

INTRODUCTION

As a social media account administrator for Lenoir-Rhyne University, you accept the responsibility to maintain a professional digital presence. All posts should represent institutional values and never showcase personal beliefs or ideas.

Lenoir-Rhyne's social media accounts are consistent with the University's core values. The brand can be reinforced by promoting the University's core values of Excellence, Integrity, Care, and Curiosity. Posts, shares, and comments will be made by appropriate administrators who have a clear understanding of the LRU social media policies.

SOCIAL MEDIA STATEMENT

At Lenoir-Rhyne University, we encourage thoughtful and insightful conversation from students, faculty, staff, family, alumni, and the community. We will delete comments that contain abusive, vulgar, offensive, threatening or harassing language, personal attacks of any kind, or offensive terms that target individuals or groups.

Users who have a continued pattern of negative or disruptive behavior on Lenoir-Rhyne social media accounts may be banned from the pages and reported to the host site.

We understand that social media is a 24/7 medium; however, our moderation capabilities are not. We may not see every inappropriate comment right away, and we are trusting in our community to ignore personal attacks and negative speech or respond politely.

GENERAL SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

OTHER ACCOUNTS/SOURCES

- Cross sharing is extremely helpful for building followers and engagement.
- When possible, tag or share the posts of other institutional accounts (when appropriate).
- Avoid tagging individuals/personal accounts in posts. Certain situations may be appropriate (i.e. prospective students sharing acceptance letter, social media contest winners). Linking to personal social media accounts can be a risk, as we can not manage what they are posting.

TIMES & DATES

- For times, use am and pm (lowercase, no periods). 3 pm, 10 am.
- Write out full words for days of the week (Monday, Tuesday), unless characters do not allow. In which case, they may be shorted (Mon., Tues.).
- Months can also be abbreviated (Jan., Feb.) for space.
- June 1 may also be abbreviated to 6/1 to accommodate for characters.

WORD CHOICE/CONTEXT

- All LRU accounts should maintain professionalism and stray from casual tones.
 Correct Example: Have you registered for our graduate open house? Admission counselors will be in attendance to answer questions about the application process.
 Incorrect Example: Let’s hang out tomorrow for food and drinks! Our favorite people are ready to help you enroll. It’s as easy as pie!
- Always assume the average user is not familiar with specific campus terms. Provide additional context.
 Correct Example: Join us for the 3rd Annual LRU 5K on our Hickory Campus.
 Incorrect Example: The 5K is on Saturday.
- The LRU voice must be consistent across the board and match official terminology.

A few specific examples:

YES	NO
Student-Athlete	Athlete
Cromer Center	Cromer
Residence Halls	Dorms
Asheville Center	Asheville Campus

PUNCTUATION GUIDELINES

- Always proofread posts to refrain from typos, inaccurate information, or broken links.
- Avoid using exclamation points. They may be used in rare instances, depending upon scenario.
- Ellipsis (three periods, no spaces) may be used to show when part of the text has been omitted (i.e. shortened quotes or an attempt to signal suspense).
- Em dashes may be used to set off various parts of a sentence.
- Colons are encouraged when adding URLs at the end of copy
 Example: Learn more about graduate studies: lr.edu/graduate.

NETWORK SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- If URLs do not have a unique redirect, shorten the link using bitly.com.
- Use ampersand (&) in replace of “and” to save characters, when necessary.
- Avoid using 3+ hashtags in a single post.
- Review all articles before sharing or retweeting.
- Use line breaks if characters count allows.
- If you are using Gifs within a post, please only use references you know, so it will not be mistaken or link to an inappropriate source. The same is true for viral trends, such as memes.

- University-level accounts are often event promoters. The volume of university-affiliated events greatly exceeds best practices for posting on social media. That's why university-level social media accounts only promote signature events.
- Do not post selfies or other content that would be more appropriate on a personal account. Think about how your post reflects the institution prior to posting.
- Only create posts that have an LRU connection. If there is no association or tie to LRU, then do not post.
- Avoid multiple live sessions on the same day, unless they are announced and coordinated in advance.

TIMING & RESPONSE TO USER COMMENTS

When engaging on accounts that represent the University, you must consider the time. Be aware of timely events and the presence they may have when planning your posts. You should monitor conversations and provide information for those who need assistance by responding accordingly and in a timely manner. If you are unsure of how to respond to any user questions, you may refer to lr.edu or direct the user to someone who can help.

It is also important to consider “after-hours” when liking or commenting on other accounts. If you happen to see a post late at night, think about waiting until the next morning before liking or responding. However, if there is a particular post or response that is related to emergency & crisis communication, the time of day may be ignored.

Please reference our **Social Media Statement** for a detailed description about engagement on LRU posts.

EMERGENCY & CRISIS COMMUNICATION

All information regarding crisis communication will be posted on the University’s official accounts. Additional information will be posted at lr.edu/emergencyandsafety.

You are encouraged to share emergency information posted from the main University accounts on your own channels. Sharing the posts of official accounts creates a more direct message to users and eliminates the confusion of many accounts attempting to pass along the same information.

Never. Do not post University or departmental news on a social media site unless preapproved by the Office of Marketing & Communications. Examples of this may include announcements of new Head Football Coach, employee resignations, or legal issues.

COMMON URLs - REDIRECTING FOLLOWERS TO WEBSITE:

lr.edu

lr.edu/visit

lr.edu/graduate

lr.edu/apply

lr.edu/gradapply

lr.edu/publicevents

lr.edu/AVLevents

lr.edu/friendsofLR

lr.edu/news

*If you are unsure if a webpage has a unique URL, please reach out to Leslie Ellis at leslie.ellis@lr.edu.

Example:

Correct - Visit lr.edu/friendsofLR to learn more about our community partners.

Incorrect - Click this link for discounts: <https://www.lr.edu/facultystaff/discounts>.

REGULARLY USED #HASHTAGS:

GENERAL

#WeAreLR

#LRViews - Used to showcase the beauty of campus in posts.

#FriendsOfLR - Visit lr.edu/friendsofLR for the complete list of Friends of LR partners.

#LRUGOGRAD - Commencement

ADMISSION

#LRSaidYes

#ChooseLR

#LRBound

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES/BEST PRACTICES

→ **Think twice before posting.** It is important to know that whatever you post is a direct reflection of the institution. If you find yourself second guessing a post, then it is probably not appropriate to be posting. If you have any additional concerns, ask a supervisor for input or you can reach out to the Office of Marketing and Communications.

→ **Be accurate and factual.** Any information you send out is permanent. Posts and comments may be deleted, but a digital footprint has already occurred. It is vital to ensure that information you send out and share is accurate.

→ **Establish a presence.** Social media can often turn into a full-time job. The best accounts are ones that are posting, sharing, and commenting regularly.

→ **Understand your audience.** Keeping the audience in mind when posting content to social media is a major key to generating traffic on your accounts. Social media is often a recruiting tool for LRU. As a university, our core audience can range from current students and alumni to prospective students, parents, and the Hickory community. However, there is a clear understanding that anyone can view our content at any time.

→ **Show respect.** People may become very opinionated while expressing their viewpoints on social media. While some comments from followers may be positive and show encouragement, others may spark discussion for opposing ideas. Responses to a user's comments should be carefully considered, as they reflect the institutional voice.

→ **Push users to the institutional website and accounts.** Always drive your audience to additional initiatives of the institution. This can be done by sharing links and directing people back to specific web addresses within the lr.edu framework.

CONCLUSION

Social media is an opportunity to bring our digital storytelling to an audience beyond those we normally interact with. Our social media channels should be consistent with digital properties in voice, tone, look, and message. Collaboration with the Office of Marketing & Communication is essential to making sure we represent LRU in a positive light.

Any further questions, feedback, or setting up a training for social media on campus can be directed to digital.team@lr.edu.