

Social and Other Media Statements

The purpose of WAA's Alumni Groups is to build an inclusive local community of university alumni and supporters united by Badger pride and spirit, mutual respect, and the desire to advance the University's positive impact on the world. Alumni Groups recognized by the WFAA act as ambassadors of the organization and the WAA brand. Accordingly, WFAA has implemented this policy and guidelines to assist its Alumni Group volunteers (chapters and groups) when representing their Alumni Group via social and other media outlets. This includes social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, WeChat, and WhatsApp; "traditional" and news media sources; and any other services or platforms used to share information with others.

This policy applies to social and other media statements made on behalf of an Alumni Group, by an individual in their capacity as an Alumni Group volunteer, or when a volunteer implies by word or action that they are speaking on behalf of their Alumni Group. This policy does not apply to statements made by an Alumni Group volunteer in their individual capacity *and* via personal channels (i.e., a personal Facebook or Twitter account) so long as the volunteer makes clear that they are stating their personal views and are not expressing the position of WAA, WFAA, UW-Madison, or their Alumni Group. While a volunteer may speak on behalf of their specific Alumni Group consistent with this policy, volunteers are not authorized to speak on behalf of WFAA, WAA, UW-Madison, any other Alumni Group, or any other group or individual.

Volunteers should be aware of the effect their social media and other statements may have on their image and that of WFAA, WAA, UW-Madison, and their Alumni Group. Such statements may be public information indefinitely. Use good judgment and think twice before posting or commenting. If ever in doubt, consult with your WAA representative for advice.

General Guidelines

- Alumni Groups and their volunteers are expected to use their platform in a manner that supports the mission and priorities of WFAA and UW-Madison. Keep the tone informative, inviting, and Badger spirited!
- Consistently be engaged with the Alumni Group's social media to keep it fresh and relevant. An Alumni Group may use social media to promote and encourage attendance at upcoming events and activities, feature local alumni interest stories, and highlight UW-Madison news.
- Information shared should be verified as accurate (e.g., factual, not based on rumor) and on topics relevant to the UW-Madison community.
- Names of or information about individuals (including UW-Madison students and employees) should not be used without their express written permission to do so. Similarly, information considered confidential or not public should not be used. Remember, you may be held personally responsible for such content. If unsure whether information may be shared, consult with your WAA representative.

- Alumni Groups should welcome their community’s interaction with and contributions (comments, photos, wall posts, etc.) to their official social media platforms. Always be respectful to those who contribute content and understand that some contributions could encourage comments or discussion of opposing ideas. When commenting on others’ posts, choose words carefully and do not engage in a war of words. Reply to comments in a civil and timely manner when a response is appropriate. Thank them for sharing their feedback.
- Alumni Groups and their volunteers are expected to manage their social media accounts consistent with WFAA’s [Digital Community Guidelines](#). This includes not posting and potentially removing any content the Alumni Group or WFAA determines to be any of the following. If a volunteer feels that content does or may run afoul of the Digital Community Guidelines, they should immediately seek advice from their WAA representative to determine the next steps. This could include posting a WFAA-approved message or removing the content.
 - Off-topic;
 - Unlawful, harmful, threatening, abusive, harassing, tortuous, defamatory, vulgar, obscene, libelous, invasive of another’s privacy, hateful, or racially, ethnically, or otherwise objectionable;
 - Harmful to minors;
 - An impersonation or misstatement of affiliation with any person or entity;
 - Shared in violation of law or contractual or fiduciary relationships;
 - Infringing any patent, trademark, trade secret, copyright, or other proprietary rights; or
 - Promoting a commercial product or service; or
 - Disruptive, harmful, or has the potential to be disruptive or harmful to another user’s experience or device.
- Alumni Groups and their volunteers must adhere to this policy and process for making and posting a statement related to incidents and activity on campus:

Step 1: Alumni Group develops a statement and intended distribution plan and sends it to the appropriate WFAA staff liaison, using considerations shared with Badger Leaders.

Step 2: WFAA staff liaison shares the statement with the Chief Alumni Officer and Director of Communications for review, potential edits, and approval

Step 3: WFAA staff liaison shares the final approved statement with the Alumni Group for them to share according to the distribution plan.

- The bio or “about” section of any social media account operated by an Alumni Group must identify the group and that WAA volunteers run the group.
- Alumni Groups must link to WFAA’s [Digital Community Guidelines](#) in their social media accounts. This may be a “pinned” post or a similar method of ensuring the guidelines are available in a prominent location. Linking to the WFAA-hosted site is suggested, as these guidelines are updated from time to time.
- Each Alumni Group must ensure the WFAA Social Media Specialist has administrator rights to the group’s social media accounts. This is important to ensure continued access during Alumni Group leadership changes or lapses or if WFAA requires access to enforce this policy and/or the Digital Community Guidelines. Only key WFAA staff will have access to this information.

News Media Inquiries

Social media sometimes generates press and media attention. Alumni Group volunteers are not prohibited from speaking with news media on matters pertaining to their events or activities of their group, provided that the response is consistent with this policy and is discussed with their WAA representative before doing so.

Alumni Group volunteers are not authorized to speak on behalf of WFAA, WAA, UW-Madison, another Alumni Group, or any other group or individual. Questions or requests for comment from news media that require an institutional response and/or relate to WFAA, WAA, or UW-Madison policy, position, or stance must be forwarded to the Alumni Group’s WAA representative.

Volunteers may make statements to the news media in their individual capacity so long as the volunteer makes clear that they are stating their personal views and are not expressing the position of WAA, WFAA, UW-Madison, or their Alumni Group.