Library Social Media Policy

1. Objective
   a. To establish consistent brand identity and visuals.
   b. To promote & protect IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Accessibility) values.
   c. Advise actions & interactions on social media platforms to protect the Library as an entity.
2. Definitions
   a. Social Media
      i. Public-facing accounts representing the University Library, including but not limited to 1) Instagram, 2) Facebook, 3) YouTube, & 4) LinkedIn.
   b. Confidential Information
      i. Any fact, matter, document, or file which would not be known without employment by the Library.
   c. Communications Team
      i. Comprised of the Special Assistant to the University Librarian, the Communications Coordinator, and the Programming Coordinator.
   d. To note, American University Library may be referred to as "University Library" or the "Library" throughout this policy.
3. Supplemental Documents
   a. [Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, As Amended | ADA.gov](#)
   b. [Revised 508 Standards and 255 Guidelines (access-board.gov)](#)
   c. [Social Media Guidelines Policy (american.edu)](#) (Last updated August 2015)
   d. [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 (w3.org)](#)
   e. Inclusive Comms Guide

Guidelines & Recommendations

4. Personal Account Guidelines
   a. Scope
      i. This section establishes guidelines for personal accounts on social media platforms maintained by Library employees. *Only applicable when employment or affiliation with AU, the University Library, & associated parties can be easily identified by the public.*
   b. When speaking on matters related to or responding to the above organizations, employees must state that the views expressed are their own and are not made on behalf of the organizations*.
   c. Information considered proprietary or confidential to the organization must be protected and not shared. It is highly suggested that employees do not post defamatory, derogatory, or inflammatory content.
   d. Under no circumstances should Library employees say they are speaking on behalf of or represented by the Library to external audiences, unless previously approved by the Communications Coordinator or Special Assistant to the UL.

5. Library Accounts
    a. Scope
        i. All social media and networking accounts created by Library employees that represent the University Library or associated groups, that are created using an American University email address, are considered property of the University Library.
    b. Access & Usage
        i. Log-in details for official Library social media accounts should not be shared outside the Communications Team**.
        ii. No content shall be posted to any platform without prior approval from the Communications Coordinator.
    c. Guidelines
        i. All external-facing accounts created in association with the Library should consider their messages, audience, and goals and have a uniform strategy for content development and distribution.
        ii. Pages should be kept up to date with Library resources and information and be updated as soon as possible when changes or alterations are made to the regular operating schedule of the Library.
        iii. Comments
            1. American University Library will not tolerate discrimination (including but not limited to age, sex, race, color, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, citizenship, disability, marital status, or any other legally recognized protected basis under the law). Any comments made on Library social media platforms that directly or indirectly discriminate will be removed immediately.
            2. It is recommended that responses are crafted for any relevant questions or comments, however, the Library reserves the right to use judgement in selecting the messages that are responded to.
        iv. Reposting/Sharing 3rd Party Content
            1. All content reposted or shared through Library social media pages must abide by the Social Media policy. Additionally, any content that contradicts the University Library mission, vision, or values is not to be shared through Library pages.
            2. Library accounts should not repost/share content from student-run groups, clubs, or organizations, to prevent any interpretation of favoritism or preference.

v. Associations/Partnerships
   1. Official American University Accounts
      a. Library social media pages should be following or "friends" with official American University pages and associated groups.
   2. Individual/Personal Accounts
      a. Library accounts should not follow individual or personal pages, regardless of employment status by the University.
   3. Student Organizations/Clubs
      a. It is highly suggested that Library accounts do not follow pages/accounts for student-run groups, clubs, or organizations, to prevent any interpretation of favoritism or preference.
vi. Content
   1. Any pictures or videos involving anyone who is not directly employed by the Library must sign a ==Filming Consent== form which will then be retained by the Communications Coordinator
   2. Student employees are not required to participate in content creation, however, are allowed to do so with approval from their supervisor.

d. Accessibility
   i. American University Library strives for complete ADA compliance on Library social media pages. Content is developed to be accessible and usable for all individuals, including individuals with disabilities. Whenever possible, Library content should strive to achieve greater accessibility for users but must at the minimum meet the requirements below. ==A complete list of accessibility guidelines is available in the Inclusive Communication Policy, which can be found in the "Supplemental Documents" section above.==
   ii. Inclusive Design Guidelines
      1. "Alt text" or Alternative Text
         a. Alt text should be available on every post for screen readers. Transcribe text caption and include a description of the posted photo.
      2. Closed Captions
         a. All video content should include captions in an easily readable font.
      3. Accessible Text
         a. Write captions in plain language, readers should be able to understand the caption on the first read through.

      b. Do not replace letters with asterisks (ex. Sp*ce), as this interrupts screen readers.

      c. No alternating caps, (ex. LiBRaRy), this reads as gibberish for screen readers.

4. Inclusive Language
      a. Use gender neutral terms and evaluate captions for assumptions and limited points of view in the language.

5. Accessible Visuals/Graphics
      a. Avoid placing text on a detailed background or above an image which makes the text harder to read.

      b. Don't add excessive text to images, if a large block of text is necessary it should be placed in the caption.

      c. Avoid animated images or videos with flashing or excessive movement. If content flashes more than three times per second, or switches between clips at the same rate, it is a potential hazard for those susceptible to seizures and should be avoided.

      d. Avoid conveying message through color. For example, making good things green and bad things red wouldn't make any sense to someone who is color blindness.

      e. Colors used together in images should have a high contrast (recommended ratio of 4.5 to 1 per the *Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCGA)*).

6. Emoticons / "Emojis"
      a. Do not use emojis as bullet points, emojis are fully read aloud by screen readers and will disrupt the flow of text if used in this manner.

      b. Avoid placing emojis in the middle of a sentence as it disrupts screen readers. As a general rule, avoid using more than three emojis in a post.

*Organizations defined as American University, the University Library, and any other associated entities.

**The Communications Team refers to the Special Assistant to the University Librarian, the Communications Coordinator, and the Programming Coordinator

Need to input