



STUDENT PEACE ALLIANCE

Social Media Guide

What is digital advocacy? What does it do?

Advocacy work is all about promoting a cause, so digital advocacy simply means doing this work online. Using social media is a smart and easy way to gain supporters, increase visibility, and maintain existing ties with organizations and individuals.

“Digital advocacy is the use of digital technology to contact, inform, and mobilize a group of concerned people around an issue or cause. The purpose of digital advocacy is to galvanize supporters to take action.”¹

Four Skills Needed to use Social Media to Drive Social Change:

Focus – hatch a goal that will make an impact

Grab Attention – stick out in an overcrowded, over-messaged, noisy world

Engage – help people connect with your goal

Take Action – empower others, enable them, and cultivate a movementⁱ



Social Media Do's	Social Media Don'ts ⁱⁱ
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a unique voice • Be positive in what you write and share • Proofread for spelling and accuracy before posting • Share lots of pictures! • Mention other relevant organizations, people, or places by <u>sharing links</u> and using <u>hashtags</u>. • Save articles and images related to your chapters' interests in a folder on your computer and use them in future posts • Include social media info on printed materials • Post about meetings and events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go days without posting anything • Write overly long and wordy posts • Argue with your followers. (But don't hesitate to engage in meaningful dialogue which sometimes includes respectful disagreement!) • Post anyone's personal information on the page • Forget sign in information and let the page die out • Use personal passwords on any page

How to grow viewership:

It's not only *what* you post, it's **when** you post. Getting more views and growing followers can be helped by posting at the optimal time of day on a specific social media platform.

Optimal posting at: ^{iii iv}

- Facebook: 1pm-4pm
- Twitter: 1pm-3pm
- Instagram: 5pm-6pm

Pictures, pictures, pictures: Images and videos drive traffic on social media because they grab attention. Plus, they are easy for followers to share, retweet or favorite. Ask SPA members and friends to share these images to drive viewership.

Analytics: Keep track of your posts' and site's viewership with analytics data in order to understand what is already working and how you can make an even greater impact. Facebook and Twitter both offer internal analytics tracking. The sites below offer free analytics services for a variety of social media.

- Agropulse: <http://www.agorapulse.com/free-facebook-marketing-tools-pop-up>
- Komfo: <http://komfo.com/pricing-plans/>
- Sum All: <https://sumall.com/>

How to use different platforms:

What do you want to say? How do you want to say it? Who should see it?

Ask yourself these questions to understand what kind of content and messaging each social media platform supports and tailor the posts of your SPA chapter accordingly. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, blogs, and Tumblr are among the most commonly used platforms for college groups.

Facebook: Good for communicating with your chapter!

Almost every college student has a Facebook account and more and more organizations are learning the benefits of creating a Facebook account. Facebook can be an extremely effective way to keep your chapter informed, to increase visibility, gain momentum, and recruit new students. If you keep it updated with lively photos and information about upcoming events, it can serve as an important tool for growing your chapter and keeping it robust.

Create an SPA Facebook Group:

- Include mission and vision of your chapter
- Post tons of pictures from events
- Post your meeting times
- Keep the group open to the public
- Invite everyone you know on campus
- Post about upcoming events
- Make sure login information is passed down as members graduate
- Use them for petitioning
- If you do letter writing campaigns or lobbying events, make info available for your group members to take action if they can't attend an event



Make Facebook Events:

- Create these from your group
- Every time you are having a campus event (besides normal meetings) make a Facebook event for it as well
- Remember usually about half of the people who confirm attendance on Facebook actually show up. Plan accordingly.

Assorted tips:

- Facebook advertising resources: costs \$5 to target around 1,000 people
- Highlight the work of other student groups and link to their Facebooks
- Post something positive and inspirational each day or week

- Remember, in a pro-peace movement it can be easy to post about how much we don't like about the world. It's important to post things that keep people feeling up-beat and excited about the work they're doing.

Listserv / Google Groups: *Good for communicating with your chapter!*

- Every chapter should have a listserv to communicate within the group. You should have signups at every event and should continue to add people to the listserv as the semester progresses.
- Google groups have the capacity to create a listserv and also a space for uploading and commenting on documents.
- How to create a mailing list in Gmail:
 - <http://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Mailing-List-in-Gmail>

Twitter: *Good for activism and spreading campaigns!*

While Facebook is great for promoting events, maintaining a long-term dialogue between members, and slowly and consistently growing viewership, Twitter works for short, catchy, timely content blasts. It is a wonderful resource for connecting people from all over the world, especially through the use of hashtags and the possibility of tweeting directly at someone who you may not know personally.

Here are some Twitter tips:

- Keep it conversational. Write a Tweet like you're having a conversation with a good friend. Strive for a genuine, approachable communication style. Stay away from "marketing speak"—it'll go a long way in making your voice your own.
- What's the best way to engage your followers? Ask questions. Listen. Then show people you're listening by responding.
- Employ your knowledge and voice. This is also your chance to show off your own brand of humor, wit and know-how. People seek education and entertainment online. Use Twitter as a way to provide it.
- Tweet exceptional content. On Twitter, there's a pattern: the most retweeted content tends to contain links, pictures, videos or quotes. Paste a link of any length into the Tweet box and it will automatically be shorted to fit the 140 character limit.
- Make it shareable. What makes people share? Funny, helpful, newsworthy or inspiring content. When you write a Tweet, imagine how your followers will use it. How will it help them?

Instagram: *Good for Sharing Photos!*

Instagram is all about photos. If you have any SPA members who are photographers or are visually-inclined, charge them with the task of operating a Chapter Instagram account. This could even become an official position within your chapter. Other students who see the photos may wish they had been there and join the org!

Tumblr or Blogspot: *Good for a mix of everything!*

Tumblr and Blogspot are great resources if you want to create a blog for your chapter and provide a space for lengthier content-based posts and reflections. You can use a blog to post event info, programs, conversations, ideas and pictures.

On a blog you can...

- Write about discussions you have in meetings or at events
- Provide overviews of issues, events or topics of interest
- Post pictures of events
- Post notes from meetings
- Have guest-writers
- Share inspiring stories or news from other blogs or websites

SPA-Specific Posting for Social Media

Social Media Posting for Events: ^v

Planning and Lead-Up

- Set up profiles/pages for your event on Facebook and Twitter (and wherever else you choose)
- Edit your profile picture, cover photo and/or background on each social media profile to make them consistent
- Choose an official hashtag to use when talking about your chapter or use a related hashtag that other SPA chapters or advocates are using
- Capture photos and videos of meeting and event planning processes and share on social networks
- Create events on Facebook through your page, and send reminders the day-of

During event

- Share updates of news and activity on social networks
- Live-blog/tweet/stream the event
- Blog updates or highlights of the event during breaks
- Capture photos and videos of the event and share online
- Record interviews or talks and upload to social networks

Post-event

- Post a wrap-up to your blog or social media network about the event
- Send wrap-up email to chapter members
- Report the event on the SPA website so that we can add it to the program bank or feature it on our own social media platforms

How to integrate individual chapters pages with the SPA page:

We want to use our collective energy as SPA-affiliated groups to collaborate. We can make a bigger difference all together than we can by ourselves, and this goes also for our social media presence.

Individual SPA chapters can work to integrate themselves into the general SPA social media presence and bring visibility to both pages. They can also work with other SPA chapters to bring visibility to multiple SPA-affiliated pages, campaigns, or articles.

For instance, collaboration can be achieved through sharing SPA posts and using the same hashtags, or linking your viewers to the national SPA Facebook and twitter pages.

Communication is key to a cohesive social media presence, so don't hesitate to send a message to other chapters as well as to SPA in DC to ask for support.

i http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/the_dragonfly_effect

ii <http://iatse.net/sites/default/files/morefiles/smguidesocialmediaguide.pdf>

iii <http://www.fastcompany.com/3036184/how-to-be-a-success-at-everything/the-best-and-worst-times-to-post-on-social-media-infograph>

iv <http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/232645>

v <http://www.attendly.com/a-complete-guide-to-using-social-media-for-conference-organizers/>