



ECL Social Media Content Submission Guide

DLC LAB

Digital Literacy and Communications

About ECL's Social Media

The Department of English and Comparative Literature's social media platforms are a space for promoting ECL related events, spotlighting the achievements of students, faculty, and alumni, and showcasing research. All platforms, including [X \(Twitter\)](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [LinkedIn](#), are run by the Digital Literacy and Communications (DLC) Lab's graduate student social media team.

Please direct all email inquiries or questions to dlc_lab@unc.edu.

Please Note: *The social media calendar is subject to change based on time-sensitive promotional requests, lab staffing constraints, and departmental priorities. Additionally The DLC reserves the right to adjust graphics and captions in accordance with account branding and voice.*

1. Types of Content You Can Submit

To have your content featured on departmental platforms, you must complete the [web calendar / social media request form](#) in advance of the date you would like the content shared.

Deadlines and requirements vary and can be found below.

The DLC social media team typically publishes 3 to 5 posts per week (weekdays only) across all platforms. We aim to keep viewers engaged by publishing a variety of content and balancing event promotions with non-promotional posts.

Event Promotions

The DLC provides 3 types of event promotions posts on social media, below you will find a description of each post type, their associated submission deadlines, and eligibility requirements.

1) Round-Up Post | Submission Deadline: 5:00 pm the Thursday of the week before the event

Your event will be promoted in a round-up style events digest post. Round-up style posts are published every Monday on Instagram and Facebook. You will also receive an individual Tweet a day or two before your event.

2) Individual Post | Submission Deadline: TWO weeks in advance

Your event will be promoted with an individually published post the week before your event, and in the form of an instagram “story” post and individual Tweet the day before.

To merit an individually dedicated post, your event must qualify as Large Scale.

Large-scale events **must meet at least two** of the following criteria:

- 1)** Funded by the ECL department
- 2)** Hosted by an organization with 2 or fewer major events a semester
- 3)** Planned for an audience of greater than 50 people
- 4)** Related to the mission of the ECL Department in some outstanding way

3) Campaign Posts | Submission Deadline: ONE MONTH in advance

Your event will be promoted by a campaign of 3-4 posts, instagram stories, and Tweets leading up to the start date of your event.

Significant content (i.e., caption copy, visuals) must be submitted with the request form when submitting a campaign posts request.

Announcements & Other Content

We also invite you to share non-event announcements and other content with us that might help our followers get to know the ECL better.

Examples might include: fellowship or service awards, book publications, performances, course promotions or announcements, new faculty introductions, behind the scenes content, photos of archival research and/or classroom work, showcasing public humanities projects and/or digital humanities projects, student and/or alumni features, etc.

DEI Recommendations

The DEIA Committee & DLC Lab have collaborated on social media campaigns that highlight diversity and raise awareness with posts recommending readings and other multimedia texts that encourage meaningful engagement with (inter)national observances.

Fill out [this form](#) to submit a recommendation for such posts.

2. Designing a Visual – Best Practices

All social media requests should include a visual formatted for Instagram. Since visuals matter less on Facebook and Twitter, we generally use the same visual for a post across all platforms or opt to forgo a visual on Facebook and Twitter.

The overall goal when choosing an image or designing a graphic is to ensure your content is eye-catching and that information is conveyed clearly. Below are some best practices for designing effective visuals.

Choose the Right Type of Visual

Consider what type of visual makes the most sense with your content:

- 1) **a photographic image** - such as a headshot, or action shot
- 2) **a non-photographic image** - such as an illustration, or a period artwork
- 3) **a graphic** - image paired with text such as a flier or book cover

If you're promoting an event with detailed logistics, a graphic that includes text might make the most sense. However, a photograph or other image by itself often results in greater viewer engagement than a visual that includes text.

If using an illustration or artwork for a non-photographic image, please ensure that the image provided is either in the public domain and available to use freely, or that you provide appropriate crediting information (see below for further details on crediting images)

When choosing an image, it is also important to consider the significance of inclusive visual representation in your image selection.

When choosing an image, please ask yourself:

- “Who is represented here?”
- “Is this representation inclusive?”
- “How does this image reflect the department and our work?”

Size Images Correctly

Images must be shaped and sized correctly for Instagram.

On Instagram, the finished visual (graphic, photograph, etc) must have a height and width of at least **1080x1080 pixels** and as close to **4:5 or 1:1 aspect ratio** as possible.

If a visual doesn't have enough pixels it will appear blurry when stretched to fit into an Instagram square and will be unusable. Likewise, if a blurry image is included on a graphic or flier, that visual will be unusable.

Sizing is less important on Twitter and Facebook, although an image with a **16:9 aspect ratio**, or **1600x900 pixels**, is the most viewer-friendly on Twitter.

Adding Text

There are several important guidelines to keep in mind when adding text to a graphic.

Firstly, **keep text to a minimum**. This increases clarity and engagement with ECL's Instagram grid from a user perspective.

Secondly, **think carefully about the fonts you choose**. Make certain to choose fonts that are legible and consistent with the style of your organizations' content. Keep in mind that some fonts appear more dated than other fonts which may or may not align stylistically with the content you are sharing.

Lastly, consider **enforcing a text hierarchy**. By incorporating at least two different sizes of font and/or at least two different fonts, you can better organize your text to ensure that your most important information stands out from less crucial information. This increases the legibility of your graphic.

Crediting Images

If you are featuring an image taken or created by someone outside of your organization, ensure that you share with us their full name, the name of the image/art if applicable, and their social media handles if they have them.

Do not use an image that is copyrighted or fail to give credit to the creator of an image.

3. Writing a Caption – Best Practices

Caption Length

Along with your visual, you will also be asked to submit an Instagram-length caption of around 100 words. Official character limits are listed below, but currently, all that we ask is that you submit an Instagram-length caption. This enables us to shorten or expand it for the other platforms.

Character limits are as follows:

- **Facebook:** No limit
- **Instagram:** 2,200 characters / around 300 words
- **Twitter:** 250 characters per thread / around 35-50 words

Elements to Include in a Caption

Below is a typical structure for a 100-200 word Instagram caption:

- Open with **a creative introductory sentence** that grabs a reader's attention, such as a rhetorical question or a headline-type statement.
- Include any **logistical information** (e.g. date, time, location) early in the caption. Consider leaving less central logistical information out (e.g. ticket prices) if such information can be linked.
- Prioritize **information viewers would find interesting**. This could be a speaker's biography, a preview of the topic of a lecture, or perhaps the history of an event.
- If applicable, **a call-to-action within the last sentence or two** is an effective way to keep a reader engaged in the topic being discussed.

Voice

One thing to consider when drafting a caption is voice – both your organization's unique voice and the voice of the ECL.

The DLC aims to convey the voice of the ECL in the content that we publish. We have cultivated this voice as one that is professional, but also enthusiastic and playful in a sort of literary way. We are, after all, an English department, so use of word play or creative word choice to keep captions light and engaging is welcome!

Emojis directly relating to the topic of a caption can also be used to lighten the tone and capture reader's attention.

Tags and Hashtags

Hashtags and tags should be used to increase the impact of a post.

If hashtags will detract from a post for any reason (e.g. there are no fitting hashtags, hashtags clash with the seriousness of a post, etc.), they can be left off.

We generally aim for 2-3 hashtags per post. These can be applicable ECL hashtags, such as **#ECLEvent**, applicable UNC hashtags, such as **#GDTBath**, or hashtags related to the content, such as **#digitalhumanities** or **#queerfiction**.

Tags are used both to give credit to individuals and organizations mentioned in the post and to increase engagement by drawing the tagged individuals and their followers to the post.

Only tag an individual when it is clear that that individual has an active and public account that they use for reasons other than purely personal social activities.

Tagging organizations affiliated with content being posted is also important and can greatly increase the impact of a post.