



FLORIDA  
AGRICULTURAL AND  
MECHANICAL  
UNIVERSITY

STYLE,  
PUBLICATION &  
MEDIA GUIDE

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## **OVERVIEW**

Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University's (FAMU) distinction is not only grounded in how the University accomplishes its mission of advancing knowledge, resolving complex issues and empowering citizens and communities, but it is also centered on how well the institution presents itself to the world.

Uniformity in style, writing, presentation and visual identity removes distractions, presents a clear message and serves to support FAMU's overall brand and reputation as a high-quality leader in higher education.

The consistent implementation of this guide illustrates the University's commitment to excellence. All messages and materials produced by FAMU, its employees and affiliates must follow the conventions of standard written English, with careful attention to spelling, grammar, punctuation and high-quality visuals.

The University's Style, Visual, Publication and Media Guide directs our branding, marketing, publications and media relations efforts. The practices and procedures outlined on the pages that follow govern how administrators, faculty, staff, students, vendors, volunteers, affiliate groups and organizations should use, communicate and promote the University's name, likeness and programs.

This guide also outlines the correct and lawful use of the University's logos/iconography, colors, images and typefaces. The writing guidelines are based on the standards established in The Associated Press (AP) Stylebook along with the best practices of the communications industry. It also incorporates standards unique to FAMU, such as specifics about how to represent the University's name on first and subsequent references.

Our guide is not intended to replace discipline-specific principles and style concerning academic papers and research documents. However, it has been developed for University-wide (including affiliates, vendors, contractors and partners) use whenever research and academic information are marketed, presented, promoted and subsequently distributed.

# **BRAND STYLE GUIDE**

## **FAMU's MOTTO, LOGOS AND SYMBOLS**

The University's official motto is "Excellence With Caring." Always use the official motto without altering or changing the wording. FAMU's logo is the heart of its visual identity and is used on all communications and marketing materials produced and approved by the Office of Communications. Using it uniformly not only supports recognition of FAMU and its distinction, but also helps the institution stand out and compete for the best students, faculty, staff and partners across the globe.

The official University logos and wordmarks are trademarks of Florida A&M University. Their purpose is to evoke a visual identity with FAMU stakeholders and audiences through a consistent and uniform presentation of the University and to reinforce the collective value of the institution.

Campus divisions, departments, offices, colleges, schools, programs, centers, institutes, student organizations/groups, vendors, contractors and affiliates/partners producing advertisements, videos, publications, visual promotions and all other marketing/informational materials that contain the University's name, graphic symbols, images or likeness must receive approval from the Office of Communications before printing, distribution or posting. Activities sponsored, co-sponsored or hosted by or at the University (and offsite), as well as its associated entities and partners, must also receive approval from the Office of Communications for the use of the University's graphic symbols, name and likeness.

The University's logos/symbols give proprietary identification to FAMU; therefore, usage is restricted to officially recognized entities (i.e. departments, divisions, colleges, schools, institutes and centers) that properly use these guidelines.

Direct support organizations (DSOs) and its members should only use the logo assigned and approved for them by the University via the Office of Communications. For example, the FAMU National Alumni Association has its own logo, approved by the University. Alumni chapters should contact the Office of Alumni Affairs to gain access and permission to use this logo. No affiliate, unit or organization may use a FAMU logo or its name without permission from the Office of Communications.

Personal, commercial or non-approved use of the official University trademarks, logos or its likeness is prohibited; this includes event posters/flyers, social media graphics, clothing, web spaces, various products, etc. Florida A&M University's symbols include the official logos and word marks covered in this guide. Individual unit logos that have not been approved or issued by the Office of Communications are not permitted.

University units or affiliates who partner with external organizations or events, including memorandums of understanding, grants and the like, must seek the Office of Communications' approval before agreeing to share or allow use of the University's logos, images or other branded items with these entities.

Florida A&M University does **NOT** approve or endorse the use of its marks in conjunction with distasteful designs or for the purpose of advertising products related to alcohol and tobacco, obscenity, illegal activities, firearms, religious or political associations, discriminatory practices, etc.

It is an infringement of the University's trademark rights to create any artwork design or visual element that could cause public confusion due to the likeness or similarity of FAMU's trademarks.

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17 U.S. Code) governs the making of photocopies or other productions of copyrighted material. The person reproducing the material is liable for infringement.

## THE SEAL

The University seal is not to be used for general branding, marketing, communications and promotional purposes. It is restricted for use on official documents, such as diplomas, transcripts, legal documents, Board of Trustees reports, resolutions and proclamations, commencement and convocation documents and official University stationery (i.e. letterhead, business cards). The seal is only released by the Office of Communications and should not be downloaded or copied for any reason. It should not appear on websites, social media, documents, images, videos, apparel or any promotional product without approval from the Office of Communications.

The presence of the seal authenticates publications as an official document from Florida A&M University. The Office of Communications must approve the use of the University's logos and seal at all times. Manipulated, edited or altered versions of the seal are unlawful.

## THE BLOCK LOGO MARK & IDENTITY SYSTEM

This is the signature/general block logo that is the official representative logo of the University.



## UNIT/GENERAL BLOCK LOGOS

This is the standalone block logo that can be used as an alternative logo for marketing and identification purposes. This logo is used by the Office of Communications and may be used when appropriate by other campus entities with approval.



This is the block logo assigned for use to all University divisions, departments and non-academic units.



This is the block logo assigned for use to all University colleges and schools.



These versions of the block logo have been developed for official use by approved colleges, schools, centers, institutes, divisions and departments that wish to designate their names in the signature. Although the official FAMU block signature is preferred, these approved logos with designation may be used. The Office of Communications uses the standalone block logo and general signature logo. Each college, school, division or department should use the block logo with their attached name. It should not be cropped, edited or altered in anyway. Color variations of the logos in approved University colors/styles are available by contacting the Office of Communications at 850-599-3413 or submitting a request via the FAMU Communications web page. Unit-assigned block logos and the Florida A&M University text logo should only be used on publications, websites, paraphernalia and promotional/marketing material as approved by the Office of Communications. The Office of Communications must approve certificates, plaques, awards and other items bearing the University's logos.

#### THE TEXT LOGO



This is the only acceptable alternate logo/text mark that may be used with permission from the Office of Communications. It may not be reconstructed or altered in any way. The Office of Communications normally approves the use of the University text logo for special occasions and may grant other official campus units permission for its use by request and review based upon the subject matter of the item being produced.

#### THE RATTLER HEAD LOGO



This is the Rattler head logo. The full body snake is no longer available to use in any form. The Rattler head is currently in use and only used by FAMU Athletics for marketing and advertising purposes. With the exception of the Office of Communications, no other University unit or affiliate is permitted to use the Rattler head logo without permission from Athletics.

For rules governing use of the logo, please review the guidelines in this document and on the Office of Communications web page.

## BRANDING RESOURCES

The following resources will be accessible to the University's campus community via the Office of Communications and its online resources and include logo files for use in print and electronic materials in various formats. They will also include approved University stock images. Please contact the Office of Communications if you require other resources not provided on this page.

## DESIGN CONDUCTOR

Internal access to University logos, graphics and photos will be provided through the Office of Communications distribution service via the Design Conductor System or additional designated software. The Office of Communications will provide access to this system.

## POWERPOINT TEMPLATES/PRESENTATIONS

If you need the University logo, images and colors in your presentation, contact the Office of Communications for an editable template. The design of the template should not be altered. This template is the preferred presentation format for all University representatives/entities. If a custom template is used and includes the FAMU name, likeness, logo or University images, the Office of Communications should approve it.

## APPROVED VENDORS

Contact the Office of Communications for a list of pre-approved vendors to use for ordering marketing/communications-related products or services.

## FAMU COLOR GUIDELINES

The official colors of Florida A&M University are orange and green. Specifically, the official orange to use on any material is Pantone Matching System number 158 (PMS 158 C). The University uses Pantone Matching System number 357 (PMS 357 C) as its official green.

The specifications above are the standards for all print and electronic materials and media. Please see the design and brand guidelines for instructions on the modified official colors and other styles for use on the University's websites.



## PRIMARY COLOR SYSTEM

### Explanation:

FAMU has two official colors: Orange and Green. These colors have become a recognizable identifier for the university.

### Usage:

Use them as the dominant color palette for all internal and external visual presentations of the university.



### PRIMARY COLOR FANG ORANGE

#### COLOR CODES

CMYK : C 2 M 66 Y 99 K 0  
Pantone : 158 C  
RGB : R 238 G 118 B 36  
Web : #ee7624



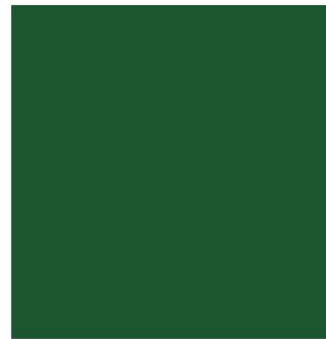
100% 80% 60% 40% 20%

#### COLOR TONES



Orange Gradient

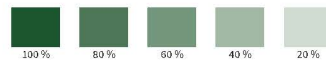
#### THE GRADIENT



### PRIMARY COLOR VENOM GREEN

#### COLOR CODES

CMYK : C 86 M 40 Y 91 K 38  
Pantone : 357 C  
RGB : R 27 G 86 B 51  
Web : #1b5633



100% 80% 60% 40% 20%

#### COLOR TONES



Green Gradient

#### THE GRADIENT

## TYPEFACES/FONTS

Florida A&M University has a special system of fonts to incorporate in every form of how FAMU communicates. Specific typeface options are recommended to ensure a consistent look and feel for both print and web.

Myriad Pro is the University's primary sans serif font.

Times New Roman and Cambria are the University's primary serif fonts.

**Gill Sans Light and Century Gothic** are the University's standard system fonts, and they should only be used when the primary sans serif and serif fonts are not available.

Myriad Pro

Times New Roman

Cambria

Gill Sans Light

Century Gothic

## SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

Florida A&M University understands how important and valuable it is to effectively communicate with FAMU audiences using social media. The University also understands that when using social media, you essentially have two identities – both as yourself and as a representative of the organization to which you are a member. The University's social media guidelines are designed to direct students, employees, alumni or affiliates in managing their online presence and interacting with a social media platform that is officially affiliated with FAMU.

A social media platform officially affiliated with FAMU is defined as:

- The official social media platforms that the University uses to interact with the public, current and potential students, faculty, staff and alumni of FAMU

- A social media platform established and maintained by an entity (i.e., college, school, unit, department, office, organization, etc.) of the University for interaction with the public, students, faculty and staff of FAMU
- A social media platform established and maintained by a student organization or similar entity of the University used for interaction with the public, students, faculty, staff and alumni of FAMU

Note: Personal social media pages that include references to the University or links to groups affiliated with the University are NOT considered “officially affiliated” for the purposes of these guidelines. However, the University name and logo must not be used for setting up personal pages. Faculty, staff and students are encouraged to follow these guidelines both when managing and interacting with the various types of social media platforms. “Managing,” in this case, means that you are creating content for the platform and administering it completely. “Interacting,” in this case, means that you are not the administrator of the platform but choose to in some way interact with it.

Florida A&M University expects each member of the community to use the institution’s information technology resources responsibly, ethically and in compliance with the Information Technology Access and Use Policy, relevant laws and all contractual obligations to third parties.

Social networks and other online media are great tools for engagement and two-way communication. These guidelines will provide the tools to speak effectively through social media on behalf of the University and its schools, colleges, departments and offices. It is also important to note that this will be a living document, which will reflect Florida A&M University’s current needs and adjust to future changes in social media.

Note: Anyone misusing the University’s name, logo or identity on social media may be subject to legal action. Therefore, existing legal remedies and University policies are enforced when FAMU employees use social media improperly. It is an infringement of the University’s rights to create any artwork design that could cause public confusion due to the likeness or similarity of FAMU’s trademarks.

### **People Covered by These Guidelines**

These guidelines are designed for FAMU staff, faculty, students and DSOs who are authorized to outreach on behalf of the University through social media channels. These include, but are not limited to, channels for schools, colleges, departments, programs and offices at FAMU. Social media channels can include blogs, wikis, portals, social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube and LinkedIn, virtual worlds and other media yet to be developed in a dynamic communications field that uses the University’s name and likeness.

These guidelines only apply to those individuals when they are posting on such official sites and/or when they otherwise speak as an authorized representative of the University, including all employees, students, affiliates or contractors. It does not apply to other social media

communications and postings that such individuals may make on personal social media sites so long as such communications do not indicate that the individual is representing or speaking on behalf of FAMU.

### **Reasons for These Guidelines**

This policy is to provide authorized representatives of the University requirements for using social media to communicate about FAMU and to clarify work-related and personal uses of social media.

These guidelines are not intended to limit or restrict academic freedom or freedom of speech.

### **Authorized Communications**

All University colleges, schools, departments, divisions, centers, institutes and offices must follow the following three steps when managing or requesting social media accounts.

#### **Step 1 – Common Goals**

Review the University’s strategic plan and make sure your current or desired social media account will support the plan. In addition, identify if a separate social media presence is necessary and beneficial and adds value for users visiting or engaging with the account(s). The social media account must be approved by the dean or unit head of your college, school, department, division or office first and ultimately by the Office of Communications.

Note that social media is an external engagement and marketing tool. It is not a platform for internal communications to be shared on an intranet. Failure to properly use social media in this manner can result in termination of your account.

Next, identify a manager for your social media presence. All colleges, schools, departments, divisions and offices must have at least one dedicated employee whose job responsibilities include managing the daily operation of the account to ensure it is aligned with the University’s strategic goals and it remains active. This individual should also identify back-up staff with account access.

#### **Step 2 – Submit a Communications Request Form**

Before creating a social media account at Florida A&M University, fill out the Communications Request Form. A meeting will be scheduled with the Office of Communications to discuss how the goals of the requested social media account align with the University’s strategic priorities as well as the University’s social media strategy, messaging and best practices.

All official social media accounts (and related login information) at Florida A&M University, along with the name and contact information for the social media account manager, must be supplied to the Office of Communications within three (3) days of creating a new account or reading these guidelines for existing accounts.

Only post on behalf of FAMU in an official capacity where you have been explicitly authorized to do so. Furthermore, only create an account in the name of a recognized Florida A&M University entity if you are authorized to represent that entity. All new and existing social media account managers and individuals who will have access to social media accounts must receive training and communication indicating completion of training from the Office of Communications. Information about training will be discussed at the social media concept request meeting or by contacting the Office of Communications. Those who complete training will receive an official social media tool kit. Audits to ensure compliance will be conducted throughout the year.

Failure to contact the Office of Communications for approval prior to creating a social media account or within three (3) business days after receiving these guidelines may result in removal of the social media account. The Office of Communications will make reasonable attempts to contact leadership and discuss any issues before taking corrective action.

### Step 3 – Create an Authorized Social Media Account

You must work with the Office of Communications to identify what platform is best for your college, school, department, division or office goals. This includes the appropriate cover photo, profile photo, tagline and “about” information to post, what you should post and how often, and general FAQs to post if/when users have questions or comments.

Only one official social media account is permitted for each college and school, as well as each office, division, center or institute in order to follow social media best practices, maximize audience reach and maintain consistent brand standards. Entities with more than one account will result in the removal of unofficial accounts.

You must supply your entity’s official social media pages information to get access to University graphics and support. Any use of the FAMU logo without permission is prohibited.

### **Confidentiality**

Do not post confidential or proprietary information about Florida A&M University or Florida A&M University employees, students, affiliates, contractors or alumni that would violate such person’s rights to privacy under applicable federal and state laws and regulations such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA) and University policies. This guideline applies to all web-based communications as well as publications. Non-disclosure agreements that prohibit the University from disclosing information also bind its employees from disclosing such information.

### **Privacy**

Do not post anything to an official social media channel that cannot be shared publicly. In particular, do not discuss a situation involving named or pictured individuals on a social media site without their knowledge or permission. This does not include official FAMU photos or event photos in which individuals are not clearly recognizable. The University must obtain written permission from individuals used in marketing or promotional photos before use.

Keep in mind that for reasons of privacy or security, some students or employees may not want it publicly known that they attend or work at Florida A&M University.

Also remember:

- Whatever you share (either on the University's behalf or your own personal account) may be public for an indefinite period of time, even if you attempt to modify or delete it. Never share social security numbers, addresses or other private information.
- Published social media content can be considered public record by Florida's Sunshine and Public Record laws and are required to be archived. You are required to create a system so that you are archiving everything you publish from your social media account on a weekly basis, including deleted content.
- Be cautious about what personal information you share online. Many social networking websites are not secured and information is available to anyone with access to a computer and the internet.
- On many social networking websites, your name and photo/icon appear next to the content that you post and will be associated with you or with the University when you are representing FAMU or its colleges, schools and units on the web in an official capacity. Therefore, please use discretion regarding the visual elements and content that you use.

### **Security/Passwords**

Use strong, unique passwords when establishing social media accounts. Do not use a password that matches other account passwords, like your personal email account.

All social media pages must be linked to a general FAMU.edu account for your entity, not a personal or employee email account. All passwords and usernames must be kept on file with your supervisor and emailed to the Office of Communications within three days of creating them.

### **Account Access**

At least three (3) staff members are required to have access to the login information and/or administrator access to a social media account. If individuals will have access to your official social media account(s) on mobile devices (through apps like Twitter), you must be able to clearly distinguish personal posts from posts to FAMU accounts.

Provide social media login and contact information for the three (3) staff persons who have access to the account to the Office of Communications. If the account is new, this must be done within three (3) days of creating the account. If it is an existing account it needs to be done within three (3) days of reading these guidelines. Before your account is shared with the public, the Office of Communications must have received this information.

Use different apps for each account — one for a personal account (if applicable), and one for a FAMU account. A number of “accidental” tweets sent by organizations were due to employees mistakenly posting from corporate accounts instead of their own personal accounts. Individuals need to always check which social media account they are actively logged into before posting.

### **Personal Responsibility and Liability**

The use of social media on an official Florida A&M University platform must be managed responsibly because it is a reflection of the University and its employees, faculty, students and alumni.

Communications made through social media are not exempt from the expectations and obligations set forth in FAMU’s policies or from the laws and regulations that govern personal liability across general and traditional forms of communication. You are responsible for what you post on your own social media account and on the sites of others.

### **Emergencies and Crisis Situations**

In the event of an emergency or crisis, only publish official information provided by the main FAMU social media accounts and shared in official University emails and communications.

Sharing information found online or not approved by FAMU may lead to false or confusing information reaching the community and spreading online.

Never participate on social media when the topic being discussed may be considered a crisis. Even anonymous comments may be traced back to your entity or FAMU’s IP address. Email all social media activity around crisis topics to the Office of Communications at [communications@famuedu](mailto:communications@famuedu).

### **HIPAA/FERPA Violations**

Social media account managers and individuals with access to those accounts must take steps in advance to prevent the exposure of confidential medical or student information. Confidential information must never be posted online. Photos must also be inspected closely before posting to make sure no confidential, personal information, such as Social Security numbers, addresses, or academic records, can be seen. Never publish a name or photo without that individual’s permission.

### **Other Users**

Other users, including student groups at FAMU, may have different interests, attitudes and opinions than official FAMU social media accounts. Before retweeting or sharing content posted by others on official University channels, research and ensure that the content is accurate and reflects FAMU’s position.

### **Fake Accounts**

Never create fake social media accounts (i.e., an account that seems to be the work of a third-party) or share false or misleading information through a University account.

### **Correcting Information**

If you unintentionally post something online that is incorrect, correct it visibly and publicly as quickly as possible. Screenshot or save the post with an error before deleting.

Follow the practical tips below for representing FAMU online and in an official capacity:

#### **Affiliation**

Disclose your affiliation if you talk about work related matters that are within your area of job responsibility.

#### **Be Sensitive About Confidentiality**

Do not post confidential or proprietary information about the University and be fully aware of non-disclosure agreements.

#### **Accuracy**

Think about what you are posting (both personally and professionally) before you hit the publish/post button. Think about the content. Is it relevant and topical? Are you reviewing and maintaining the content you provide through social media on a regular basis? Proofread for spelling, grammar and style.

Be strategic about what you say and your connections in social media networks. For example, a comment you make on a user's Facebook wall is visible to anyone that person is connected to, but you might not be connected to those individuals and therefore unable to control access or anticipate further distribution of your comments. Be thoughtful and discreet.

#### **Copyrights and Avoiding Infringement**

Only include in your posts material that you have written or created or that you otherwise have the right to publish on social media. For example, make sure that you are legally allowed to incorporate third-party photographs or videos that FAMU does not own and that you have not obtained permission to use. Doing so could infringe on the third-party's copyright. If you want to publish third-party content, link to it, rather than copying it yourself. Always give photo and video credit in some form.

FAMU's official accounts must follow the University's Terms of Use when posting intellectual property, including photos and videos.

Materials posted online need to be your property, in the public domain, have a Creative Commons license or fall under fair use. For all other instances, you must seek permission from the copyright holder.



Most social media account agreements require that the account holder grant the service a broad license to redistribute content posted by the account holder. Material you have created, as well as third-party material you have incorporated, may end up being used in ways you did not intend or originally foresee.

### **Transparency and Shared Content**

To protect the FAMU brand and build trust with users, social media platforms such as blogs, Facebook pages and Twitter feeds that are created and utilized on behalf of FAMU entities need to be explicit and accurate regarding their relationships with FAMU.

Since FAMU is tax-exempt, do not use social media to promote or transact any third-party commercial business, including revenue from advertising. Staff with administrative responsibilities cannot realize any personal monetary profit from FAMU-related social media. Social media may be used for fundraising as long as a transaction does not occur on the social media platform itself.

Content shared via official Florida A&M University social media platforms, as well as pages or accounts that these platforms like or follow, must reflect the mission and values of FAMU. Official FAMU accounts must refrain from posting content and liking or following users or pages that reflect personal interests or that may be in conflict with the University's mission or values.

Your social media profile background information must include descriptions of the mission/work of the FAMU entity and examples of information a user can expect to receive by "liking" or "following." "Liking" or "following" sites or feeds must reflect the opinions of FAMU. Do not "like" or "follow" sites or feeds for personal interest or communication. Information shared from other users through links or "retweeting" must be relevant to the audience.

When sharing content through links, "retweets" or blog posts, do not promote vendors or other commercial operations unrelated to FAMU entities. More specifically, do not promote vendors who are not licensed by the University.

Official Florida A&M University accounts need to engage and interact with and among followers; however, they must remove content that is spam, commercial, controversial, offensive, obscene, harassing or derogatory. If the social media platform allows for third-party content to be posted on behalf of FAMU, official accounts are required to post this disclaimer in the "Bio" or "About" section: "Third-party posts on this wall do not imply endorsement of that content by FAMU. FAMU reserves the right to remove content that is spam, commercial, obscene, harassing and/or derogatory."

### **Use of the FAMU Name**

There are unique challenges associated with using the Florida A&M University name on social media, such as the potential need to (accurately) abbreviate the name of a FAMU program or entity for a Twitter account. When addressing challenges of this nature, you must follow the points below:

- FAMU should always be fully capitalized on social media (i.e. #FAMU, @FAMUCareerCenter)

- FAMU should only be used in the handles or usernames of official University accounts or accounts approved by the Office of Communications. All others should consider using a non-trademarked identifier such as Rattler (i.e. @RattlerGroup).
- Rattler or Rattlers (the University's mascot) should be capitalized.
- The name of a FAMU program or entity must always accurately represent the program or entity and its relationship with the University. Any variations of the name of a FAMU program or entity, including abbreviated names, must also serve as accurate representations of the program or entity and its relationship with the University.
- Social media account staff setting up a new account must get the name of the page or username approved by the Office of Communications before creating the account. Be as clear as possible when naming your social media accounts, while keeping in mind the 15-character limits. Avoid using acronyms that may not be universally recognized. Current social media accounts that are in violation of the use of the FAMU name will be required to be deleted, if not corrected within three (3) business days of receiving this guide or request from the Office of Communications.
- Use of the FAMU seal or logo as a profile or cover photo on Facebook, Twitter or any other social media account is not allowed by any other campus entity outside of the Office of Communications. The Office of Communications may issue social media managers a themed cover photo graphic. Use of unit block logos and word marks will be approved on a case-by-case basis.

Note that if the Office of Communications did not approve a graphic or flyer you created using the University's name or logo, it is not approved for use on social media.

### **Social Media Platforms Terms of Service**

Please adhere to and stay up to date on the rules of engagement, policies and/or terms of service provided by social media platforms (which evolve often):

- Facebook – [Facebook.com/policies](https://www.facebook.com/policies)
- Twitter – [Twitter.com/privacy](https://twitter.com/privacy)
- Instagram – [Instagram.com/about/legal/privacy](https://www.instagram.com/about/legal/privacy)
- Snapchat – [Snap.com/en-US/privacy/privacy-policy](https://snap.com/en-US/privacy/privacy-policy)
- YouTube – [YouTube.com/yt/policyandsafety/communityguidelines.html](https://www.youtube.com/yt/policyandsafety/communityguidelines.html)
- LinkedIn—[Linkedin.com/legal/privacy-policy](https://www.linkedin.com/legal/privacy-policy)

## **Florida A&M University's Official Social Media Accounts**

- Facebook – [Facebook.com/FAMU1887](https://www.facebook.com/FAMU1887)
- Twitter – [Twitter.com/FAMU\\_1887](https://twitter.com/FAMU_1887)
- Instagram – [Instagram.com/FAMU\\_1887](https://www.instagram.com/FAMU_1887)
- YouTube – [YouTube.com/FAMUtube1887](https://www.youtube.com/FAMUtube1887)

## **Social Media Best Practices**

1. Know Your Audience – Create value added content that encourages two-way communication.
2. Be Strategic – Create a strategy for each of your channels. Know what platform is best for specific content. Make sure your social media strategy supports the University's Strategic Plan and priorities.
3. Create Engaging Content – Optimize content per platform. Create a content mix that is best suited for each platform audience. All content must support the strategy for your social media account. Contact the Office of Communications Social Media Manager at 850-599-3413 for content guidelines for best practices on planned content, post frequency, hashtag strategy and recommended hashtags.
4. Listen and Respond – Monitor your social media account(s) to engage with users and proactively drive conversations.
5. Actionable Results – Create measurable goals and track and report on performance. Analytics and research must drive your content strategy. Analytics provide insight into audience reach, interactions and viewership.

## **Inactive Accounts**

Social media channels at Florida A&M University must be continually updated and monitored. Accounts that have been inactive for more than one month will be subject to deletion. Deletion will be carried out by contacting and working with the communications liaison and the highest-ranking officer of the department, division, college or school.

## **Accessibility**

Florida A&M University is committed to ensuring effective access to communications materials for all members of the University community, including individuals with disabilities.

Visually impaired individuals and those with other disabilities may confront significant barriers when accessing certain information through social media. Accordingly, individuals who maintain social media on behalf of the University must take steps to reduce barriers to access for

individuals with disabilities. For example, screen reader compatibility captioning and descriptive tags on images can help reduce barriers to accessing information for individuals with disabilities. Most major social media platforms (including Facebook, YouTube and Twitter) provide access solutions for individuals with disabilities, including application-programming interfaces (API) that enable the ability to create applications that enhance accessibility of content.

APIs do not eliminate or resolve all accessibility challenges. For additional and more current resources on improving access to FAMU-related social media and FAMU websites for individuals with disabilities, please contact the Office of Communications at 850-599-3413.

## PHOTOGRAPHY/IMAGERY

The use of strong, dynamic photos is one of the best ways to communicate a strong brand, personality and sense of place. To promote FAMU's special brand and image, select images carefully and work with the Office of Communications to select appropriate event and stock photos.

The selected photos should reflect a tapestry of interests and activities at the University. Photos should vary in place and subject matter and reinforce FAMU's culture and academic reputation as a leader in high-quality education. Landmark images are most valuable when they also feature people and interaction. Historic shots should be used sparingly.

### **Photographic/Video Services**

FAMU has a full-time photographer/videographer and provides related services for the campus based upon availability, as well as the request's alignment with the University's strategic goals and priorities. University officials and students who desire photographs/videos for University-related activities must receive approval from the Office of Communications. A request must be submitted to the Office of Communications at least ten (10) business days before the planned activity. Video production projects may require additional planning and advanced request to allow time for production.

If the Office of Communications is not available, then the University's visuals team will facilitate the booking of an approved and vetted photographer/videographer. The unit requesting these services is asked to submit a budget for this need and will be held responsible for vendor payment.

If photos are needed for a particular publication or online publishing, please contact the Office of Communications at least two weeks in advance.

Photos produced by the University must not be manipulated or used without permission. Photos for publications should never be copied, pasted or downloaded from the internet or social media. Only high-resolution, high-quality photos must be used for publication, websites or marketing material development.

Request for photo/video services should be submitted via the Office of Communications Service Request Form, which is available on the “Communications” page at [www.FAMU.edu](http://www.FAMU.edu).

#### GUIDELINES FOR PHOTOGRAPHY ON UNIVERSITY WEBSITES, SOCIAL SITES AND MARKETING MATERIAL

- Use candid photos of people. Capture moments that allow viewers to capture a glimpse of FAMU and welcomes them to be a part of the FAMU community.
- Show activity that reflects a sense of warmth, vitality, academic rigor, prestige and intellectual pursuit. Avoid passive shots.
- Balance shots of individuals with ones that include more than one person in order to show a culture of collaboration.
- Profile photographs should be warm, friendly and approachable.
- Use a variety of close-ups and wide shots. Close-ups create warmth and familiarity, while wide shots convey expansiveness.
- When using photos of the campus, architectural structures or interior shots, give a sense of openness by lowering the horizon line or cropping images in a wide format.
  - Ensure that the background of your photo is free of blight and never photograph clothing or signage that contains obscenities or offensive content.
  - Intentionally incorporate racial, gender, age, professional and sexual orientation diversity as much as possible.
  - Take photos that can be used on multiple platforms, including photos that are both vertical and horizontal.

Please note that all photos taken of students require a photo release form. Contact the Office of Communications at 850-599-3413 for additional guidelines and access to the form.

#### PUBLICATIONS

The Office of Communications staff are stewards of institutional publications and responsible for overseeing the use of the name and logos of the University. University names, logos, images and any likeness are the property of FAMU and may not be altered in any way. This includes changing the aspect ratio or colors, or combining any items with other graphic elements, type, or logos.

Use of a font or art similar enough to be confused with official University marks in order to circumvent the requirements is not allowed. Unauthorized use or misuse of University names, logos or pictures may result in legal action and/or disciplinary action.

All publications distributed internally, externally and digitally (except for student media) must be reviewed by the Office of Communications to guarantee that Florida A&M University's brand, image and message are consistently conveyed to its constituents and stakeholders. The Office of Communications will review materials based upon the established printing guidelines found in this document, which also applies to official University websites and social media pages.

Official publications that offer pertinent information about Florida A&M University, its purpose, objectives, programs of instruction, research, faculty and staff, public services and information for current and prospective students, parents, partnerships and the like are published and/or approved through the Office of Communications. These publications include catalogs, schedules, reports, handbooks, manuals, brochures, posters, fliers, recruitment materials, directories, annual reports, programs, general information documents, newsletters, magazines, booklets and FAMUInfo, the University's official email notification system.

#### ELECTRONIC PROMOTION AND INFORMATION SHARING

All documents, visuals and advertisements submitted for distribution via electronic systems, such as FAMUInfo, social media pages, landing and event pages, iStrike, Captiveeyes and closed-circuit programs, must be approved by the Office of Communications. If a document, visual or advertisement is not approved by the publications office then it is also not approved for distribution online, such as web pages or social media.

All FAMUInfo requests must be received at least five (5) days prior to the date of the event, unless it is considered a safety/health/campus emergency – NO EXCEPTIONS. All public and committee meetings, as well as interview schedules will be posted on the calendar of events via FAMUNews.com (and homepage) and not emailed via FAMUInfo.

#### PRINTING

The Office of Communications facilitates the production and approval of all projects produced in the University Print Shop or any related, on-campus printing office. It is charged with the stewardship and interpretation of all institutional publications involving the use of the name and logos of the University. This responsibility is carried out primarily through the University's design and brand guidelines. Unauthorized use or misuse of University names, logos or images may result in legal action and/or disciplinary action.

Some larger and quick-turn-around jobs require that printing be done off-campus. The Office of Communications is ultimately responsible for ensuring that all publications are in line with guidelines. Therefore, you must receive approval from the Office of Communications prior to

printing off-campus as well as on-campus.

Outside printing jobs require a completed request form and other supporting documentation (such as your unit head's approval). These items must be submitted prior to clearance or the start of printing/production.

When possible, and with proper turnaround time, the Office of Communications will request a minimum of three price quotes from selected vendors. The vendor with the lowest bid for the job and best quality of service is normally selected for the contract. The unit requesting printing services will be responsible for establishing a budget for their project and paying the vendor's invoice. The Office of Communications only works with vendors with the highest quality of production standards who will respect and help maintain the University's brand and adhere to this guide.

Request for review and approval should be submitted via the Office of Communications Service Request Form, which is available on the "Communications" page at [www.FAMU.edu](http://www.FAMU.edu).

## UNIVERSITY IDENTIFICATION

The University's slogan ("Excellence With Caring"), and its institutional logos and phrases such as "Rattlers," "Florida A&M University" and "FAMU," may be used in publications requiring a symbol of identity, such as catalogs, handbooks, brochures, programs, flyers, invitations, posters and paraphernalia. One logo per publication is sufficient. Before designing a publication or any of these items on your own, consult with the Office of Communications for approval and instruction on how to appropriately use the logo and utilize the University's template system.

## LICENSING AND SALES

Use of Florida A&M University's trademark for products must be consistent with the institution's style guide. In addition, you must also obtain a license to do so.

Under Florida Statute 831.032, it is a third-degree felony to possess or sell merchandise with counterfeit trademarks valued at \$1,000 or more. Under this statute, it is a first-degree misdemeanor if merchandise is valued at less than \$1,000. Violations will result in the confiscation of all illegal merchandise and can result in arrest.

Any mark, logo, symbol, nickname, letter(s), word(s) or combination of these that can be associated with Florida A&M, Florida A&M University, FAMU or Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University qualifies as a trademark.

To obtain a license to produce products bearing the marks of FAMU, you must complete a licensing agreement with the Collegiate Licensing Company (CLC). You can contact CLC by telephone at (770) 956-0520 or by visiting them at [www.clc.com](http://www.clc.com).

The University benefits from licensed vendors, because it helps to protect the University's brand/trademark; it helps to promote the University; and it helps to generate funds to assist the Athletics Department by receiving 10 percent of all licensed merchandise sold. FAMU Athletics manages the CLC process and can be contacted at 850-561-2177 or via its website at FAMUAthletics.com

## EDITORIAL STYLE GUIDE

### About the Editorial Style Guide

The Office of Communications is responsible for setting FAMU's editorial style standards and keeping publications consistent so that they present a positive image. Editorial style helps all FAMU colleges, schools, divisions, departments and offices present a consistent and unified image to the public through the materials they produce. The University's style guidelines should be followed as listed below. If there is a question about exceptions or special circumstances, please contact the Office of Communications at 850-599-3413 for assistance.

The Editorial Style Guide is to be used as a tool when preparing various announcements, publications and documents, whether for print, online or presentations.

It should be noted that these guidelines must be applied to each case and the judgment of the writers and editors is part of that application. The guidelines were created for a purpose and in the interest of supporting the University as a whole and helping readers easily understand printed and online material. All colleges, schools, divisions, departments, offices, vendors and affiliates must follow them. While there is some flexibility in some instances, the rules of AP style, grammar and punctuation should not be arbitrarily changed, unless noted by the Office of Communications. Please note only academic and research documents have flexibility in regards to the editorial guidelines and should be adjusted by the writer to reflect their professional or discipline specific writing requirements.

### University Names

The official full name of the institution is "Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University." On first reference, it should always be spelled out with no abbreviations or should be styled as **Florida A&M University**. The first reference should be followed by "(FAMU)." For example: Florida A&M University (FAMU) is the best HBCU in the world.

On second reference, after the complete name has been used, employ one of the following: "FAMU" or "University." The "U" in University must always be capitalized if referring to this University, even when the word is not preceded by "Florida A&M."

Note: "Florida A&M" is for Athletics use only and should never be used outside of that department.



There are no other acceptable variations of the University's name and its uses.

**Unacceptable versions of the University's name include:**

Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University

Florida A & M University

Florida A and M University

Florida A & M

Florida A and M

F.A.M.U

Famu

famu

F A&M U

A&M

A & M

A. & M.

A and M

Note: The only approved use of A&M is for the title of the University's official magazine "A&M Magazine" and for Athletics iconography.

**Other References to the University**

Below is the proper way to stylize common University terms.

The "Hill"

Rattler(s)

"Excellence With Caring"

Marching "100"

Eternal Flame

The "Set"

The Quad

"College of Love and Charity"

HBCUs or historically Black colleges and universities

Alumnus (male), alumna (female), alumni (plural), alum (non-gender specific)

**Unit Names**

Spell out the first reference to any University program, group, institute, center, department, college or school. Subsequently use phrases such as "the committee" or "the center" instead of acronyms or abbreviations, which can become ambiguous. For example, the Center for Academic Success becomes the "Center" in the second reference. Please note that on campus acronyms and nicknames may not be easily understood by external audiences.

Capitalize the names of all campus colleges, schools, departments, divisions, centers, institutes and offices.

For example:

Department of Public Safety and Security

Division of Student Affairs

Office of Communications

Sustainability Institute

College of Science and Technology

## **Associated Press Style and Formatting Quick Guide**

### **Abbreviations**

Spell out the names of the 50 U.S. states at all times except for in the dateline of press releases. However, where necessary for space, all states can be abbreviated with the exception of Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas and Utah. The traditional abbreviations are used for the other states (For example: Ala. for Alabama, Fla. for Florida). Postal code abbreviations (AL, FL, etc.) are used only with full addresses that include zip codes.

### **Academic Specifics**

#### **Courses**

Academic courses are capitalized headline style, but not italicized or put in quotes (Topics in American History, Introduction to Theatre)

#### **Degrees**

Use periods for degree designations (B.A., Ph.D., etc.) except for MBA, DBA, DM, etc.

Degrees always follow the person's full name and are set apart by commas:

John Smith, Ph.D., is the first vice president of the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University Community Assistant Center.

Academics with doctorates are never referred to as "Dr." on the first reference. The title "Dr." in first reference is reserved for medical doctors. "Dr." may be used in second reference and only in article or press release quotes for individuals who have earned a doctorate as long as it is made clear in the first reference that the person is not a medical doctor or dentist.

The plural for degrees does not require an apostrophe: Ph.D.s, MBAs

Doctoral program not Ph.D. program.

Please note a person should never be referred to as a Ph.D. or an MBA. Instead use terms like:

Kym is a doctoral student.

Carrol received a doctorate.

They are MBA candidates.

### **Best practice examples:**

Jon earned his doctorate in educational leadership.

Joe is in the educational leadership doctoral program.

### **Grade Point Average (GPA)**

Expressions of grade point averages require only one digit after the decimal (3.5). GPA is acceptable on all references.

## **Majors/Minors/Student Status**

Don't capitalize names of academic majors and minors except for proper nouns.

Examples:

Billy has a major in Japanese and a minor in dance.

Bobbie is a pharmacy student.

Never write: John is a freshman English major. Instead: John is a first-year English student.

Don't capitalize freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, first-year student, etc.

## **Times**

4 p.m. (Notice that AP Style does not include a colon and two zeroes when referring to an even hour.)

Time may be stylized without the periods, such as 4 pm, when necessary and approved for graphic design purposes only.

## **Telephone numbers**

Separate the area, prefix and extension with hyphens. Examples: 850-599-3000.

## **Titles**

Capitalize the principal words in the title before the name of a particular person: "Vice President John Smith."

Do not capitalize titles after the proper name. Do capitalize department names. Correct use: John Smith, vice president for Support and Services, called a meeting with the staff."

In subsequent references, use the individual's last name: John Smith, vice president for Support and Services, called a meeting of the staff. Smith approved the report.

## **Dates**

Capitalize and spell out the days of the week.

Separate day from month by a comma: Friday, Dec. 3 or October 3, 1887.

All months except April, July, June, March and May can be abbreviated for spacing needs.

Do not use ordinal numbers even though they may be expressed verbally: Monday, Nov. 15, not 15th.

Capitalize and spell out months of the year when used alone (September) or used with the year (December 2014). Do not separate year and month with a comma.

## **Years**

List years using all four numerals: "1997, not '97."

To show a span of years, list all four numerals for both years and separate the years with a dash: "1997–1999, not 1997–99.

Note: Including the year is not necessary if the date is within the current year.

## **Decades**

Express decades as "the 1970s," or the "70s," but not the "1970's."

## **Centuries**

Write out the century number up to 10, and then use numerals: The first century or the 20th century (without superscript).

## Seasons

Do not capitalize the seasons of the year: spring, summer, fall and winter; they are common nouns like any other. Think of them as similar to morning, afternoon and night—terms that denote clearly defined periods of time, but are not capitalized because they are not proper nouns.

As parts of official names, however, seasons are capitalized: the 2012 Summer Olympics or the 2018 Spring Preview.

## Gendered Terms

Whenever possible, avoid gender bias. Use a vocabulary that is fair to both women and men. Common practice today is to use gender-neutral terms when gender is not a defining factor. For example, “business person” or “business people” instead of “businessman;” “chair” instead of “chairman;” “U.S. Representative” not “Congressman;” “firefighter” not “fireman.”

When possible, avoid “he” and “his” as inclusive references for men and women, but don’t use slash-forms: “she/he” and “his/her.” It is better to alter a sentence and use plurals instead of singulars: “All students create their own programs” rather than “Each student creates his or her own program.”

“Co-ed” refers to both male and female students – not exclusively female.

## Nationality/Race

Capitalize the proper names of nationalities, peoples, races, and tribes: Jewish, French, Hispanic, Latino, Eskimo, Cherokee, African American, Native American, Asian, Asian American. This should also include Black American or Blacks, as well as White Americans or Whites. (The University has adopted this style to

distinguish between shades of color and cultural/racial/ethnic descriptions).

Do not use hyphens when combining proper names of nationalities, races, tribes, etc. with American (Asian American, African American), except when used as an adjective.

Example: The student is Asian American. The group went to an Asian-American restaurant.

## Numbers

Spell out whole numbers and ordinal numbers one through nine and use numerals thereafter.

There are many exceptions that always use numerals, however. Most, but not all, involve units of measurement.

Common exceptions include:

Addresses: 7 Park Place

Ages, but not for inanimate objects: The 4-year-old cat, but the four-year-old car

Cents: 8 cents

Dollars: \$3 (Notice that AP style does not include a period and two zeroes when referring to an even dollar figure.)

Dates: March 4. (Notice that dates take cardinal numbers, not ordinal numbers. Don’t use 4th.)

Dimensions: 5-by-9 cell, 5 foot 9 inches

Highways: Route 7

Millions, billions: 6 billion people

Percentages: 1 percent (Notice that percent is one word.)

Speed: 8 mph

Temperatures: 2 degrees

Times: 4 p.m. or 4:30 a.m. (Notice that AP Style does not include a colon and two zeroes when referring to an even hour.)

Spell out numbers used at the beginning of a sentence: Ten thousand people marched on the capital.

Never spell out years: 1999 was a terrible year for technology companies.

Use semicolons to set off each group of three digits in numerals higher than 999 (except for years and addresses): 1,000; 12,650; and 265,000

Use decimals (up to two places) for amounts in the millions and billions that do not require a precise figure: \$3.74 billion.

Add an 's' but no apostrophe to a number to make it plural: "Jen kept rolling 7s." The same rule applies to decades: the 1980s. Use an apostrophe on a decade only if cutting off the initial figures: the '80s.

The letters in ordinal numbers should not be written with superscript (12<sup>th</sup> place, 1<sup>st</sup> place).

### **Publication Titles**

Titles of books, movies, plays, operas, poems, songs, works of art, as well as titles of radio and TV programs, articles and lectures are styled in in roman letters and enclosed in quotation marks.

Magazines, newspapers, journals, the Bible, catalogs, directories, dictionaries, encyclopedias, and handbooks are written in roman letters, without quotation marks.

In headline style, the first and last words of the title and subtitle and all other major words are capitalized.

Capitalize all words in titles of publications and documents, except such words as: a, an, the, at, by, for, in, of, on, to, and, as, but, or, nor, with (except when being used to stylize the University's slogan "Excellence With Caring," etc.

### **Punctuation**

#### **Commas**

Commas should be used to separate all the items in a series of three or more ending in "and" or "or." This avoids considering items separately when they are meant to be understood as a unit or vice versa: "Committees were formed to investigate the following areas: athletics, academics, research and development, and governance."

Simple series do not require a comma before the conjunction:  
Burgers, fries and milkshakes.

Commas may be necessary for a more complex series: Sam went to the store at Sixth Street, walked home, cleaned the garage and the bathrooms, ate a warm dinner and went to sleep.

Semi-colons are only needed in a series of items if one of the items already has a comma in it: The featured guests include John, a writer; Bill, an artist; and Tom, a singer.

Note: If an individual, organization or other entity utilizes a name of which the use of a comma is preferred, then the University will respect this preference.

Examples:

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

The College of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities

#### **Dashes (–)**

Dashes aren't hyphens. The em dash is longer than a hyphen and indicates a break in the syntax of a sentence: Of the two grading options—graded only, pass/no pass only—the last option is the default.

Em dashes are created by typing two (2) hyphens immediately following the previous letter and followed immediately by another letter with no spaces in between.

The en dash is half as long as an em dash. Use an en dash to indicate continuing or inclusive numbers in dates, times or reference numbers: 2002–2003; pp.12–28.

The end dash is created by leaving a space after the previous letter and then typing two (2) hyphens followed by a letter.

### **Ellipses**

Ellipses are not needed at the beginning or at the end of a quote. It is understood that there may be more to the quotation than what the author has chosen to use.

### **Parentheses**

If part of a sentence is parenthetical, then put the punctuation outside of the parenthesis: I enjoy skating (sometimes). If the entire sentence is parenthetical, put the punctuation inside the parenthesis: (I asked Bob to skate with me.)

### **Periods**

Periods always go inside of quotations: “FAMU has the No. 1 band in the land.”

### **Misc. Commonly misused words/terms**

Accept/except

Affect/effect

Copyright/copywriter

Every day/everyday

Everyone/every one

Who/whom

Website not web site

Performance metrics not performance matrix

Lowercase internet and web

No. 1, not #1

## **Written Correspondences and Communications**

### **Email Signature Guidelines**

While the email signature is your business calling card, it is also an extension of the University.

The required email system fonts to use for drafting and signing an email are Times New Roman or Cambria.

You must use no more than four-six lines for your signature. This is the standard for ALL University employees.

- Name
- Title, Department
- College/School/Division Name
- Florida A&M University
- Unit Address
- Official University Phone/FAX/Email/Web Address
- Optional: Only official University social media handles

Example:  
John Doe

Assistant Director, Community Services  
Division of Engagement  
Florida A&M University  
1000 S. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Suite 100  
Tallahassee, FL 32307  
Main: 850-555-1111 | Direct: 850-555-1112  
john.doe@fam.u.edu | www.famu.edu  
Twitter: @fam\_u\_1887 | Facebook: FAMU1887

University email signatures cannot include references, slogans, quotes, scriptures, icons, images, logos, or external links (non-FAMU approved websites or social media links).

### **Background Color**

University email backgrounds must be solid white. Patterns and colors are prohibited.

The required color for text in the signature and the body of the email is black.

Notice: All FAMU-related emails are University property and are subject to Public Records Law. According to University policy, all employees must use University-issued emails to conduct official FAMU business. Those violating these guidelines may be subject to corrective action.

## **WEB STYLE GUIDE**

FAMU's .edu website is the University's portal to the world. This web style guide is intended to facilitate consistency and usability and to promote standardized FAMU branding that will allow visitors to immediately recognize a web page's affiliation with the institution. Please refer to the University's web policy as posted by Information Technology Services (ITS).

All FAMU-related websites must be easy to use, navigate and understand to ensure user friendliness for the widest possible audience and especially FAMU's customers and potential customers. They also must be accurate, up-to-date and follow all of the University's style and branding guidelines. Any web document that represents FAMU or its official units, programs, divisions departments, colleges or schools is expected to follow this guide, the communications policy and ensure accessibility and a high-quality web presence. All images and videos used on .edu web pages must be approved by the Office of Communications.

**External Websites (non-FAMU.edu/non-ITS approved)**

External or self-maintained websites, such as Weebly, Wix, GoDaddy, Tumblr, Joomla, WordPress, etc., are not permitted. All new and existing websites must be housed on the FAMU.edu server and approved by ITS and the Office of Communications (see the University's web policy).

The University has one official mobile app. All University content, web and communications platforms will feed to this app. In order for your content, web and communication platforms to be officially recognized, promoted and placed on the app, the Office of Communications and ITS must approve it and must have access to your administrative login in the case of an emergency or violation of University policies and guidelines.

## **Writing for the Web**

### **Be Clear and Direct**

Be as direct as possible. When providing links, be clear about what visitors will find when clicking. A short blurb to describe a linked resource instead of a click here or a URL is a best practice.

Ensure that provided links are active and not broken.

### **Provide Easy-to-Scan Content**

To provide easily scannable content and keep visitors' attention, use the following techniques:

- Break your information into "chunks" that can be easily accessed and comprehended
- Use heads and subheads to partition your content
- Use bulleted lists whenever possible

### **Prioritize Your Content**

Key facts and important details should be at the beginning of your webpage. FAMU visitors are rarely interested in mission statements, formal strategic plans and lengthy biographies. While such content is often necessary to share, it should not be prioritized. Help visitors find what they really need to know and ensure they won't have to dig through unfriendly content. If your key audience is students, ensure that the navigation prioritizes student information first. Do not use your web presence as an intranet. Your website is a marketing tool to promote the



services you provide to potential and returning consumers.

### **Avoid Jargon**

Technical jargon is a turn-off unless appropriate to your audience.

### **Keep It Short: Guidelines**

- Headings: 4–7 words
- Subheads: 1–4 words
- Sentences: 1–20 words
- Paragraphs: 1–5 sentences

### **Visuals**

Use high-quality, high-resolution visuals that fit well into the identified space for posting and also support the information you are sharing and the mission and vision of the University. Seek guidance from the Office of Communications for what is appropriate before posting or publishing photos.

Contact ITS for full details of the University’s web policies and procedures.

## **MEDIA GUIDE**

The Office of Communications is responsible for generating, distributing, monitoring and collecting news coverage on FAMU, its outstanding academic programs, important events and the key achievements of its students, faculty and staff. The office also serves as the official liaison to external media by establishing and cultivating relationships with journalists, responding to media inquiries and providing guidance and leadership to the FAMU community about working with the media. All faculty, staff, academic/departmental units and affiliates must coordinate with the Office of Communications to receive approval to develop and distribute news about the University and to participate in or respond to solicited and unsolicited media interviews or information inquiries.

As a public institution of higher learning, Florida A&M University embraces being responsive to requests for information from the public/ media whenever possible and in accordance with Florida law and University policy. If you are contacted to share information with the public or the media, contact the Office of Communications at 850-599-3413 or at [public.relations@fam.u.edu](mailto:public.relations@fam.u.edu) prior to further communications with a media representative or other public entity.

Journalists occasionally request interviews with FAMU leaders, faculty, staff or students related to specific news developments. If the request is in response to the Office of Communications contacting the media first, the University has already identified a representative to speak and will arrange the interview for the journalist with the interviewee. However, if a request for an interview is unsolicited, the Office of Communications will need to research the issue and determine who is best to speak effectively about the issue.

### **Press Conferences/Media Briefings**

As a rule, press conferences, media briefings and similar events are reserved for announcing news concerning the University that will have a significant impact on the constituents, external community and the future direction of FAMU. It is important that these types of events not be overused or used to announce news that is not significant. The Office of Communications must approve all press conferences and media briefings or related events prior to these events being scheduled.

Prior to releasing sensitive information (for example: the termination of an employee, an ongoing investigation, verifying student information, a legal matter or an allegation of sexual harassment), administrators, faculty, staff, student workers, affiliates, vendors and volunteers are required to contact the Office of Communications or the Office of the General Counsel.

**Note: The University does not comment on ongoing investigations, legal or personnel matters.**

Occasionally, potentially controversial situations or crisis events may occur at FAMU. During these times, it is important to take a proactive approach by contacting or meeting with the Office of Communications immediately. It is best to prepare for such instances as early as possible. In instances where there is a question about the legality of releasing information, the Office of Communications and all other campus units receiving media and public information requests must consult with the Office of the General Counsel.

Faculty and staff are only encouraged to give FAMU-related or affiliated interviews to the media after receiving approval from the Office of Communications. Employees are encouraged to make themselves available to the Office of Communications to provide information on matters within their field of expertise in a timely and courteous manner when media requests are received. The staff of the Office of Communications must serve as facilitators and approvers of all media interviews and outreach as it is charged with helping reporters find the best possible source for story topics.

The Office of Communications staff also develops key messages for the University and through media training can assist you in anticipating reporters' questions. Contact the Office of Communications at 850-599-3413 or [public.relations@fam.u.edu](mailto:public.relations@fam.u.edu) for additional media-related questions or to request message development and training.

When you participate in an interview:

- Ensure the interview has been approved by the Office of Communications
- Stay focused on key messages and repeat them throughout the interview
- Always be truthful and accurate. Never exaggerate or inflate.
- Remember that everything you say is “on the record” and can be included in a story. Never agree to “go off the record.” If you do not want to see or hear it in print, on the web, radio or television, do not say it.
- If you need time to research or think about how to respond to a question, please say so and arrange a deadline for providing the additional information.
- Avoid using jargon.
- Spell difficult names.
- Speak slowly.
- Repeat figures.
- Treat reporters courteously.
- Discuss only a subject that is within your area of expertise and you have been authorized to discuss.
- Keep in mind that reporters occasionally report on facts incorrectly. Ask the reporter to read back your quotes to confirm accuracy.

### **University Spokesperson**

The President is the official spokesperson of the University. The President has designated the chief communications officer in the Office of Communications as the official spokesperson in external matters including official announcements, weather, health and safety emergencies and crisis situations. This individual also provides a point of contact between media and University resources and also provides referrals to proper sources of information within the University community. The President or chief communications officer may identify an alternative spokesperson for emergency situations.

### **Press Releases**

The Office of Communications approves all press releases to local, regional, national and international media, with the exception of sports-related releases (unless requested by the President, chief communications officer or athletics director), prior to distribution. The Office of

Communications prepares and approves press releases that range from major stories about achievements by faculty, staff, administrators, students and alumni to unique programs and offerings, in alignment with the University's mission and strategic priorities and goals. Press releases from all University colleges, schools, centers, institutes, departments, offices and affiliates must be submitted to the Office of Communications for prior approval before releasing. Press releases are approved and distributed based on subject and relevance to the University's brand, mission, strategic goals and priorities.

## **Office of Sports Information**

The Office of Sports Information is responsible for publicizing information regarding FAMU's intercollegiate varsity athletic teams. The Office of Sports Information publishes all athletic publications and news releases, coordinates athletic photography, maintains statistical data on teams, maintains athletics web pages, and serves as the department's contact for the NCAA and the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference. The sports information director must ensure compliance with FAMU's editorial and publication standards, communications policy, strategic priorities, and media outreach protocols including athletics marketing materials and publications.

## **Public Records**

As a public university supported by tax dollars, Florida A&M University has a responsibility to be open and responsive to requests for information and documentation from the public in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act and Florida's Sunshine Law. According to Florida Statute 119 (1), "It is the policy of this state that all state, county and municipal records shall be open for personal inspection by any person."

When you are asked to provide documents or information in response to a public records request or Freedom of Information Act request, respond quickly and efficiently by providing the requested files to the Office of Communication or Office of the General Counsel for review and handling within three to five (3-5) business days or within a reasonable time, upon communicating a delivery timeline with the Office of Communications. Please note that the statute applies to existing records and information only. The statute does not require the creation of new documents to fulfill an information request.

There are exemptions to certain documents and information being released under Florida law. Before releasing any documents or information in response to an information request, please consult with the Office of Communications or Office of General Counsel to ensure no exemptions apply.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. Please consult with the Office of Communications or the Office of General Counsel before releasing any information or documents that contain student details. Please note that there are also laws regarding releasing an individual's health information and personal records that must be considered prior to releasing documents or information.

Forward any request for information you received from external entities to the Office of Communications or Office of the General Counsel immediately.

Collect all information and documents that contain what is being requested and submit it to the Office of Communications or the Office of the General Counsel expeditiously for processing within three to five (3-5) business days or within a reasonable time period based on the details of the request and how the information or documents must be collected/acquired. If more time is needed for processing, please contact the Office of Communications or the Office of the General Counsel for consultation. Failure to do so can result in legal repercussions for the University.

Please record how long it took to process the request and how many copies were made, as well as the lowest hourly pay rate in the office processing the request. Florida law allows for the charging of fees for such requests. A template is available upon request by contacting [publicrecords@famu.edu](mailto:publicrecords@famu.edu).

As an institution subject to the Sunshine Law, all University business conducted by email must be done via the FAMU.edu domain to ensure documents and correspondences can easily be accessed when requested. Information must also be collected and shared via University servers such as using Qualtrics for surveys, polls and assessments and Blackboard, FAMUInfo, FAMU.edu, FAMUNews.com and iStrike for announcements so that they can be accessed.

Please note that social media accounts connected to the University must also be archived (including deleted posts) in the case they need to be retrieved for information requests or legal matters. Contact the Office of Communications at 850-599-3413 for tips on how to archive social media accounts.

More information about public records and Freedom of Information Act requests can be obtained here:  
[http://myfloridalegal.com/webfiles.nsf/WF/MNOS-AXJGEU/\\$file/2018+Government+in+the+Sunshine+Manual.pdf](http://myfloridalegal.com/webfiles.nsf/WF/MNOS-AXJGEU/$file/2018+Government+in+the+Sunshine+Manual.pdf).

## **Advertising**

The Office of Communications must approve, in advance, all advertising from all campus units, which includes but is not limited to print, broadcast (television), billboard, digital, social media and radio ads, as well as student-recruitment, marketing, informational and fund-raising videos and materials.

This also includes banners and promotional items (t-shirts, pens, bags, etc.) and digital media promotions or campaigns (i.e. YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, Pandora, Spotify, AdRoll, Captiveeyes and the like). This does not include paid ads for hiring personnel. However, personnel ads should be reviewed for style and grammar before publication within the Human Resources division.

All advertisements, publications, digital and visual marketing must only use University issued phone numbers, email addresses and Office of Communications/Information Technology Services-approved website links. Websites must be approved by the University's web council in conjunction with the University webmaster/Information Technology Services and the Office of Communications.

All campus units should establish a marketing budget to cover the cost of advertising, marketing and associated printing. This process also is intended for programs, committees and initiatives.

### **External Agencies, Businesses and Organizations**

External agencies, businesses, organizations, groups, partners, affiliates, event organizers, etc., interested in using or producing an item that contains the University's name, logo, likeness or images must submit a copy of the advertisement or promotional item to the Office of Communications for approval. University names, logos and images are the property of the University and may not be altered in any way. Use of a font or art similar to official University marks in order to circumvent the requirements is not allowed.

Authorized advertisements must display the Office of Communications written approval before being posted on campus, off campus or appearing in University or external/community publications, etc.

Prior to an employee, contractor/vendor, student, volunteer, partner or affiliate shooting information or promotional video presented on behalf of the University (except for journalism school productions) or in partnership with it, a script, proposal and/or production timeline must be approved by the Office of Communications three weeks before scheduling the shoot. All edited or any raw video must be submitted to and approved by the office before it is disseminated or posted online.

Any advertisement, marketing video or promotional photo that includes University students must require that student sign a release form provided by the Office of Communications.

Office of Communications approval must be provided to the University's procurement, controller and foundation offices if a unit seeks to pay a vendor or individual for communications, media or marketing related work. Violation of these guidelines will result in non-approval by the University to pay or credit these individuals. A form and additional documentation may be required to receive this approval. Employees and others who violate these guidelines may be subject to corrective action or cease and desist actions.

Individuals, groups and agencies producing marketing or media-related content or hosting marketing or media-related events on behalf of the University or using the University's name must first obtain the expressed approval of the Office of Communications.

Request for review and approval of advertisements, videos, and media content or events should be submitted via the Office of Communications Service Request Form, which is available on the "Communications" page at [www.FAMU.edu](http://www.FAMU.edu).

## **EVENT PLANNING AND ANNOUNCEMENT GUIDELINES**

### **Calendar Submissions and Protocols**

All FAMU-related events and official University dates (including recruitment, departmental, academic, and Athletic related) must be entered into the University's centralized scheduling calendar system via FAMUNews.com/events and must accurately represent the nature of the event (i.e., internal, external, sponsored, free or paid, public notice). The Office of Communications requires information about events prior to reserving space in facilities on campus. Failure to communicate your event during the planning stages may result in a cease and desist notice. Failure to post events on the University's official calendar may result in your event not being recognized or promoted by the University and removal of advertisement from University platforms or physical locations. It is a best practice and requested by the Office of Communications to begin listing your event at least 30 days in advance.

Public meetings must be public noticed and therefore must be posted on FAMUnews.com seven days prior to the event on the University's calendar so external audiences may become aware of the event and individuals who require reasonable accommodations have the option to request support. If an event that must be public noticed is not submitted to the University calendar, then it will not be shared on FAMUInfo.

Please note that the following statement should be placed on all promotional event announcements or advertisements: "If you require a reasonable accommodation to participate in this meeting pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Amendment Act (ADAA), please contact the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs at (850) 599-3076 at least five (5) business days prior to the start of the event. If you are hearing or speech impaired, please contact the University by calling TDD via FRS 800-955-8771.

FAMU is committed to being compliant with Florida's Sunshine Law which requires every "collegial public body of the executive branch of state government or of any collegial public body of a county, municipality, school district, or special district, at which official acts are to be taken or at which public business of such body is to be transacted or discussed, shall be open and noticed to the public and meetings." This includes Board meetings, hiring/search committee meetings, the Faculty Senate and any advisory board that makes recommendations.

### **Notifications and Approvals**

Any event that brings in media, guest speakers, alumni, celebrities, dignitaries and international guests must be discussed with and, depending on the type of event, approved by the Office of Communications during the planning process. It is a best practice to plan an event 90 to 120 days prior to the day of the event.

In order for a University event to be approved for promotion, it must also be sponsored by an officially recognized FAMU college, school, department, division, office, organization or affiliate and must be aligned with the University's mission, core values and strategic goals and priorities.

If you desire help or advice as you plan your event, please consult with the special events coordinator located in the Office of Communications. An event checklist is available through the Office of Communications to ensure full compliance and best practices.

All event signage and marketing materials or event-related publications and programs must be approved by the Office of Communications 30-60 days prior to the event, especially those that display the University's name, logos, or likeness. Signage, flyers, and posters for student events should also be approved by Student Activities. Signage, flyers, and posters approved by the Office of Communications should not be removed from any part of campus, once posted, without expressed permission and only after the event is over.

Requests for approval should be submitted via the Communications Service Request Form at [www.FAMU.edu/OfficeofCommunications](http://www.FAMU.edu/OfficeofCommunications). All programs and events or projects that require marketing, must have a marketing budget, be approved by a unit leader and the Office of Communications, and submitted to the University calendar before any promotional efforts begin.

An employee, student, vendor/contractor, department, academic unit or affiliate's failure to comply with these guidelines may result in a cease and desist communication. An employee's failure to adhere to the guidelines will be reported to their supervisor for further action. A vendor or contractor's failure to adhere to these guidelines is grounds for termination of their contract.

Non-University affiliated or non-approved event promotions displayed on campus shall be removed immediately, including business related promotions.

Event preparation and reminders:

1. Ensure the proper event paperwork is submitted to facilities planning or Student Activities at least two months in advance, where applicable, for approval to use University spaces.
2. Ensure your event does not conflict with other official University events.
3. It is a best practice to plan your event at least 90 days in advance.
4. Ensure your event is not contrary to University policy, the mission statement or strategic priorities.
5. Ensure you have the budget to cover the cost of event marketing, setup, catering, talent and cleanup.
6. Ensure your agenda or program has been approved by your unit leader and the Office of Communications.
7. Offsite events that use the University's name, logo, or likeness must still follow the above guidelines for approval.