Follow Us: A Social Media Discussion
from *In Their Territory:*
Best Practices of Social Media Use in the College Admission Process

Communication Team Plan for College/University Office of Admission

Effective Admission Social Media Communication Plan
- Planned communication content timeline
- Frequency plan
- Consistent layout/design for multiple platforms
- Addressing negativity
  – Ethics conversation
- Time
  – Posting
  – Monitoring
  – Conversing with audience
  – Moderation is key
- Multiple authors
  – Expand to student voices? Faculty?
- Marketing social media when content is prepared
  – Via word-of-mouth, e-mail, mailings, etc.
- Amplify: social media is supplementary to traditional, proven forms of communication
  – Social media cannot be the only form of communication for any particular content until it is proven that every member of the audience (prospective students) has easy, immediate access to social media
  – Parents and guardians may not access social media in the same way or with the same frequency; be aware of the "digital divide" between students and parents/guardians as well as between different families
- Cost-effective
  – 2011-2012 study (Barnes & Lescault, 2012)
    - 570 interviewed institutions, spent 33% less on printing

Social Media Plan	Evaluation of Admission Communication Plan *(Satisfactory or Needs Improvement)*
Communication Timeline	
Frequency Plan	
Consistent Layout	
Addressing Negativity	
Posting Time	
Monitoring	
Conversing with Users	
Moderation	
Multiple Authors	
SM Marketing	
Amplification Check	*Be mindful that SM is always an amplifier, not the primary instrument*

What we do well:
- _____
- _____
- _____

What we should do more:
- _____
- _____
- _____

Food for thought:
- Cannot use students' social media to discriminate or shape the class (searching through students' social media sites)
- Larger social media plan
  - Collaboration amongst offices/departments on campus; monthly social media lunch meetings/sharing to make the college's social media consistent (branding) and to learn from each other

Research notes:
- The "Millennial" generation of students tends to be invested in social welfare and social institutions (Elam, Stratton & Gibson, 2007)
  - Promote service learning, spring break trips, etc. on Twitter and Facebook to speak to the general interests of the students with whom we work
- Use social media to help students understand the mission statement and highlight uniqueness of the college (Lewison & Hawes, 2007)

Communication Plan Goals:

Goal: _____ **Deadline:** _____ **Met?** _____

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Goal: _____ **Deadline:** _____ **Met?** _____

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