

UBC BRAND

SOCIAL MEDIA PLAYBOOK

2024 | VERSION 1.0



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Welcome to the UBC Social Media Playbook

2024 | VERSION 1.0

CONTENTS

1.0	How to use the playbook	3
2.0	UBC's social media strategy	5
3.0	Content pillars	10
4.0	Producing content	17
5.0	Channel guide	33
6.0	Management	42
7.0	Measurement	45

OUR INSTITUTIONAL CHANNELS

-  Instagram [@universityofbc](#)
-  LinkedIn [/universityofbc](#)
-  YouTube [@UBC](#)
-  TikTok [@universityofbc](#)
-  Facebook [/universityofbc](#)
-  X/Twitter [/UBC](#)



HOW TO USE THE PLAYBOOK

Why this playbook matters

These centralized guidelines, templates and checklists simplify our workflow, enabling Brand and Marketing's social media team and UBC's social media managers across UBC to produce strategic, engaging content for our institutional channels more efficiently and effectively.

How to use the playbook

- **Streamline the content creation process:** With clear outlines of the types of content that resonate with our community, along with practical templates and checklists, you can achieve your content goals more effectively and efficiently.
- **Enhance strategic content alignment:** By demystifying the content strategy behind our institutional channels, this playbook empowers social media users across the university with the knowledge to craft and submit content that not only resonates with our audience but also supports UBC's overarching strategic goals for each platform and the institution at large.
- **Empower success from the start:** By understanding what makes content successful, you can produce high-performing social media posts that align with our institutional goals from the outset.
- **Guide the launch of new channels:** For those looking to expand UBC's digital footprint, this playbook offers crucial advice on starting and managing new social media channels, ensuring they thrive and contribute positively to our online ecosystem.

HOW TO USE THE PLAYBOOK

What we ask of you

As a UBC social media community member, your role in bringing our shared vision to life is invaluable. We ask that you:



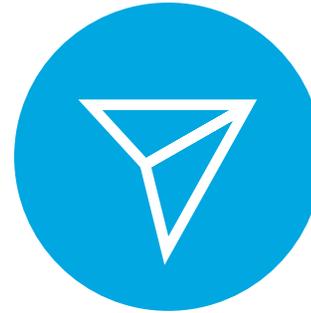
Engage with purpose

Approach social media with the intent to inform, inspire and engage, ensuring your content reflects UBC's values and aspirations.



Stay informed and adaptive

Keep abreast of the latest trends and platform updates, using this playbook as a living document that evolves alongside the digital landscape.



Collaborate and share

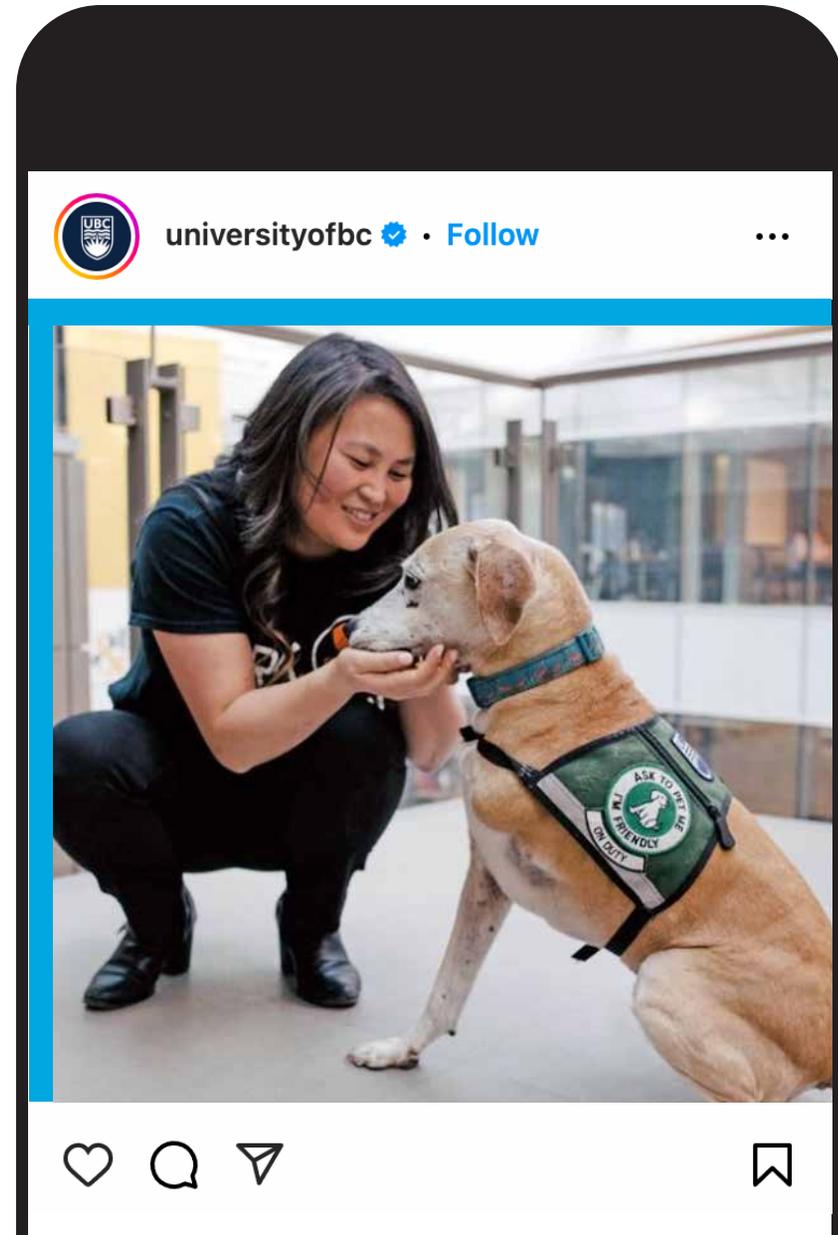
Social media thrives on collaboration. Share your successes, learn from challenges and contribute to a supportive community of UBC communicators.

UBC'S SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

Social media at UBC

At UBC, we use social media to share authentic, value-driven content that inspires, challenges, connects and celebrates people’s potential to positively shape the future.

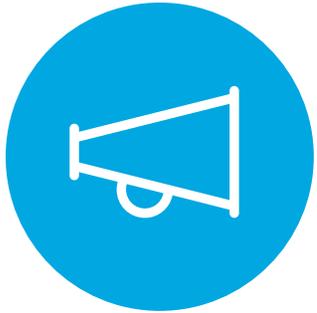
Social media reinforces UBC’s position as a globally recognized education, research and community engagement leader. It connects with people driven by a vision for a better world and empowers them to realize it. By spotlighting stories of hope, collaboration and human achievement, we connect with our audience on a deeper level and position UBC as a forward-thinking institution where people are empowered to create solutions to our biggest challenges.



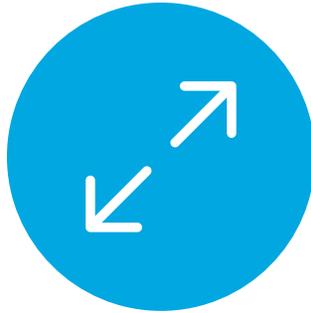
UBC'S SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

Social media at UBC

Our presence on these platforms supports the institution's overarching goals by:



Promoting global leadership in sustainability and wellbeing, inspiring transformative teaching and learning experiences and building a diverse culture rooted in innovation, collaboration and inclusion



Expanding connections that enable us to learn from others and share our groundbreaking work and research with local communities and people across the globe



Celebrating the immense potential of people and community members at UBC who are doing great things

UBC'S SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

Our strategy

At UBC, our social media strategy is all about staying ahead of the curve. We're not just reacting to changes but proactively adapting to our audience's evolving behaviours and the latest platform trends. We are moving away from one-size-fits-all content and crafting strategies that resonate with each specific channel's unique cultures, capabilities and performance analytics.

OUR BRAND GOAL

At UBC, we use social media to create, share and celebrate knowledge that inspires people to maximize their potential to shape a better world.

OUR MARKETING GOAL

Increase our followers by sharing content that drives positive engagement, which will lead to greater reach.

OUR PLATFORMS

UBC actively engages with its community through our primary social media platforms: **Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn** and **YouTube**.

OUR CONTENT STRATEGY

We share content that aligns with the university's strategic direction, our brand and maximum online engagement. There are four pillars for our content: **Foster Culture and Community, Expand Connections Beyond Campus, Mobilize Research and Knowledge** and **Celebrate People and Potential**.

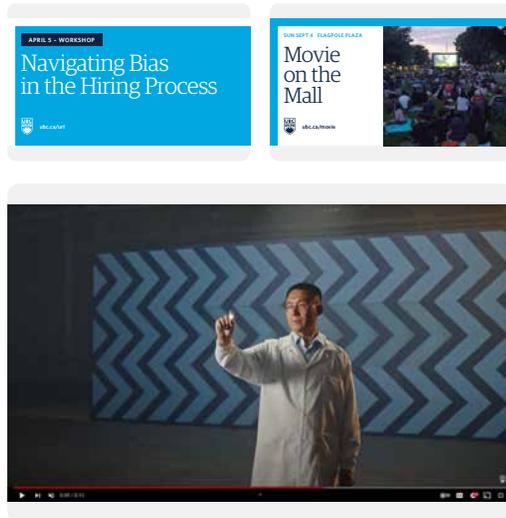
UBC'S SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

Platforms

Primary platforms

INSTAGRAM, TIKTOK, LINKEDIN, YOUTUBE

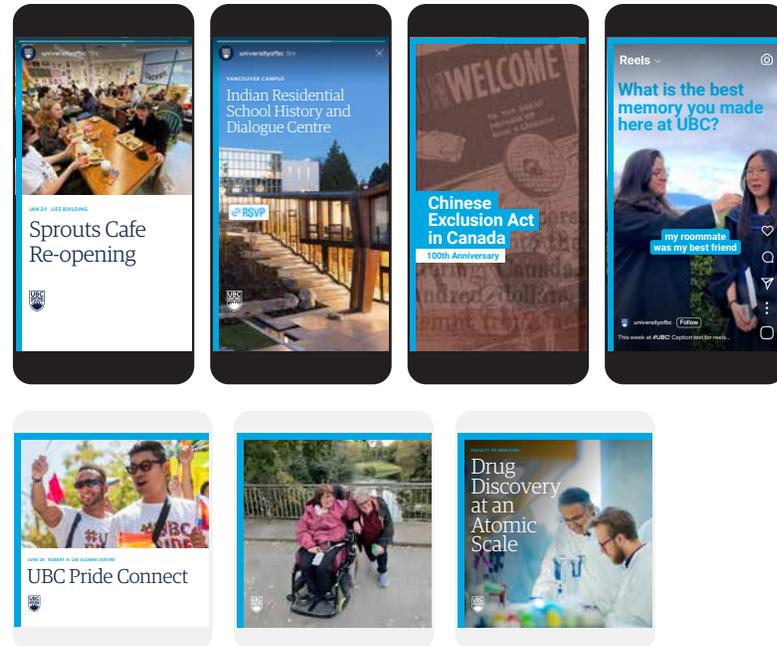
UBC actively engages with its community through our primary social media platforms: Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn and YouTube.



Maintenance mode

FACEBOOK, X/TWITTER

We're scaling back our efforts on Facebook and X/Twitter. These platforms will continue to receive essential updates related to institutional and emergency messages to inform our community but do not constitute a primary focus in our ongoing content creation or engagement strategies.



UBC'S SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

Audiences

What we know about our followers:

- They are **broad** and interested in UBC-wide content, rather than department- or demographic-specific.
- They are **Vancouver-based**; they follow once they apply for or arrive at campus.
- They are **proud and nostalgic**: they want to see their school succeed and be reminded of life at UBC (even if they're still there).
- Content applicable to several of our **key audiences** performs better than content that is specific to niche or singular audiences.

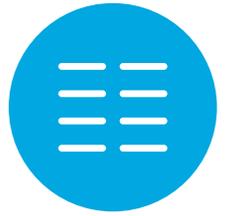


WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR OUR CHANNELS?

- Students follow UBC on channels such as Instagram and TikTok as part of their new identity as students, but they don't look to the page for student-specific updates.
- LinkedIn also has a large UBC audience, including students, faculty, staff and alumni, and many of our partners who are interested in engaging with UBC content. Sharing stories that bolster our reputation also helps lift those associated with UBC.

CONTENT PILLARS

Content pillars: Quick start guide



Foster culture and community



Expand connections beyond campus



Mobilize research and knowledge



Celebrate people and potential



CONTENT PILLARS

Foster culture and community

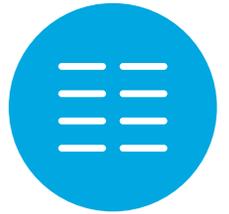
We showcase UBC's incredible cultural diversity, highlight unique academic and campus experiences and celebrate our community.

- **Student life:** Showcase the vibrant student life at UBC, emphasizing the diverse student body, clubs, organizations, cultural events and quintessential campus experiences and traditions.
- **Diverse voices and inclusive storytelling:** Showcase diverse student, faculty, and staff experiences and stories. Ensure stories from Indigenous, diverse ethnic, racial, and socio-economic backgrounds are consistently showcased, celebrating the diversity of UBC's community.
- **Unique campus experiences:** Profile cultural festivals, annual traditions and feature iconic campus locations.



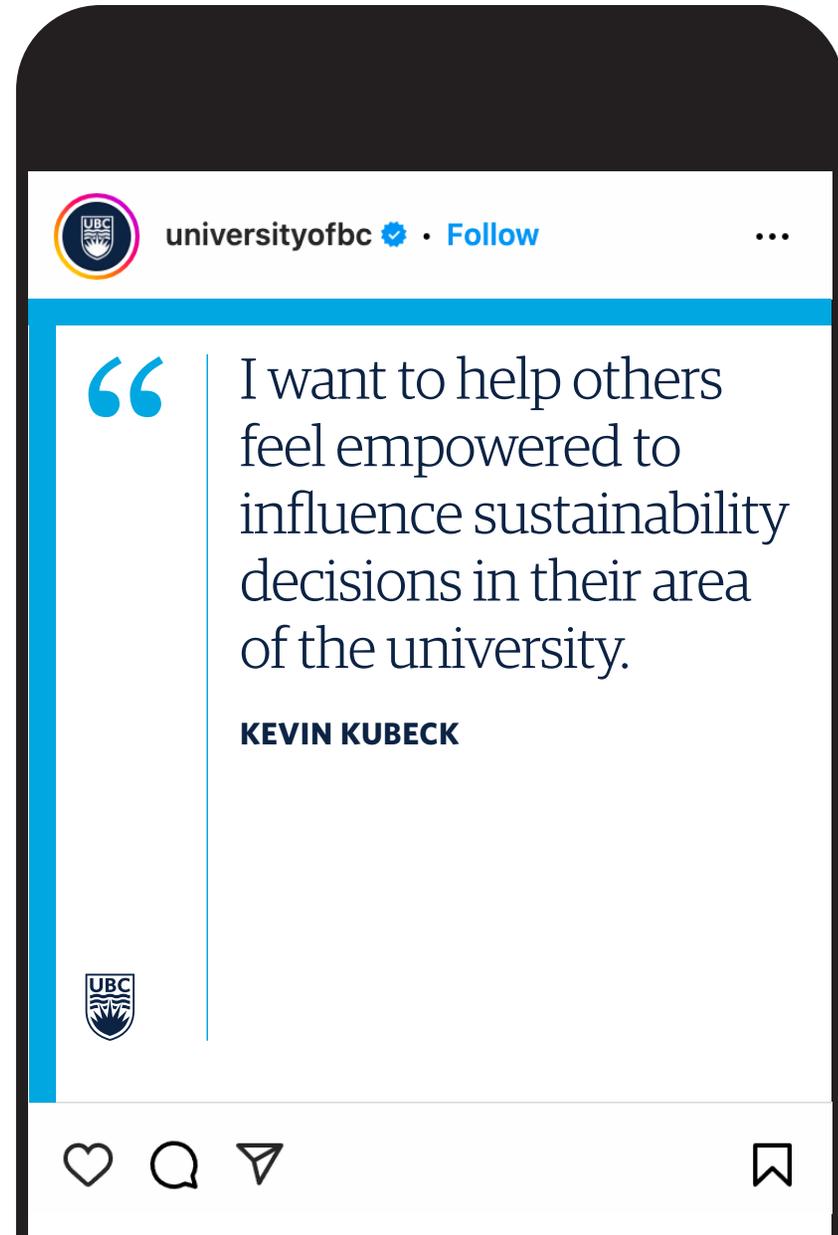
CONTENT PILLARS

Expand connections beyond campus



We tell stories and share knowledge designed to go beyond our walls, to build stronger relationships, learn from others, empower community knowledge and action and make the benefits of the university more accessible to all.

- **Edutainment:** Make academic knowledge accessible to facilitate learning and bridge the gap between academia and the general public.
- **Indigenous engagement and collaboration:** Celebrate Indigenous education and knowledge holders through stories of Indigenous students and their journeys, UBC's collaborative work with Indigenous communities.
- **Community engagement:** Profile UBC's initiatives that benefit the local communities/BC (outreach, partnerships, free lectures, community projects).
- **International collaborations:** Showcase UBC's global partnerships and collaborations, emphasizing its international reach and influence.

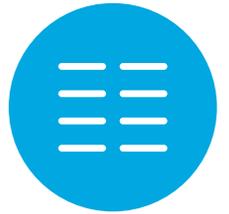


CONTENT PILLARS

Mobilize research and knowledge

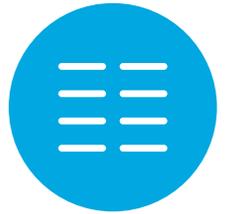
We launch UBC research into the world, highlighting our research interests, strengths, achievements, breakthroughs, people and partners. We show how new knowledge is produced, understood and used to improve the world. We illustrate the unique journey new knowledge takes from idea to impact.

- **Profiling groundbreaking research:** Use video to highlight research on contemporary issues or significant real-world applications.
- **Interactive interviews with scholars, researchers and students:** Introduce formats like AMAs (Ask Me Anything) with faculty, staff, alumni or successful students on topics of contemporary relevance.
- **Day-in-the-life content:** Use video to offer a glimpse into the life of researchers and their subjects, processes and labs.
- **Impact:** Highlight tangible outcomes and benefits that demonstrate the value of the research.



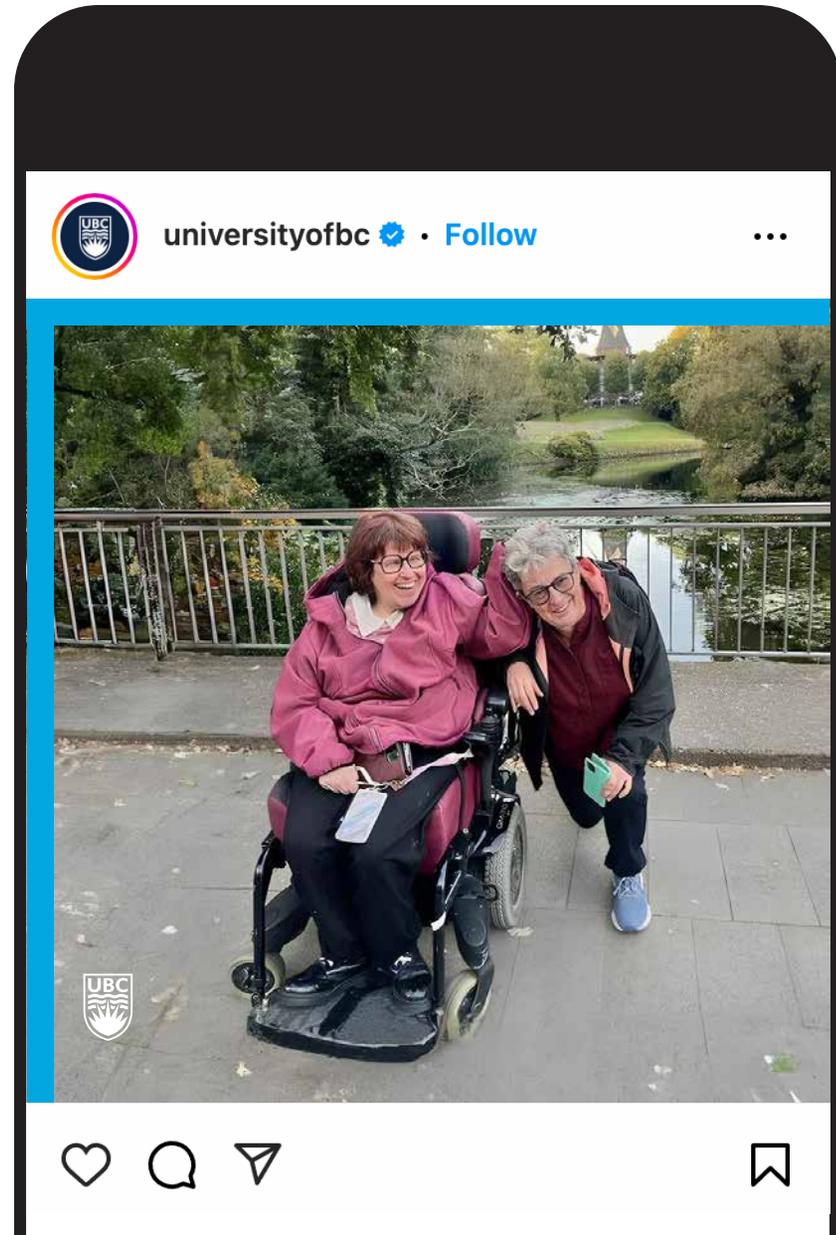
CONTENT PILLARS

Celebrate people and potential



We celebrate the power and potential of people, highlighting the humanity, perseverance, curiosity and drive of UBC’s students, faculty, staff and alumni—from the subtle delights of an ordinary day-in-the-life to the wonders of extraordinary abilities, achievements and accolades.

- **Spotlight students, faculty, staff, alumni:** Highlight personal stories that reveal the community’s character, personality and talents.
- **Show the “driven”:** Profile diverse student journeys, challenges faced and personal growth stories. Stories of perseverance, innovation and growth make the institution relatable and authentic.



CONTENT PILLARS

Content checklist



Content filter: All content posted to UBC's institutional channels must match at least three of these four criteria:

- ✓ Matches a UBC content pillar or hit topic (campus photography, student/faculty/staff individual stories, Vancouver-centric content, rankings and excellence proof points, research)
 - ✓ Info is self-contained (no requirement to visit the link to understand or see value)
 - ✓ Visuals are explicitly designed for that platform
 - ✓ Content is relevant beyond current students, faculty and staff
- Start with action:** Use compelling leads to highlight why this story matters and what they will learn from viewing.
 - Show impact:** Focus on the problem, the journey and the discoveries, and outcomes of the research. What's different now because of this work?
 - Simplify complex information:** Use simple language, infographics, animations and short edutainment videos to summarize complex topics.
 - Incorporate visual storytelling:** Use high-quality images, graphs and short clips within posts to illustrate key points and keep the audience engaged.
 - Design and create for channel:** Content should be tailored to fit the native format and audience preferences of each platform to ensure it resonates and performs well.
 - Video for channel:** Focus on platforms' preferred video formats to maximize visibility and engagement.
 - Interactive:** Leverage interactive formats that encourage audience participation through Q&A sessions, live interviews, polls and quizzes related to the research.
 - CTA:** All posts should have a call to action like "learn more" or "apply now" along with an accompanying link.

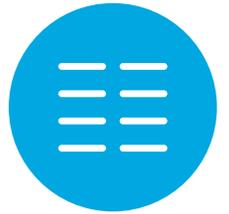
CONTENT PILLARS

What to avoid

- ✗ **Generic weekly updates:** Avoid broad “This Week at UBC” posts. Focus instead on specific, engaging stories that capture the essence of campus life and achievements.
- ✗ **Purely informational content:** Avoid content that merely informs without educating or engaging.
 - Lacks engagement
 - No clear takeaway
 - One-way communication
 - Generic presentation
- ✗ **Direct off-platform actions:** Minimize content that requires users to take immediate action off the platform, such as signing up or visiting a website. Keep engagement on-platform to maintain user interest and interaction.
- ✗ **Ported format content:** Content repurposed from one platform to another without adaptation (ported format content) can detract from UBC’s perceived authenticity and engagement.
- ✗ **Feed videos:** Videos posted directly to the feed, particularly longer videos, often see lower engagement than short-form content like Reels or TikToks.
- ✗ **Illustrations:** While illustrations can be artistically appealing, they do not connect with audiences at the same level as photographs or videos. Illustrations should be minimized and thoughtfully integrated into your content mix.
- ✗ **Link in bio:** Frequently directing users to “link in bio” can lead to a disjointed user experience and may reduce direct engagement on your posts. Try to minimize its use.

PRODUCING CONTENT

Voice, tone and messaging for social media



UBC's brand exists in the experiences our audiences have with us on many platforms. How we speak, behave and respond elevates UBC's integrity and reputation. Our brand voice and tone are the foundation of all our interactions, ensuring that every piece of content resonates clearly and coherently with our audience, creating a recognizable and trustworthy presence across our social media platforms.

UBC's voice is:

- **Inspiring and optimistic:** showcases achievements and potential impacts positively
- **Curious:** encourages exploration and innovation.
- **Courageous:** exhibits confidence and initiative without being boastful
- **Driven:** reflects a commitment to making a difference and overcoming challenges
- **Diverse and inclusive:** highlights the global community within UBC and respects all voices

Adapting UBC's voice and tone for social media

TikTok 🎵 Leverage UBC's inspiring and optimistic tone. Use direct, conversational language and encourage user interaction.

Instagram 📷 Utilize visually appealing images and videos with narratives that reflect UBC's curious and inclusive personality.

LinkedIn in Maintain a professional yet approachable tone, focusing on sharing achievements, research breakthroughs and expert insights that reflect UBC's driven and knowledgeable character.

YouTube ▶ Produce content that delves deeper into subjects, using UBC's educational and inspiring voice to explain complex topics or showcase significant projects. Ensure the content is accessible and engaging to retain viewer interest.

PRODUCING CONTENT

Voice and tone checklist



Use this checklist to create content that reflects UBC's values and resonates across various platforms, ensuring consistency and engagement in all communications.

- Did you put students first in your content, stories and messaging (where possible)?
- Did you focus on the person or people in the story—highlighting their personal achievements and contributions?
- Does your content illustrate the power of “maximizing potential” to improve the world?
- Did you tell an engaging story?
- Did you write short, easy-to-understand sentences, avoiding academic jargon?
- Did you adapt your tone to fit the platform and context without altering the core brand voice?
- Did you humanize complex subject matter to make it accessible and engaging for all audiences?
- Does your visual content captivate and complement the copy/message?
- Does your content use inclusive language that respects all community members?

WRITING TOOLKIT

To better understand how to write on behalf of UBC, reference our Voice and Tone Guide (assets.brand.ubc.ca/downloads/UBC_Voice_and_Tone_Guide_2023.pdf) and our Editorial Style Guide for UBC Communicators (assets.brand.ubc.ca/downloads/ubc_editorial_guide.pdf).

PRODUCING CONTENT

Social media photography



Today's most popular social platforms are visual-centric. Photography is our most powerful asset for visual storytelling.

It helps us paint a complete, rich picture of life at UBC —our modern buildings and natural coastal landscapes, technology-enabled labs and learning spaces, the curious, driven people engaged in everyday campus activities and incredible moments of discovery. For social posts, our photographs depict iconic locations, people and moments at UBC where real people demonstrate curiosity and passion for their work. High-quality photography not only captures the culture of UBC but also performs better.

The Four Pillars

FOSTER CULTURE AND COMMUNITY



EXPAND CONNECTIONS BEYOND CAMPUS



MOBILIZE RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE



CELEBRATE PEOPLE AND POTENTIAL



PRODUCING CONTENT

Social media photography

Foster culture and community

People come from far and wide to study, teach, research and work at UBC. They are ethnically diverse, proudly bringing their culture to UBC and helping shape our culture. Through high-quality, visually engaging content, our visual storytelling should reflect:

- the vibrancy and diversity of our campus life
- the beauty of our surroundings
- the ambition of our people
- broad and diverse individual expressions in daily life
- large gatherings and events
- people participating in new and old traditions



PRODUCING CONTENT

Social media photography

Foster culture and community cont'd

Few campuses in the world boast UBC's natural beauty. UBC's Vancouver campus is situated within the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the Musqueam.

Across campus, buildings, signs, artwork and poles provide acknowledgement and linkages to Musqueam. Our campus photos in this category should show the natural beauty that surrounds UBC, the iconic Pacific sunlight that streams in from the ocean and the exhilarating architecture and dynamic spaces where knowledge lives.



PRODUCING CONTENT

Social media photography

Expand connections beyond campus

Our learning, research, service, connections and partnerships help us open UBC to the world, creating greater access to our resources while also helping bring the issues, needs and knowledge of communities into our spaces where we can learn alongside others. To tell these stories visually, look for photographs showing:

- students, faculty and staff at work
- engaging, learning from and participating in communities and community-based activities
- conducting field research and learning
- participating in community service projects
- working or learning in international settings or with global partners

It is also essential to show the work of Indigenous leaders, knowledge holders and communities collaborating with UBC.



PRODUCING CONTENT

Social media photography

Mobilize research and knowledge

In addition to showing faculty and students in the classroom or UBC's modern, technology-equipped lab environments, it's essential to show our research impact on the world. We do this by tracing the journey of research collaboration, from the initial real-world problem to the ups and downs of investigation, collaboration and discovery through implementation, showing how life is different thanks to the research solution.



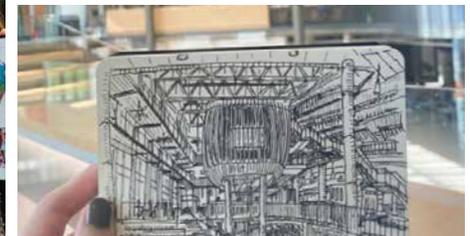
PRODUCING CONTENT

Social media photography

Celebrate people and potential

UBC would be a hollow shell without thousands of people filling it daily and animating the campus with their energy, interests, passions and talents. People do amazing things at UBC, from the excitement of their first day on campus to celebrating an entire career.

Across campus, people are discovering new skills and ideas every day. They are testing themselves, growing and learning, and overcoming fears and doubts to embrace learning, work and service that make a difference in the lives of others and the world. These students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends form our community and positively contribute to our world.



PRODUCING CONTENT

Social media photography tips

LOOK FOR 

- Locations that tell the research story, unique technology and tools of the trade and the connections between researchers and others (students, patients, communities) as they work together for a better world. Close-ups and details make research stories visually rich.
- Beautiful sunlight, modern architectural elements, inspiring learning spaces and places where people gather to share a meal or take a break. Our campus is as much about the big, impressive spaces as it is about the smaller, more intimate settings we inhabit.
- Moments when people come together to share an experience, show their pride in learning or cheering on a team, or participate in a cultural experience. Our photographs should show what it means to find belonging in our community.
- Photos of people who feel natural and in the moment rather than posed or staged. Seek genuine expressions of concentration, inspection, joy, camaraderie and connection.
 - **Authenticity Appeals and Engages:** Aim for authenticity, whether capturing candid moments with a smartphone or crafting images with professional equipment. Photos that feel genuine and relatable resonate more with audiences.
 - **Quality Matters:** Even with organic shots, consider lighting, composition and clarity. Regardless of the device, a well-taken photo can stand out and tell a compelling story.

 RESOURCE

UBC's Guidelines for Respectful Image Usage (assets.brand.ubc.ca/downloads/ubc_respectful_image_usage_guidelines_2023.pdf) can help ensure photographs are used appropriately.

PRODUCING CONTENT



UBC social media image creation: Quick start guide

This guide will help you produce compelling, on-brand images that reflect the essence of UBC across all social media platforms.



Foster culture and community

- Capture diverse, authentic interactions and celebrations. Emphasize group activities.
- Campus Beauty: Focus on natural beauty, architectural details and inspiring spaces. Use natural light to enhance the atmosphere.

Expand connections beyond campus

- Document interactions with local and international communities.
- Highlight field research, community service and Indigenous collaborations.

Mobilize research and knowledge

- Show research environments, tools and collaborative efforts.
- Capture the journey from concept to solution, emphasizing real-world impacts.

Celebrate people and potential

- Photograph candid moments of students, faculty, staff and alumni.
- Focus on genuine expressions and transformative experiences.

General tips

- **Authenticity:** Prioritize spontaneous over staged photos.
- **Composition:** Utilize the rule of thirds for engaging shots.
- **Lighting:** Opt for natural lighting wherever possible.
- **Diversity:** Showcase a broad representation of the UBC community.

PRODUCING CONTENT



Photography checklist

- Authentic scenarios and locations:** Ensure all scenarios and locations feel genuine and natural. Avoid settings that feel contrived or overly staged.
- Interactive subjects:** Aim to photograph individuals in interaction. This adds life and dynamism to the images. Where appropriate, capture detail shots to highlight specific moments or features.
- Genuine emotions:** Prioritize authentic emotions and expressions in your subjects. Steer clear of posed or artificial scenarios, such as exaggerated expressions or unnatural activities typical of stock photos.

- Composition variety:** Balance horizontal and vertical shots. This variety ensures flexibility in how the images can be used across different media and layouts.
- Optimal resolution settings:** When using a mobile device for photography, set your video and photo resolution to the highest possible quality to capture the best images.
- Concise storytelling:** Whether through captions or direct text on graphics, keep your messaging brief and to the point. Effective communication should quickly capture the essence of the story, leaving the audience either intrigued or well-informed.

Three-tiered framing approach

- Wide shots:** Capture wide shots to establish the context of locations and landscapes.
- Medium shots:** Focus on people and portraits with medium shots that offer a closer view while providing some background context.
- Close-up shots:** Use close-ups to capture important details, adding depth and focus to the storytelling.

Graphic storytelling considerations

- Text and visual harmony:** Ensure any text complements the imagery without dominating the visual flow.
- On-brand design:** Use fonts and colours that align with the UBC brand standards, ensuring they are easily readable, particularly on smaller screens.

PRODUCING CONTENT

Pro photography settings for iPhone



Follow these guidelines when you're shooting on an iPhone to create high-quality social media photos that captivate and engage your audience.

For iPhone

- Set HDR to auto:** Ensure HDR (High Dynamic Range) is set to auto for balanced exposure across your photos.
- Enable grid lines:** Turn on the grid in camera settings to help compose shots using the rule of thirds.
- Use portrait mode:** For depth effect and focus on the subject, use Portrait mode when applicable.
- Opt for highest quality:** Always set the camera to capture photos and videos in the highest resolution.
- Stabilization:** Avoid blurry images using a tripod or steady surface, especially in low light.
- Manual focus and exposure:** Tap and hold on the subject to lock focus and swipe up or down to adjust exposure.
- Avoid digital zoom:** Use optical zoom if available, or get closer to your subject to maintain image quality.

RESOURCE

UBC Brand photography resources can be found at brand.ubc.ca/guidelines/photography.

PRODUCING CONTENT

Pro photography settings for DSLR cameras



Follow these guidelines when you're shooting on a DSLR camera to create high-quality social media photos that captivate and engage your audience.

For DSLR

- Shoot in RAW:** If available, shoot in RAW format for higher quality images and more control in post-processing.
- Manual mode:** Use manual mode to adjust shutter speed, aperture and ISO settings for full control over exposure.
- Aperture priority mode:** For portraits, use a wide aperture (low f-number) to achieve a blurred background effect.
- Shutter priority mode:** For action shots, choose a faster shutter speed to freeze motion.
- ISO settings:** Keep ISO as low as possible to reduce grain. Increase only when necessary in low-light conditions.
- White balance:** Adjust the white balance according to the lighting conditions to keep colors true to life.
- Use a tripod:** A tripod stabilizes the camera to prevent shake, especially in low light or for long exposures.

RESOURCE

UBC Brand photography resources can be found at brand.ubc.ca/guidelines/photography.

PRODUCING CONTENT

Social media video

UBC's social media video content helps forge stronger connections with our community, showcasing UBC as a place of inspiration, innovation and inclusivity.

EMBRACING HUMAN STORIES

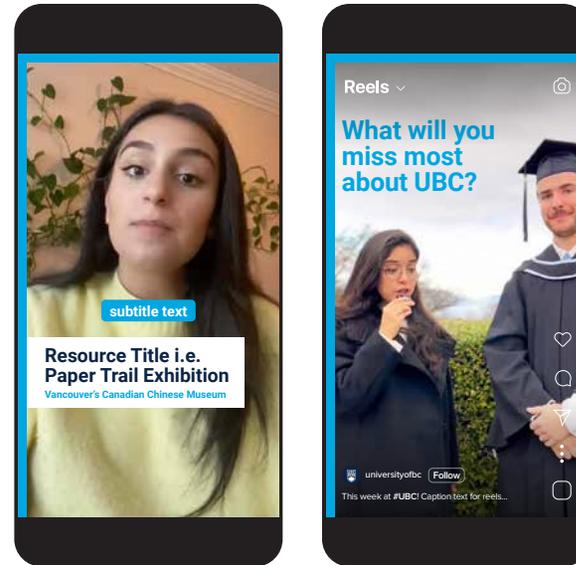
Start your video with a compelling hook within the first few seconds to prevent scrolling. Tease the content's value upfront to keep viewers watching. Our videos should illuminate the curiosity, initiative and courage that define our community and highlighting passionate individuals dedicated to shaping a better future.

REELS/TIKTOKS/SHORT VIDEOS

Carefully leverage the creative tools and effects available on platforms like TikTok and Instagram Reels, utilizing simple edits, transitions, quick cuts, trending sounds and engaging visuals to tell compelling stories within concise timeframes.

YOUTUBE

YouTube allows for more in-depth storytelling, perfect for detailed explorations of research initiatives, comprehensive event coverage, and informative content that positions UBC as a thought leader. Educational content, expert interviews and student testimonials effectively engage a wider audience.



LEVERAGING AUDIO TO ENHANCE NARRATIVES

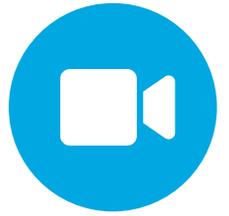
Sound is pivotal in enriching our storytelling, providing texture and depth to the visual narrative. The strategic use of audio elements should complement the video content without distracting from the message. Quality sound recording and thoughtful audio selection support the narrative.

ENGAGEMENT AND ACCESSIBILITY

Every video should encourage viewer interaction through direct calls to action, engaging questions or prompts for feedback. Additionally, ensuring accessibility through captions and descriptive audio ensures that our content is inclusive and reaches a broader audience.

PRODUCING CONTENT

Quick start guide for creating social media videos with iPhone



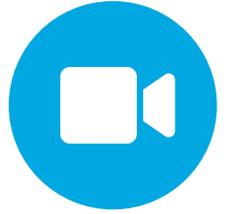
Follow these guidelines when you're shooting on an iPhone to create high-quality social media videos that captivate and engage your audience.

For iPhone

- Resolution and frame rate:** Set your iPhone to record in the highest resolution. Use 60 frames per second (fps) for smooth motion, especially for dynamic scenes. For a more cinematic look, use 24 fps.
- Stabilization:** Use a gimbal or handheld stabilizer to keep your footage smooth. The iPhone's built-in optical image stabilization helps, but additional hardware can significantly improve results.
- Focus and exposure:** Press and hold on the part of the scene you want to highlight to lock focus and exposure. Focus lock prevents the camera from adjusting focus or exposure during the shot.
- Composition:** Use the grid setting to align shots according to the rule of thirds. Composition enhances visual interest and balance in your videos.
- Lighting:** Natural light works best. When indoors, shoot near windows or use additional lighting like a ring light to brighten faces without harsh shadows.
- Sound:** Use an external microphone to enhance audio quality, especially if the subject is speaking. Clear audio is crucial for engagement.
- Editing apps:** Use apps like CapCut, iMovie or Adobe Premiere Rush to edit directly on your iPhone. These apps allow for quick adjustments and immediate sharing.

PRODUCING CONTENT

Quick start guide for creating social media videos with DSLR cameras



Follow these guidelines when you're shooting on a DSLR camera to create high-quality social media videos that captivate and engage your audience.

For DSLR

- Resolution and frame rate:** Set your DSLR to the highest resolution and choose a frame rate. Use 60 fps for smooth motion and 24 fps for a cinematic feel.
- Manual settings:** For the best results, control shutter speed, aperture and ISO manually. A general rule for shutter speed is to set it at double your frame rate (e.g., 1/50 sec for 24 fps).
- Focus:** Use manual focus for precise control, especially in dynamic scenes where autofocus may struggle.
- Sound:** Invest in a good quality external microphone. DSLRs do not typically have great built-in microphones; good audio is essential.
- Stabilization:** Use a tripod or a shoulder rig to stabilize your camera, especially for static shots or panning.
- Lighting:** Utilize external lights to ensure your subject is well-lit. Be mindful of the lighting setup to avoid unwanted shadows and to enhance the video's overall mood.
- Post-production:** Use video editing software like Adobe Premiere Pro or Final Cut Pro for editing. These programs offer advanced options for colour grading, sound mixing and adding effects that can elevate the production value of your videos.

CHANNEL GUIDE

Social media tips



INSTAGRAM FEED

- Use portrait-first video or carousel images.
- Don't include a formal "intro" or pleasantries (leave for caption).
- Use quick edits or walking film to create a sense of momentum.
- Include sound-off captions (video) or text overlays of quotes (carousels).
- Include quotes in captions.

INSTAGRAM STORIES AND REELS

Capture attention immediately

- Your first three seconds are crucial to prevent scrolling past your content.
- Use engaging elements like trending audio, eye-catching visuals or intriguing teasers right from the start.
- A compelling caption can also serve as a backup to grab attention.

Strategic use of audio

- Audio significantly enhances the viewing experience, especially for Stories and Reels.

INSTAGRAM CAROUSELS

Take your audience on a visual narrative journey

- Each slide can be a chapter, building upon the last to tell a complete story—showcasing an event, a process or contrasting perspectives.
- Encourage interaction by asking viewers to swipe through and discover more.
- Use the final slide for a solid call to action or a question to prompt comments.

LINKEDIN

Storytelling with a professional spin

- Use storytelling to highlight successes, case studies or employee experiences.
- While the narrative can be more formal than other social media platforms, it should still be compelling and humanized to foster connections.

Networking and community building

- Craft messages and content that foster professional relationships and community engagement.
- Encourage discussions, share user-generated content and actively participate in groups relevant to your industry.

CHANNEL GUIDE

Social media tips cont'd

TIKTOK 

Tap into subcultures using the ___Tok

- TikTok is home to many subcultures, such as **#BookTok**, **#FoodTok**, **#EduTok**, or **#MoneyTok**, making it a great way to connect UBC's interest areas with those of users worldwide.

Green Screens

- TikTok has its own Green Screens (a green backdrop used in TV and film that makes it easy for editors to superimpose other images behind the actors) that creators can use to record videos in the background.
- Green Screen is accessed in the "Effects" tab when recording your video.

Use skits

- A skit is a type of short video used to entertain or inform your audience through a play or performance.

YOUTUBE 

Consistency across videos

- To build a recognizable brand presence, maintain a consistent voice and tone across your videos. This includes the style of your intros and outros, the on-screen graphics and how you address your audience.

Leverage the video description

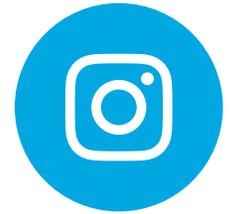
- Use the video description space to provide additional context, links or calls to action in a tone that complements the video content. This is also a space to reinforce your brand voice with a consistent message.

 HASHTAGS

- Incorporate one to three hashtags per post that help people access recurring content series or branded trends, such as **#UBCGrad** **#UBCOGrad**.
- Overusing hashtags can come off as insincere or overly aggressive marketing to followers.

CHANNEL GUIDE

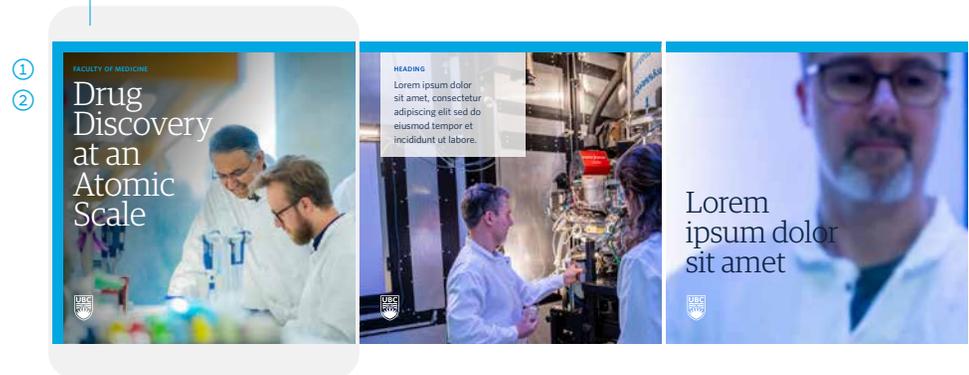
Instagram feed



Tell stories via carousels or entertain/inspire with campus life. Instagram carousels are great for storytelling, before-and-after sequences or sharing multiple angles of an event. They also tend to have higher engagement levels.

Audience(s)	Current students, prospective students, alumni, general public
Post frequency	3 to 6 times per week (max once per day)
Word count	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Max: 2,200 characters
Content	<p>Primary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Beauty shots—entertain/inspire with Vancouver campus life ▪ Tell student/faculty/staff stories via carousel ▪ Highlight awards, university proof points (such as rankings) and distinctions <p>CTA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Include “Comment to access” in the caption and automate via Manychat. Continue the link in the bio as a backup mechanism.

SAMPLE INSTAGRAM CAROUSEL



CONTENT

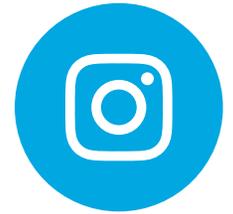
- ① SURHEAD
- ② HEADLINE

Every carousel should begin with a title frame and end with a call-to-action frame.



CHANNEL GUIDE

Instagram Stories



Use Stories and Reels to share visual-centric behind-the-scenes looks, event highlights and short, impactful stories. Offer value through humour, engaging narratives or informative content like how-to guides or thought-provoking facts.

Audience(s)	Current students, prospective students, alumni, general public
Post frequency	2 to 4 times per week (max once per day), Include at least 3 Instagram elements/ posts per story
Word count	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Max: N/A ▪ Recommended: 120 characters or less to ensure readability
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stories benefit from text and context. Pair high-quality images and videos with engaging captions that include calls to action or questions to encourage comments. ▪ Stickers like polls, quizzes, etc., are great for engagement and audience interaction. Leave space in the design for tags, stickers and auto-populating elements.

SAMPLE INSTAGRAM STORY

①
②

CONTENT

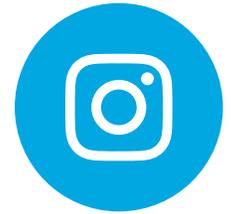
① DATE / LOCATION
② HEADLINE

📌

TAGS AND STICKERS FOR ENGAGEMENT

CHANNEL GUIDE

Instagram Reels



Use Stories and Reels to share visual-centric behind-the-scenes looks, event highlights and short, impactful stories. Offer value through humour, engaging narratives or informative content like how-to guides or thought-provoking facts.

Audience(s)	Current students, prospective students, alumni, general public
Post frequency	2 to 4 times per week (max once per day)
Word count	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Max: 2,200 characters for captions ▪ Recommended: Shorter captions of 125 characters for better engagement ▪ Keep the focus on the video content. The caption should provide context or a call to action.
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Utilize trending audio, effects, and creative editing to capture attention. Reels offer a unique opportunity to reach beyond your current followers.

SAMPLE INSTAGRAM REEL

CONTENT

- 1 SUBTITLE
- 2 CAPTION
- 3 HEADLINE
- 4 CAPTION

Utilize trending audio, effects and creative editing to capture attention. Reels offer a unique opportunity to reach beyond your current followers.

CHANNEL GUIDE

TikTok



Share digestible education or entertain with campus life.

Audience(s)	Current students, prospective students, alumni, general public
Post frequency	3 times per week (max once per day),
Word count	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Max: 2,200 characters for captions ▪ Recommended: Be specific and detailed when writing video descriptions
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ AMAs (Ask Me Anything) with faculty, alumni, or successful students ▪ Day in the Life: Use TikTok to take followers on behind-the-scenes trips through the university's life, offering a glimpse into odd and unusual spaces, unique traditions or day-in-the-life explorations with campus community members. ▪ EduTok: Break down complex subjects into bite-sized, 60-second videos. Use engaging visuals, animations or demonstrations to illustrate points. Introduce UBC professors or experts in a fun, relatable manner. ▪ CTA: Include CTA directly in video content, i.e. overlaid text saying "Learn more at ubc.ca/content."

SAMPLE TIKTOK POST

① SUBTITLE
② CAPTION
③ CTA
④ HEADLINE

CHANNEL GUIDE

LinkedIn



Highlight individual achievements or share values-aligned content.

Audience(s)	Students, young alumni (job seekers), alumni (recruiters looking for young alumni), business professionals, current and prospective employees; community, business- and post-secondary partners
Post frequency	3 to 6 times per week (max once per day)
Word count	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Text posts: 3,000 characters, including spaces and punctuation ▪ Article posts: 125,000- characters per post
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ People stories: Amplify the stories of students, faculty, staff and alumni. Highlight their successes, challenges and how UBC contributed to their journey. Celebrate alumni and partner achievements. ▪ Engaging and informative content: Share content that adds value to your audience, such as industry insights, UBC news and accolades, thought leadership pieces and professional development tips. ▪ CTA: Include a link in the caption (alongside an image).

SAMPLE LINKEDIN POST

① ANNOUNCEMENT

② UBC has placed fourth globally overall in the 2024 QS Sustainability Rankings

③ ubc.ca/news/sustainability

CONTENT

- ① POST TYPE
- ② HEADLINE
- ③ CTA

APRIL 5 - WORKSHOP

Navigating Bias in the Hiring Process

ubc.ca/urll

VANCOUVER CAMPUS

Image Caption Text
UBC Career Fair

CHANNEL GUIDE

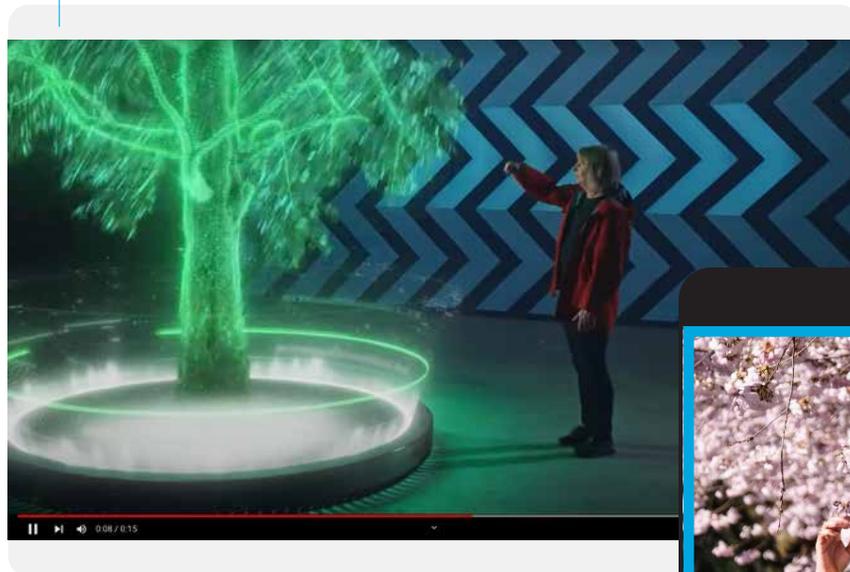
YouTube



Content should match UBC searches or be part of an ongoing series.

Audience(s)	Current students, prospective students, parents, alumni, general public
Post frequency	3 times per week (max once per day)
Word count	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Title: 100 characters or fewer ▪ Description: 5,000 characters ▪ <i>Note: The description's first one to three sentences (approximately 100 to 150 characters) are crucial since they appear above the "SHOW MORE" fold. This initial segment should convey the video's content and include any critical calls to action or links.</i>
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ YouTube is a platform for entertainment and education. Your content should be balanced with informative and engaging content, introducing UBC to prospective audiences or creating videos that share knowledge and learnings with the larger external community.

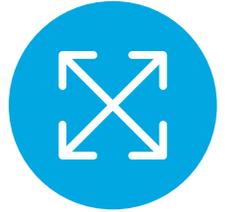
SAMPLE YOUTUBE CAMPAIGN SERIES



- 🖼️ If your video is part of a series of videos or a campaign, consider using a thumbnail template.
- ✔️ Verified accounts like the University of British Columbia official channel can upload videos longer than 15 minutes.
- 🗣️ YouTube allows you to provide your closed captioning for accessibility. Add a transcription for each video.

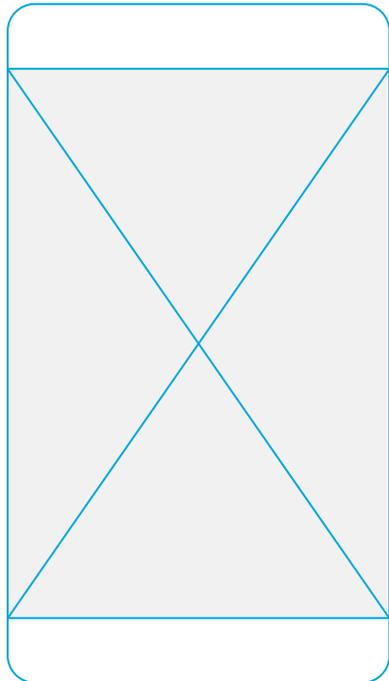
CHANNEL GUIDE

Social media specs



INSTAGRAM CAROUSELS

- **Size:** up to 10 pieces of content (videos and photos)
- **Video Duration:** up to 60 seconds
- **Min. Width:** 320px
- **Max. Width:** 1080px
- **Aspect Ratio:** 1.91:1 to 4:5



INSTAGRAM STORIES

- **Size:** under 4GB
- **Video Duration:** up to 60 seconds (longer videos will be divided into multiple story clips)
- **Width:** 1080px
- **Height:** 1920px
- **Aspect Ratio:** 9:16
- **File Format:** MP4 or MOV

Note: Cover images should be used for Instagram videos. The supported image file formats are PNG and JPG, and it must be under 30mb.

INSTAGRAM REELS

- **Cover Photo Size:** 420px 654px (1:1.55 Aspect Ratio)
- **Video Duration:** up to 60 seconds
- **Min. Frame Rate:** 30fps
- **Min. Resolution:** 720px
- **Recommended Resolution:** 1080px x 1920px
- **Aspect Ratio:** 9:16

LINKEDIN

Images

- **Single or Multi-image Post:** 1080px x 1080px (Square) 1920px x 1080px (Portrait)
- **Article Featured Image:** 1200px x 644px
- **Blog Post Link Images:** 1200px x 627px

Carousels

- **Size:** 1080px x 1080px (Square) 1920px x 1080px (Portrait)
- **Format:** PDF (recommended for the best quality), PPT, PPTX, DOC, and DOCX

Note: Publishing a carousel post with 1080px x 1080px will warn you that the image will not display on all devices. Limit to one CTA on a carousel post.

Videos

- **Video Size:** Max. 256 x 144px Min. 4096px x 2304px **Duration:** 10 minutes **File Size:** 75kb to 200mb
- **Stories Size:** 1080px x 1920px
- **Blog Post Link Image Size:** 1200px x 600px (2:1)
- **Blog Post Video Size:** 1280px x 720px (16:9)

TIKTOK

- **Max File Size:** 72mb (Android), 278.6mb (iOS)
- **Recommended File Format:** MP4/MOV
- **Video Duration:** up to 3 min recorded in-app or 10 min when uploaded from another source
- **Frame Rate:** 23-60fps
- **Resolution:** 1080px x 1920px
- **Aspect Ratio:** 9:16

YOUTUBE

Regular Videos

- **Size:** 1280px x 720px
- **Aspect Ratio:** 16:9
- **Duration:** up to 15 min

Shorts

- **Size:** 1080px x 1920px
- **Aspect Ratio:** 9:16
- **Duration:** up to 59 sec

Video Thumbnail

- **Size:** 1280px x 720px

MANAGEMENT

UBC institutional channel editorial process

UBC Brand and Marketing's social media team has established a structured process for managing and curating content submitted by various units and faculties for posting on the university's institutional social media channels. This process ensures all content aligns with UBC's branding and strategic communication goals.

UBC EMPLIFI

Emplifi is available for UBC units on a paid account basis. It enables staff and students to share approved, branded content easily across personal social networks, enhancing UBC's online visibility and consistency in messaging. Emplifi also offers analytics to track engagement, making it an effective solution for optimizing social media strategies and increasing the impact of UBC communications.



MANAGEMENT

UBC institutional channel editorial process

Submit

We focus primarily on submissions through Emplifi and our submission form on brand.ubc.ca.

- **Primary submission via Emplifi (paid platform):**
Emplifi is the preferred method for submitting, approving and planning content.
- **Alternative submission via [submission form](#):** For units that do not have access to Emplifi, content can be submitted directly to Brand and Marketing's social media team (Caitlin Campbell and Trudy Leung via a designated submission form on brand.ubc.ca).

Review

The team evaluates submitted content to ensure alignment with our strategic objectives and engagement criteria before scheduling it for posting on our institutional social media platforms.

If yes:

- ✓ **Approval for posting:** If the submitted content meets the above criteria, it is approved for inclusion in the social media calendar and scheduled for publication.
- ✓ **Editing for consistency:** Submissions are carefully edited to ensure they meet UBC's accuracy, consistency, tone and formatting standards.
- ✓ **Dynamic scheduling:** The editorial calendar is continuously updated to incorporate new submissions and adjust the timing of posts as necessary.

If no:

- ✗ **Revisions and alternatives:** Content not meeting these standards may be returned to the originating unit for revision. In some cases, it may be suggested that the content would be better suited for a different communication channel, ensuring that all shared publicly aligns with UBC's standards and strategic goals.

MANAGEMENT

Content evaluation framework

- ✓ **Alignment with UBC's four content pillars:** First and foremost, all content must resonate with one or more of UBC's four core content pillars. These pillars encapsulate the essence of UBC's messaging and thematic priorities, guiding the overarching narrative portrayed across our social media channels.
- ✓ **Engagement metric requirements:** To ensure that the content engages effectively with our audience, it must meet at least three out of the following four criteria:
 - ✓ **1. Relevance:** Matches a hit topic, aligns with a platform directive or supports an institutional messaging content pillar.
 - ✓ **2. Platform-specific visuals:** Visual elements should be custom-designed for the specific social media platform to enhance user engagement and ensure optimal presentation.
 - ✓ **3. Broader relevance:** The content should appeal not only to current students, faculty and staff but also to prospective students, alumni and the wider community, reflecting UBC's diverse and inclusive nature.
 - ✓ **4. Use of UBC social media branded templates:** All content must utilize a UBC branded template. This ensures consistency in visual branding across all posts, reinforcing UBC's identity and professional image.

LEAD TIME AND SCHEDULING

A minimum lead time of five business days is suggested for planning and coordinating social media posts. This allows the team to manage the increasing requests more effectively and reduces the stress of last-minute scheduling changes.

SOCIAL MEDIA RESOURCES & SUPPORTS

Templates and guidelines: UBC Brand and Marketing provides [templates](#), guidelines and best practices to help units craft their submissions in alignment with UBC's social media strategy.

Training and guidance: The Social Media Managers User Group (SMMUG) is available to all social media managers across the university for training and guidance.

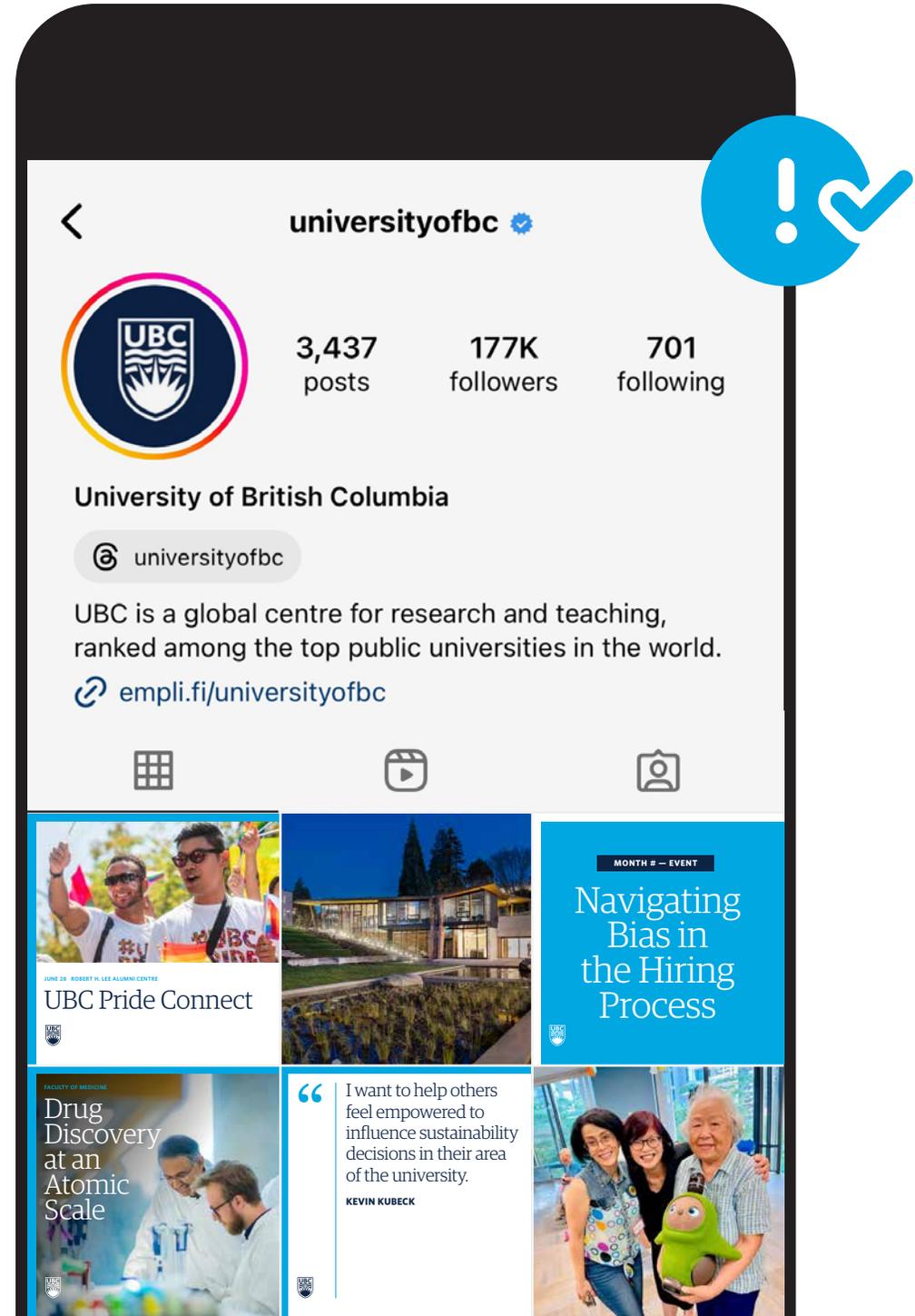
MEASUREMENT

What we measure

At the heart of UBC's social media strategy lies a simple yet pivotal formula: **Engagement** leads to **Reach**, which fosters **Follower Growth**. This relationship underscores the importance of engagement as a metric and the cornerstone of our social media performance across all platforms.

Why focus on engagement?

Engagement rate is our primary metric for analysis due to its direct correlation with reach (impressions) and subsequent impact on follower growth. Higher engagement rates indicate content that resonates well with our audience, increasing visibility (reach) and attracting new followers. Therefore, we recommend prioritizing engagement to drive overall social media success.



MEASUREMENT

Measurement tips

Consistent monitoring

Regularly check your analytics to understand trends and patterns in engagement.

Audience feedback

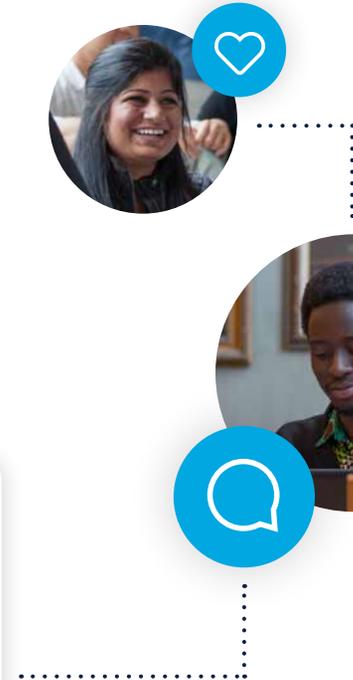
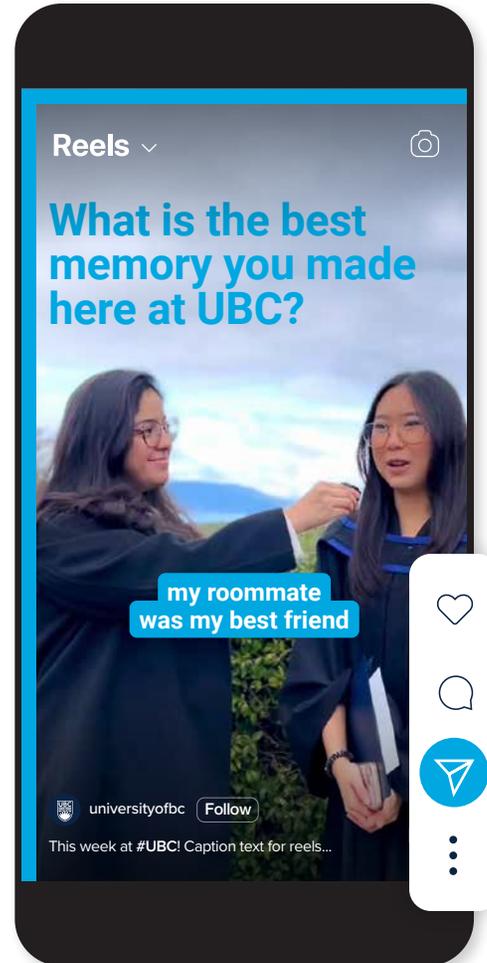
Pay attention to comments and direct feedback for qualitative insights.

Benchmarking

Compare your engagement rates against industry standards or similar institutions for context.

Experiment and iterate

Use engagement data to test different content types, posting times and strategies to see what works best for your audience.



MEASUREMENT



How to measure engagement

Engagement metrics offer invaluable insights into how your content resonates with your audience. Here's how to effectively measure engagement on Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn and YouTube:

Instagram

- **Engagement rate:** Calculate by adding up likes, comments, shares and saves, then divide by the number of followers (or reach/impressions) and multiply by 100.
- **Story views and interactions:** Track how many viewers interact with polls, swipe up links, or reply to your stories.
- **Instagram insights:** Use the platform's built-in analytics tool to review comprehensive engagement data, including your followers' active hours/days.

TikTok

- **Video views:** Start with the basics; many views indicate initial interest.
- **Likes, comments and shares:** These are direct indicators of how engaging your content is. High numbers here signal that viewers watched your video and were motivated to interact with it.
- **Completion rate:** Measure how often viewers watch your video to the end. Higher completion rates improve discoverability on the platform.
- **TikTok analytics:** Dive into TikTok's analytics for deeper insights into audience demographics, which can inform future content.

LinkedIn

- **Engagement rate:** Similar to Instagram, combine likes, comments and shares, then divide by reach or impressions. Consider tracking engagement rate both per post and overall.
- **Click-through rate (CTR):** This is especially important for posts with external links. It measures the effectiveness of your call to action.
- **LinkedIn Analytics:** This tool provides detailed metrics on post-performance, follower growth, and engagement trends, helping you tailor your content to professional audiences.

YouTube

- **Watch time:** A crucial metric that influences YouTube's recommendation algorithm. Longer watch times are generally better.
- **Likes, comments and shares:** Reflect viewers' direct engagement with your content.
- **Subscriber growth:** Tracks how your content affects your channel's growth. Sudden spikes can indicate highly engaging content.
- **YouTube analytics:** Offers in-depth insights, including audience retention graphs, showing where viewers stop watching.



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