

When tragedies happen: social media posting

Depending on the situation, we may find it necessary to post or respond on main campus social media channels regarding a tragedy or criminal investigation. Our practice -- whether it's with traditional or social media sources -- is to connect people with accurate, reliable information.

Please remember that situations will often be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and we will always be sensitive to the wishes of the immediate family members affected.

Situations where we may post content or updates include:

- Emergencies (tornado, active shooter, etc.) that have the potential to affect the safety of the entire campus
- Cases where followers (students, alumni and parents) seek clarification about ongoing threats to the general campus community
- Assistance from the campus community regarding an ongoing criminal investigation involving current students
- In special cases, we may choose to acknowledge and express condolences regarding a tragic death of a student

Posts may include: notice of a news conference, links to memorial gatherings/vigils, press releases from the University of Illinois police department, final update about arrests of suspects, etc.

We will only post information to campus social media if:

- Public Affairs has the capability and resources to answer follow-up questions in a timely manner
- Public Affairs can direct followers off social media to reputable links that offer more information or people to contact

When and how to share posts about emergencies

Communication during a tragic event can often be confusing. For unit communicators or social media managers, deciding what to post or when to share information about a tragic event can be tricky.

What to post:

- Any original post from the @Illinois_Alma account or the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Facebook page
- Any RT or link regarding the situation that @Illinois_Alma or the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Facebook page chooses to share

When/How often:

- Take the lead from the main Twitter and Facebook accounts in the frequency and manner of retweets or shares about a particular situation. All retweets, shares and original posts regarding

emergencies/tragedies/threats on campus social media have been vetted and created by Public Affairs, and are trustworthy to repost and share.

When not to post:

- If your unit does not have staff to redirect your followers to @Illinois_Alma or the Facebook page's posts about the event. Do not post or share about a tragedy if you do not have someone available to monitor or check in on all posts you choose to share.
- If a post, share or retweet doesn't come from @Illinois_Alma or the official University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Facebook page. All content posted on @Illinois_Alma or the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Facebook page regarding threats/emergencies will have been vetted by Public Affairs.

If unit communicators have questions or concerns about crafting or sharing social media messages during emergencies, please contact Public Affairs.