know there are faculty associate who are involved in the LC, but they cannot be involved in the marketing of the LC. They can suggest marketing practices for the course they teach.

Professional staff overseeing accounts should:

- Educate student workers before granting account access
- Review content regularly
- Monitor comments and messages
- Remove inappropriate content when necessary
- Maintain account security and password management
- Ensure continuity during staff transitions

For Learning Community professional staff specifically:

- Do not follow student accounts from UVM accounts
- Avoid direct messaging students except for official operational purposes (ex: giveaway coordination or responding to direct questions)
- Maintain appropriate staff-student boundaries online

Student Staff & Student Contributors

Student employees contributing to accounts should:

- Read through this guideline with their supervisors
- Represent UVM professionally
- Follow all university social media expectations
- Submit content for review when required
- Avoid posting impulsively or emotionally
- Be mindful that university accounts represent the institution, not individual opinions
- Log out at the end of your employment term (e.g., Fall 2026 to Spring 2027, log out May 2027)

Student staff should not:

- Engage in online arguments from university accounts
- Share confidential information
- Post inappropriate jokes, trends, or memes
- Use university accounts for personal promotion

Content Best Practices

Recommended Content Types

Strong content often includes:

- Event promotion
- Residence hall life
- Campus traditions
- Wellness tips
- Study support
- Move-in/move-out guidance
- Student spotlights
- Behind-the-scenes content
- Sustainability initiatives
- Recreation and outdoor activities
- Arts and creativity
- Campus partnerships
- Resource reminders
- Seasonal content

Engagement Tips

Successful posts often:

- Use high-quality photos and videos
- Include students actively participating
- Use concise captions
- Include calls to action
- Utilize Instagram Stories and Reels strategically
- Follow current trends appropriately
- Post consistently

Avoid over posting or posting solely for engagement without purpose.

Guidelines for Student Takeovers (Including RAs)

Student takeovers should:

- Showcase authentic student experiences
- Remain professional and appropriate
- Focus on campus life, events, academics, wellness, or community

Before a takeover:

- Students should review this guide with their supervisor
- Supervisors should approve expectations and timelines

- Login access should be temporary whenever possible

During takeovers:

- Avoid filming students without permission
- Avoid excessive posting
- Do not share inappropriate/off-campus behavior
- Keep content inclusive and welcoming

Suggested takeover topics:

- “Day in the Life”
- Move-in experiences
- Campus events
- Study routines
- Dining hall favorites
- Wellness activities
- Outdoor adventures
- Residence hall traditions

UVM Residential Engagement Council Specific Guidelines

Content for UVM REC should:

- Promote residential engagement and community involvement
- Highlight events, traditions, and student participation within residential communities
- Encourage inclusive and welcoming campus experiences
- Showcase student leadership, creativity, collaboration, and community spirit
- Build excitement around programming and campus involvement opportunities

REC content should prioritize:

- Fun and community-building
- Inclusivity and accessibility
- Student connection and belonging
- Positive residential experiences
- Creativity and engagement

Avoid:

- Posting content that excludes or embarrasses students
- Excessive inside jokes that prospective students may not understand
- Trend participation that could quickly become inappropriate or controversial
- Content focused solely on engagement metrics over meaningful communication
- Unprofessional photos as Instagram Posts

Recommended content includes:

Because REC accounts are highly student-facing and engagement-oriented, it is especially important to balance:

- Trendy and fun content with professionalism and university representation at the forefront of the video

Student voice and creativity are encouraged, but all content should still reflect the standards and values of University of Vermont Housing and Dining Services.

Crisis & Sensitive Situations

During emergencies or sensitive campus situations:

- Follow university communication guidance
- Avoid speculation or unofficial updates
- Pause unrelated promotional content if appropriate
- Direct students to official university resources

If unsure whether content is appropriate:

- Consult a supervisor before posting

Directions from UVM Guidelines:

[UVM Policies A-Z](#)

It is expected you have reviewed and are familiar with UVM Policies.

Officially Recognized Accounts

An Officially Recognized Account is any social media account run by an official university unit, office, department, administrative official, etc., in support of the business function or needs of that unit. Typically, these accounts include the names of both “University of Vermont” or “UVM” and the applicable unit.

Social media accounts that do not meet the definition of an Officially Recognized Account are not sponsored by the university, and the university is not responsible for the content they share. This includes social media accounts administered by students on behalf of recognized student organizations. Recognized student organizations that utilize social media are responsible for compliance with the Student Organization Handbook.

Community Management

At UVM, we are committed to teaching, learning, and discovery, and wish to thoughtfully engage in conversation about topics that are relevant in the world today. Social media extends traditional channels of engagement and transparency and opens a two-way conversation that can tell the University of Vermont’s story and promote university news and research. We encourage our fans and followers to post, comment, and interact with others, and expect that

remarks will be on-topic and respectful of the rights and opinions of others. Comments created on platforms by other users and not by the university do not reflect the opinions or views of the University of Vermont. We strive to make our social media community reflect UVM's values while supporting free speech protected by the First Amendment.

In its sole discretion, University of Vermont reserves the right to remove comments that:

- are off-topic
- are profane, or obscene
- encourage or support discrimination against protected classes
- are duplicate or spam
- advocate illegal activity
- are defamatory
- incite or threaten violence
- are a violation of intellectual property rights or privacy laws
- create a security or privacy risk
- seek to promote or sell products / engage in commercial solicitation
- promote political campaigns or candidates for office

Users who engage in this behavior may be blocked and prevented from engaging further with the Officially Recognized Account.

Final Reminder

University-affiliated social media accounts should create spaces that are:

- Welcoming
- Informative
- Engaging
- Accessible
- Safe
- Reflective of the UVM student experience

Every post contributes to how students, families, alumni, and prospective applicants view the UVM residential community.

**If you feel uncertain about any content, before posting, please reach out
acech@uvm.edu or max.belasco@uvm.edu**



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