



## AAUW CALIFORNIA COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

These guidelines are meant for all AAUW California Board of Directors, Leadership Team, and Communications Committee members interested in how social media can help us deliver our message and support the overall strategic goals of the organization. Using social media is a great way to interact with members and potential members and to join the important dialogue on equity for women and girls.

This information will familiarize you with our social media philosophy, invite you to find, join, and participate in our social media presence.

Social networks such as Wikipedia, Facebook, Flickr, Instagram, YouTube, blogs, LinkedIn, and Tumblr are exciting channels for you to share knowledge, express your creativity and connect with others who share your interests. The AAUW California Communication Committee supports your participation in these and other online social media communities.

### **SETTING UP A SOCIAL MEDIA SITE FOR AAUW CALIFORNIA**

All social media sites for AAUW California, whether internally or externally hosted, must be set up and established by AAUW California Communication Committee. Staff and volunteers may not set up an AAUW California social media site without the permission and direction of AAUW California Communications Chair since it may not support the overall strategic goals of the organization.

All hosted AAUW California social media sites need to have a username and password on file with the AAUW California Communications Committee.

Personal social media sites identifying the user as an AAUW California employee or volunteer and covering AAUW California issues should seek approval of the AAUW California Communications Chair. Otherwise please make it clear to your readers that the views you express are yours alone and that they do not necessarily reflect AAUW California's views.

### **POSTING**

**Be genuine.** Determine the tone of your messaging. Let your personality show and use humor when appropriate. Try not to simply broadcast; rather, when possible, speak as an individual, to individuals. This will help grant you credibility as a trusted source.

**Stay focused.** The people and organizations that follow you on social media have certain expectations about the type of content you post and the way you engage with them. If you stray too far from your objectives, you will lose the trust and attention of our community.

**Be reliable.** Share quality content from trusted sources, and avoid amplifying erroneous messages from unreliable sources. Reliability also means posting to your social media services regularly. Frequently sharing reliable, meaningful content helps establish you as an important source of information and ideas for our community.

**Use appropriate tone.** Be playful, hip, communal, irreverent, fun, and sophisticated, among many other adjectives.

**Get social.** Above all else, social media is about conversation. Share and comment on other people's or organizations' posts to start new conversations, and join in the conversations that are occurring on your social media pages. The more you engage with your followers, the more they will understand that your priorities are their priorities, too.

#### **What should you post:**

- News and AAUW California events that may be of interest
- AAUW's and AAUW California's policy news and updates
- The latest posts from AAUW California branches that have a state-wide appeal
- Content from AAUW's Facebook or Instagram pages
- High-quality photographs/videos of AAUW or AAUW California members or events, or any images from AAUW's or AAUW California's Facebook Photo Album.
- News related to AAUW's core issues

#### **Reminders:**

- Don't tell secrets. Don't divulge or discuss proprietary information, internal documents, personal details about other people or other confidential material.
- It is better to have a few photos that have a title, description and tags rather than dozens that have no information. Event photos should tell a story rather than just people smiling at the camera.
- Make sure you do have permission to upload the photos. For branch publications in particular, it is always good to have a signed [Photo Release](#) form for adults whenever possible. In the case of a minor, a signed release must be obtained from the parent or guardian. It is advisable to avoid listing the minor's name in the photo caption for privacy reasons. The names may be given in the copy without indicating the specific child in the photo. Even when you have the required permissions, you should always be prepared to promptly take a photo down if the subject asks you to.

#### **Comments**

**Approve** comments as quickly as possible.

**Reply** to comments from your readers.

**Add a "window" to the comments.** If you get an excellent post you may wish to acknowledge the post at the bottom of the blog with a link to it.

**Ask** your readers for their comments!

**Be the first to respond to your own mistakes.** If you make an error, be up front about your mistake and correct it quickly. If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so. If someone accuses you of posting something improper (such as their copyrighted material or a defamatory comment about them), deal with it quickly - better to remove it immediately to lessen the possibility of a legal action.

#### **Negative comments**

**Addressing them.** Let them speak their piece because a negative comment becomes a powerful opportunity for our organization to answer the concern and address AAUW California beliefs and core values.

**Contacting the “Powers that Be”.** If you are in doubt what to do or would like advice, contact the Communications Committee Chair.

**Ignoring them or deleting them.** This usually isn't the best course of action. The ignored/deleted commenter could then go back to their blog and post about how AAUW California is censoring comments. This should always be a last resort.

**Don't Engage a troll** making comments on your blog/post. Kindly ask that person to refrain from unkind remarks. Feel free to delete comments and lock or delete threads if things get out of control. Don't be afraid to ban someone who constantly creates a negative environment. It's not the troll's community, it's yours.

### **Copyright, permissions and citations**

When quoting any other blog or publication, be sure to provide a web link to the original (if possible) and use quotation marks or block quotes (for longer texts). If you can't link to a publication, cite the title, author, publisher and year of publication.

If using a photograph found elsewhere on the web, you must do one of the following:

- Get permission from the original copyright holder (which may not always be same as the site displaying the image)
- Properly credited, citing the source and photographer's name.
- Use an image that is not encumbered by copyright, such as an image that is available under a creative commons license.