



NORTH CAROLINA AGRICULTURAL  
AND TECHNICAL STATE UNIVERSITY



2012

**Social Media Guidelines**

**North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University**  
**Office of University Relations**  
**GUIDELINES FOR USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

This is the complete guide for all North Carolina A&T State University employees who manage social network accounts in an official capacity on behalf of the university. It will also benefit students, faculty and staff who have taken on an unofficial role in the university's online presence. A majority of the impact, positive and negative, comes from people who stand in official and unofficial capacities and their communication about the university's brand.

**Be responsible**

As representatives of N.C. A&T, you are charged with being more cognizant than the average user of the information you post on the university's accounts and your own. The line between work and personal space can become blurred in the world of social media. There are real consequences for information communicated online just as there are consequences for inappropriate conduct in an office, in a meeting and at official university events. We encourage all users of social media to act responsibly. When in doubt, do not publish.

**Establish a voice**

Communicate with your respective audience in a genuine voice. When promoting an event, an action or a specific product (your school, college or division), be clear with your audience about your intent and relationship to the university. The key to social media is having a two-way conversation with the audience in which the audience feels like they are being heard. Remember, it's even more valuable in an online setting to be honest and have integrity. It is best practice to only participate in those conversations in which you have a genuine interest.

**Get to know your audience**

There is a diverse collection of groups, organizations and individuals who need to be addressed on these various mediums. Talk back to them when they talk to you. Ask questions, take polls and establish some kind of relationship. The audience is more apt to respond if they know they are engaging with someone who is genuinely interested in them.

**Think before you post**

A lot of mistakes are made when trying to post quickly. Think twice before you post. Always take the extra second to self-edit. Check spellings and context. In the event that mistakes make it through, acknowledge the mistake and correct it as soon as possible.

## **Give credit where it's due**

Make sure to always give credit when using pictures or information from another source. Never post copyrighted information without permission. It is better to repost or ReTweet the information from the original source than to pull it and repost from your respective account.

## **Add to the conversation**

The purpose for social media is to serve as a resource for your audience and for your audience to be a resource to you. Give them accurate information directly from you rather than having it funneled through another source.

## **Emergency/Crisis Communication**

The @ncatsuaggies Twitter feed is the official social channel for deploying messages about emergencies or crises. In the event of an emergency, all university-level accounts are to RT or repost a verbatim copy of the specific language from that account.

## **Link back**

All university-level accounts should link back to the university's website, be it the home page or the specific school, college, division or organization's landing page. Make sure that all university-level accounts can be recognized as such.

## **Help us monitor & report violations**

Please monitor social accounts daily for comments deemed discriminatory, abusive, profane, violent, obscene, spam, that advocate illegal activity, contain falsehoods or are wildly off-topic, duplicative, or that libel, incite, threaten or make ad hominem attacks on students, employees, guests or other individuals. Messages or comments selling products or promoting commercial, political or other ventures are also deemed inappropriate for university-level accounts. If you see violations or questionable posts, contact the Office of University Relations at (336) 256-0863 or [socialmedia@ncat.edu](mailto:socialmedia@ncat.edu).

## **Learn more**

To learn more about social media strategies and best practices and social media terminology, visit the web sites below:

[Social Media Today](#)

[facebook](#)

[Use Grey Matter](#)

[Twitter](#)