

Tips for Departmental Engagement and Media Relations

A Practical Guide for Chairs and Directors

DePaul College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences

Fall 2026

This guide is meant as a central reference for LAS chairs, directors, and departmental assistants who are considering how to increase engagement with students, potential students, parents, and alumni about our programs and events. **This guide encompasses the DePaul Events Calendar and DeHub; Alumni Relations; DePaul's internal and external communications departments; our college and departmental newsletters; and program, department, and college social-media channels.** For any questions, ideas, or clarification, please feel free to reach out to Rebecca Johns-Trissler at rebecca.johns@depaul.edu or Cristina Rodriguez at CRODRIG6@depaul.edu.

University Calendars

Check DeHub and the university Events Calendar before choosing dates for departmental events to make certain your event is not scheduled against something else.

1. After choosing your date(s), the first place you should go to advertise an event should be to the university's central Events Calendar: <https://events.depaul.edu>. Please tag the college in these events to alert other LAS units about your event. (This will also download your event to all Events widgets in LAS.) If you have an Events widget on your LAS webpage (meaning your more robust web pages under <https://las.depaul.edu>, not your Program Explorer pages), it will automatically download any departmental, college, or co-sponsored events to that page. See an example at the bottom of this page: <https://las.depaul.edu/academics/departments-programs/criminology>.
2. To request an Events widget for your departmental webpage, please submit a webpage update request with Cristina Rodriguez at https://depauledu-my.sharepoint.com/personal/crodrig6_depaul_edu/_layouts/15/listforms.aspx?cid=NDlkNGM5YTktOTMzNi00ZGQzLWEyZDYtZmJjNDc0ODIyNmJm&nav=YmRjNjFhNTAtZGE5OS00ZjIyLWJhNzItZTU3OWY4ZTBhZjUz
3. Finally, post your event to DeHub for student visibility: https://dehub.depaul.edu/home_login

Alumni Email

The current LAS liaison for Alumni Relations is Charlotte Perez, email CPEREZ65@depaul.edu. She requests a week or two to fulfill a request to email alumni, so the sooner you get the request to her, the better.

Newsline/DePaul Magazine (Internal Communications)

[Newsline](#) and [DePaul Magazine](#) editors consistently tell us they are looking for human-interest stories but are less interested in events. They may cover events after the fact if they're notable or have a tie to current events, but what they're looking for more frequently are **narratives about human connection**.

Think about the following opportunities to pitch Newsline or DePaul Magazine about the good work of your department or program:

- Students working closely with community partners in a project-based learning course or service-learning course
- Students who have published or presented research in national journals or at conferences
- Alumni spotlights
- Faculty research or publications, especially if those publications have a tie-in to current events
- Mission-centered human-interest stories
- Stories about the value of the liberal arts

Send these to Rebecca Johns-Trissler, Associate Dean of Student Success, at rebecca.johns@depaul.edu, or you can email them directly to Russell Dorn, Senior Manager of Media Relations, at RDORN@depaul.edu and CC Rebecca in the email. The Internal Communications Team can be reached at internalcomms@depaul.edu.

Press Releases (External Communications)

University Communications (UC) is responsible for the development, implementation and evaluation of public relations and communications for DePaul University. UC aims to promote and protect the university's reputation. UC collaborates with colleges, schools, and divisions to achieve this shared goal.

UC must ensure that all press releases and other official statements issued to the media on behalf of the university align with the university's strategic goals and best practices. This means UC must be informed of and approve all local and national news media relations activity by colleges, schools, and other university units. This includes but is not limited to:

- All official university statements and announcements. No unit outside UC is approved to make or authorize outside partners to make university-level statements.

- All press releases to the local or national news media about university programs, projects, and partnerships. Most press releases will be sent first by UC and posted to the University News website. Outside partners may not distribute press releases, statements or announcements on behalf of the university.
- Any pitching strategies to the news media.
 - UC assists with approved pitches that necessitate on-campus media.
 - UC collaborates with internal partners on high-value stories that could elevate the university's reputation.
- All on-campus media interviews. UC should also be informed of any off-campus interviews regarding university programs, projects and partnerships. UC may request a prep session with any proposed spokesperson.

Vetting media relations opportunities

- In collaboration with internal partners, UC will assess and approve all media pitches and press releases for their accuracy, consistency, reputational value and risk before they are sent.
- Partners should inform UC of the concept, key messages and timing of upcoming pitches or press releases with at least one week's notice.
- If a potential conflict arises, or if the planned timing for a pitch or release shifts, UC should be updated and may rescind or pause approval.

Supporting media appearances on campus

- UC will staff all approved interviews/media visits that take place on campus. University units should provide at least 48 hours' notice for these requests. If approved, UC will alert Public Safety and any other relevant university partners. DePaul's Loop and Lincoln Park campuses are private property. Media must receive permission from UC and Public Safety prior to filming or interviewing university spokespersons on campus.
- Every unit at DePaul should follow best practices by asking DePaul students, faculty or staff participants to [sign a media release](#) before photographing or filming content that may be leveraged for PR, advertising, or any other commercial purpose.

The Strategic (External) Communications team in University Communications may be reached at newsroom@depaul.edu.

Newsletters

Digital newsletters allow you to email your alumni and current students easily about a multitude of departmental news and events at once and can be posted to your LAS webpage. **Older alumni consistently report that their program's annual newsletter is the medium they prefer to keep up with events at their alma mater. Younger alumni prefer social media.**

Also, newsletters are a good historical record of the department's events, milestones, and achievements for the past year. Features from within the newsletter can be highlighted separately on your webpage or be repurposed as social-media posts. See an example that began as a

newsletter feature here: <https://las.depaul.edu/academics/departments-programs/english/about/alumni-spotlight>

Russell Dorn from Media Relations has requested that he be copied on all department and program newsletters (RDORN@depaul.edu). Departments that wish to share their newsletter with their alumni should email the link to the newsletter to Charlotte Perez, Alumni Relations liaison for LAS, at CPEREZ65@depaul.edu.

1. LAS Program Newsletters

- **LAS Insights (Dean: GVV):** Sent via email once per quarter, put together by Shajuan Young. The Fall 2026 deadline will be November 9th; plan for Week 9 each quarter.
- **Graduate Programs newsletter (Associate Dean: Euan Hague):** <https://www.flipsnack.com/modernlanguages/grad-magazine-draft-3>
- **Liberal Studies Program newsletter (Associate Dean: Anna Souchuk):** <https://www.flipsnack.com/modernlanguages/the-core-liberal-studies-newsletter-spring-2026>
- **Humanities X (Director: Lisa Dush):** <https://mailchi.mp/8d1e4948975f/humanitiesx-april-2025-newsletter-17991198?e=8208157661>

2. Department/Program Newsletters

- **African and Black Diaspora Studies (2026 Chair: Chernoh Sesay)** https://issuu.com/abddepaul/docs/we_are_here_spring_2026
- **American Studies (2026 Chair: Allison McCracken)** <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uC-jxR9Fz4t3tOzcMelS96qz04ZvMq66/view>
- **Criminology (2026 Chair: Megan Alderden)** <https://www.flipsnack.com/6DB7E5FF8D6/depaul-univ-criminology-newsletter-2025-2026>
- **English Department (2026 Chair: Miles Harvey)** <https://www.flipsnack.com/dpuenglish/depaul-university-english-department-spring-newsletter-2026>
- **Global Asian Studies (2026 Director: Li Jin)** <https://heyzine.com/flip-book/7fd52f7eb0.html>
- **International Studies (2026 Chair: Shailja Sharma)** <https://dpu-p001.sitecorecontenthub.cloud/api/public/content/083febcb1c744656ba3d9a6aef7ffd60?v=62cc0f15>
- **Irish Studies (2026 Chair: Mary McCain)** <https://www.flipsnack.com/CE8EBD5EFB5/fall-quarter-irish-studies-newsletter>
- **LALS/CLR/STRC (2026 Chair: Lourdes Torres)** https://issuu.com/theclr/docs/el_centro_winter_2026?fr=sZDRjNTkwODg3NTM
https://issuu.com/theclr/docs/el_centro_spring_2026?fr=xKAE9_zU1NQ

- **MOL Newsletter (2026 Chair: Li Jin)**
<https://www.flipsnack.com/modernlanguages/spring-quarter-2026-molyglot-modern-languages-newsletter>
- **Philosophy (2026 Chair: Elizabeth Millan-Brusslan)** <https://heyzine.com/flip-book/1d44f04d66.html#page/22>
- **Political Science (2026 Chair: Wayne Steger)** Flipbook link: <https://heyzine.com/flip-book/ff2213c05c.html> Adobe pdf link: <https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:US:25fe4531-adae-4b5c-863f-97eb4e5784e9>
- **Refugee and Forced Migration Studies (2026 Chair: Kathleen Arnold)** Available in .pdf format

Social Media Channels

Departmental social-media accounts let prospective students and current majors see the department as active and human and get students excited about applying and committing to DePaul, not to mention that alumni are more likely to donate, mentor, hire graduates, and return for events when they feel a continued connection to their department. Social media is often the cheapest and fastest way to create that connection and to keep that connection alive.

You don't need to become a full-time content creator, just create a consistent system that works for your program. Your department assistant should be assigned the task of uploading the social-media content, but you (or another designated faculty member in your program) should make a plan regarding what to post.

Please reach out to Rebecca Johns-Trissler or Cristina Rodriguez in the LAS Dean's office for help creating these plans, if you need it. We can help you learn how to use these content-creation tools for simple, effective engagement. Cristina also has access to an LAS YouTube Channel for longer videos.

Also, **please make sure to tag LAS** in your posts to help our reach! Our college social-media accounts include:

- Instagram @depaul.las
- <https://www.facebook.com/DePaullas/>
- <https://www.linkedin.com/school/depaulas/>
- <https://x.com/depaulas>

For posts that you would like to cross-post to the university's channels, please reach out to Maria Hench at mhench@depaul.edu.

For chairs and directors who want to invigorate their social-media channels, here are a few guidelines to help you think about how to approach the task:

1. Audience and Platform

Be clear about who a given post is for:

- **Alumni** want to see how the department (and their degree) is evolving, hear about fellow graduates, and feel invited back.
- **Current students** want practical info: deadlines, events, faculty spotlights, career relevance, and networking opportunities.
- **Prospective students & families** want proof of vibrant community, research, and outcomes.

Then match the platform to the audience:

Platform	Best for	Why
LinkedIn	Alumni engagement, career outcomes, faculty research, upcoming events	Alumni already check it for professional reasons; posts about careers and accomplishments perform well
Instagram	Upcoming events, student life, visual storytelling	High engagement with current students and younger alumni
Facebook	Alumni 40+, reunion logistics, event RSVPs	Still the primary platform for many older alumni and parent audiences
X/Twitter	Faculty commentary, quick announcements	Optional — only maintain if someone will post regularly

To keep things simple, choose **LinkedIn for alumni-focused content** and **Instagram for upcoming events and student life**, crossing-posting relevant content between platforms. Remember that longer videos can be uploaded to YouTube; contact Cristina Rodriguez at CRODRIG6@depaul.edu for these requests.

2. Increase Visibility

Video will drive more engagement on Instagram, where current and potential students will see it, than still posts. Text-heavy event flyers also don't get much engagement; instead **look for ways to increase human interest**:

1. **Faculty & Research Highlights.** A professor's new book, an op-ed, a grant, or a media appearance signals intellectual vitality to alumni and prospective students alike.
2. **Behind-the-Scenes / Student Life.** Classroom moments, student projects, and day-in-the-life content will humanize the department. Again, go for narrative whenever possible. "Student takeovers" of SM accounts are usually very popular content.
3. **Event Promotion & Recaps.** Not just "save the date" flyers, but a short story: who should come, why it matters, and (afterward) photos and quotes from attendees.
4. **Milestone & Recognition Posts.** Awards, promotions, retirements, anniversaries. Low effort, high goodwill.

Rule of thumb: aim for roughly 1 in 4 posts to be a direct "ask" (attend this, donate to this, apply to this). The rest should build goodwill and connection.

Don't forget that during events or recordings, **you will need to have attendees and guest speakers sign permission forms to appear on DePaul social media accounts, newsletters, and the website.** Find the permission form here:
https://depaul.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cSzh71jRS8VPr8

3. Writing Better Captions

Use this structure when possible:

Hook (1 line) → Substance (2–4 sentences) → Call to action (1 line)

- *Weak hook*: “The Department of History is pleased to announce our annual alumni reception.”
- *Stronger hook*: “Twenty years ago, Maria Alvarez ('04) was a work-study student shelving books in our department office. This month, she returns as our keynote alumni speaker.”

General Guidelines:

- Lead with the human element such as a name, a quote, a specific detail before the logistics. Again, lead with narrative.
- Keep captions under ~150 words for Instagram/LinkedIn; front-load key info like dates and times since captions get cut off at the bottom.
- Always include a clear, single call to action: RSVP, register, read more, tag a classmate.
- Use 1–2 additional hashtags max (e.g., #DePaulLAS, #DePaulAlumni). Hashtag stuffing looks unprofessional on institutional accounts.

4. Visuals

- **Real photos of real people** outperform stock images and text-only flyers by a wide margin. A phone photo of an actual event beats a polished flyer.
- Again, avoid dense, text-heavy flyers as the *only* format. If you must post one, **put the key story in the caption, not just the graphic**.
- Keep university branding consistent (colors, logo placement). You can find university branding guidelines here <https://resources.depaul.edu/brand/brand-guidelines/Pages/default.aspx> or check with Cristina Rodriguez (CRODRIG6@depaul.edu) with any questions.
- Video does not need to be produced. A 15-second phone clip of a professor answering “why does this field matter” often outperforms scripted content. Your phone is perfectly adequate to this task; no need for specialized equipment.

5. Promoting an Event: A Simple Timeline

Timing	Action
3–4 weeks out	Announcement post with the “why attend” story, not just date/time
1–2 weeks out	Reminder post featuring a speaker, host, or past-event photo
2–3 days out	Final reminder with RSVP link, tagged in stories if using Instagram
Day of	Live or same-day photos/video, especially candid moments
Within 48 hours after	Recap post with photos and 1–2 attendee quotes; thank sponsors or hosts by name

6. Alumni-Specific Tactics

- **Ask, don't assume.** Alumni often don't know the department wants to hear from them. A pinned post or bio line saying “Tag us or DM us with your updates — we love featuring alumni” invites content you don't have to create yourself.
- **Feature a range of career paths,** not just the most prestigious ones. Alumni working in nonprofits, government, and small business should be represented alongside those at well-known employers, which broadens who sees themselves reflected.
- **Reconnect around anniversaries.** “10 years ago this month, our majors were studying under Professor X” performs well and costs nothing to produce.
- **Close the loop after events.** Post photos and thank-you notes within 48 hours of an alumni event, while the goodwill is fresh. This also signals to non-attendees that they missed something worthwhile.

7. A Realistic Cadence

You do not need to post daily. A sustainable rhythm for a department account:

- **2–3 posts per week** across your primary platform(s)
- **1 alumni-focused post per week minimum**
- Batch content creation: set aside 30–45 minutes every other week to draft and schedule several posts at once. It helps to be proactive rather than reactive.

8. Further Ideas for Social-Media Posts

- a. Academic & Campus Life
 - Research highlights from faculty or students
 - Faculty publication announcements
 - Tour videos of LAS spaces
 - “What are our teaching/researching/current projects?” series
 - Reading lists from faculty
 - Throwback to iconic lectures or past convocation moments
 - Showcase courses or workshops
 - Tips for studying or staying academically sharp
 - Interviews with students about courses they are taking or projects they are working on
 - Day in the life of a student in your department
 - Graduation photos and other related content
- b. Chicago-Specific Content (especially around Lincoln Park)
 - Best coffee shops to study in Chicago (Lincoln Park or Loop)
 - “Must-see Chicago spots for summer/fall/winter/spring” series
 - Campus-to-city guide (transportation tips, bike paths, etc.)

- Students exploring Chicago's festivals/museums/activities
 - Student discounts around the city
 - Historic Chicago landmarks near campus
- c. Event-Based Content
- Holiday celebrations on or near campus
 - Open house dates
 - Other events for prospective students
 - Alumni networking events or meetups
 - Recap of speaker series
 - Campus tours of LAS areas
- d. Campus Life and Nature
- Nature walks or quiet campus study spots
 - Photos of LAS student life on campus
 - Students hammocking or relaxing outdoors
 - Showcasing green initiatives on campus
- e. Student Engagement
- Student photo submissions of LAS or campus related activities
 - Polls or quizzes
 - Share your favorite study playlist
 - Student-led department tours
 - Memes about the student experience in your department
- f. Admissions and Outreach
- “Why I chose TK major/minor” – current student stories
 - Advice from alumni to incoming freshmen and current students
 - Profiles of incoming students or their hometowns
 - Parents’ guide to preparing for college
 - Important dates reminders
- g. Career & Alumni
- Student internship spotlights
 - Career tips from alumni
 - “Where are they now?” – successful alumni features
 - Day in the life of an alum
 - Resume or cover letter workshops (reel or carousel)
 - Career center office hours
 - Industry news tied to your programs
- h. Behind-the-Scenes/Miscellaneous
- Playlist from someone in your academic unit
 - Bookstore merch feature (anything LAS related)

- “This day in TK departmental history”
- TikTok tours of hidden campus gems

8. Quick Checklist Before You Post

- Does the first line make someone want to keep reading?
- Is there a real photo or specific human detail, not just a flyer?
- Is it clear who this post is for (alumni, students, prospects)?
- Is there one clear call to action?
- Has the featured person given permission?
- Does it follow DePaul brand guidelines?

9. Measure What's Working

Follower counts are not the only measure of success. Also track:

- **Engagement rates** (likes + comments + shares ÷ reach) — a better signal than raw follower growth
- **RSVPs or click-throughs** attributable to a specific post
- **Which content types get shared or commented on** — this tells you what your alumni actually want more of

Review your plans informally once a quarter.

Questions

Questions? Want help? Reach out to Cristina Rodriguez, LAS Website and Social Media Administrator, at CRODRIG6@depaul.edu or Rebecca Johns-Trissler, Associate Dean of Student Success, at rebecca.johns@depaul.edu.

Questions about brand standards, logo usage, or platform access can typically be directed to DePaul's University Marketing and Communications office:

<https://resources.depaul.edu/brand/brand-guidelines/Pages/default.aspx>