

## SVA Social Media Guidelines and Best Practices 2017

**Cater content to each platform’s audience:** Content performs differently across platforms. For example, many people tend to use their Facebook page as a newsfeed, so that’s a good place to share stories about accomplishments, awards, etc., whereas Twitter is also newsy but more conversational and interactive, and Instagram and Tumblr are more visually driven (photos, illustrations, videos, etc.). Also, when choosing content to share, keep in mind that the average user-age on Facebook and Twitter tends to be a little older (graduate students, alumni, and parents), while on Instagram and Tumblr it skews younger (teens, prospective students).

**Be consistent:** It isn’t necessary to constantly post on social media (and we all have a different amount of time and resources to devote to it) but it is important to be consistent or people will tune out. Figure out how many posts you can share each week and set up a schedule that allows you to post them at around the same time each week. Also be consistent about the types of content you share on each platform. Is your purpose to showcase student/alumni/faculty work? Show what life is like at the College? Decide what your goals are and post content that reflects them so your audience knows what to expect when they visit your page.

**Maximize the power of hashtags:** Always include hashtags with posts on social media, especially on Instagram where the character count isn’t limited. When talking about the College, include the popular tags #schoolofvisualarts and #SVAnyc; when mentioning an individual, organization, etc. be sure to include their handle (for example, @reccasugar) so they will be notified of the post and hopefully more likely to engage and/or share the post with their audience. Also include hashtags related to topics (#photography, #illustration, etc.) and tap into larger themes/trends when possible (#throwbackthursday).

**Maintain and take full advantage of a cultural calendar:** When it’s *Star Wars* Day, find and post student/alumni/faculty work related to it; when the Oscar’s are coming up, do the same, etc. Plan and post social media content that relates to/coincides with current cultural events in order to reach a larger audience.

**Don’t just promote, be a valuable contributor:** While it’s OK to promote events and to highlight the accomplishments of SVA students, alumni, faculty members and the College in general, remember that social media is a conversation. Engage with your followers, add positive and constructive insights to discussions, and post relevant articles/topics.

**Respect copyright:** When posting, be mindful of the copyright and intellectual property rights of others and of the College. Upload only images that you have been given permission to use and always credit the source, either by name or our social media handle. The Electronic Code of Conduct as described in the SVA Administrative Handbook governs all activities on social media.

**Think before you post:** Content shared on social media is public and may live online forever. Never write or reply if you are in a heightened emotional state. Ask yourself: Does this reflect well on the College and further the mission of SVA? Is what I'm posting something I would say to a visitor on campus face-to-face? Remember that social media posts can be seen by anyone, including prospective students, current students, colleagues, and peers.

**Maintain confidentiality:** Do not post personal information about students, alumni or employees, such as a person's age, hometown or marital status. A student or alumnus' academic record—including grades and GPA—is confidential. Refer to the College handbook for policies and federal law (FERPA).

**Address questions and concerns:** Keep an eye on what people are saying about you/your department and respond to them. If someone has a question, concern or complaint about something you might be able to help out with, take the opportunity to do so. It's generally not productive to respond to opinions, only to incorrect information.

**Friend/Follow/Like other SVA social media pages and posts:** There are a lot of us, so let's help each other out! And there are many SVA faculty members and alumni with large social media followings. Search for them, follow them, tag them in posts and engage with them. A good place to start for a list of who to look for is here <http://www.sva.edu/alumni/noteworthy-alumni>. The more we share each other's content, the more people we'll reach and the faster we'll build our online communities.

*Please direct any and all social media related questions to Ken Switzer, assistant director of digital content and social media, [kswitzer@sva.edu](mailto:kswitzer@sva.edu), 212.592.2042.*