

American University

Optimizing Student Engagement Through Social Media:
A Case Study of American University's Digital Outreach

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Abstract

In today's digital landscape, social media platforms serve as critical tools for universities to engage with students, foster community, and build institutional loyalty. This study examines American University's (AU) use of Instagram as a case study to assess its effectiveness in meeting student needs and preferences. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the research combines quantitative analysis of Instagram engagement metrics with qualitative survey responses from undergraduate students. The findings reveal that community-focused and authentic content generates the highest engagement, while promotional posts often underperform. Key recommendations include amplifying student-centered narratives, leveraging seasonal themes, and reimagining promotional strategies to align with audience expectations. The study highlights the importance of a strategic, inclusive, and adaptive social media presence in enhancing student engagement and institutional impact. By addressing identified gaps, AU can optimize its digital outreach to better connect with its diverse student body and maintain a competitive edge in higher education.

Introduction

In today's digital era, universities face increasing pressure to engage with students effectively, both in and out of the classroom. Social media platforms have become essential tools for fostering community, sharing information, and facilitating communication between institutions and their students. American University (AU) has turned to platforms such as Instagram to connect with its student body. However, the effectiveness of these efforts remains to be seen, raising a central question: Is American University fully optimizing its social media platforms to engage students in meaningful and productive ways?

This research seeks to assess how AU's use of Instagram aligns with the needs and preferences of its students. The study will offer insights into how the university can enhance its social media presence to foster more robust engagement by analyzing the content and strategies employed on this platform. The key objectives of this project include evaluating the types of content that generate the most engagement, understanding how students perceive the effectiveness of AU's Instagram page (@american university), and identifying strategies that could improve outreach to current and prospective students.

The importance of this research lies in its ability to address a critical issue faced by many universities today: how to effectively communicate with students in a digital environment. Social media is pivotal in student engagement, satisfaction, and retention. The COVID-19 pandemic further highlighted the need for robust digital communication strategies, as universities were forced to rely heavily on online platforms to maintain relationships with students. For AU, improving social media engagement is not just about fostering connections; it has broader

implications for student retention, academic success, and institutional loyalty. In a competitive educational market, universities must adapt strategies to meet students' expectations for personalized, immediate, and impactful interactions.

This research is grounded in two theoretical frameworks: the uses and gratifications theory and the social capital theory. The uses and gratifications theory explores the motivations behind individuals' engagement with media, such as seeking information, entertainment, or social connection. This framework will help assess whether AU's Instagram content aligns with students' needs and preferences. On the other hand, social capital theory examines how social media fosters community and a sense of belonging, which are crucial for student retention and long-term loyalty to the institution.

A mixed-methods approach will be employed to achieve these objectives. Surveys will be distributed to AU students to gather perceptions of AU's social media efforts. At the same time, a quantitative data analysis will assess engagement metrics from the AU Instagram account (@american university) over the past year (November 1, 2023 - October 31, 2024). This research will comprehensively evaluate AU's Instagram strategies and offer practical recommendations for enhancing student engagement moving forward.

1. Literature Review

In recent years, universities have increasingly recognized the importance of social media in building their brand, engaging students, and fostering a sense of community. The global shift toward digital platforms, accelerated by increased competition and student mobility, has led to social media being a pivotal tool in higher education marketing strategies. This literature review examines relevant research on social media in higher education, focusing on how universities use these platforms to enhance student engagement and the theoretical frameworks that underpin this use.

One of the key themes in the literature is the role of social media as a tool for university branding. Motta and Barbosa (2018) explored how European and North American universities ranked in the Top 100 of the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) use social media to enhance their institutional visibility and attract prospective students. They found that social media platforms, particularly Facebook and Twitter, are widely used for this purpose, with a significant number of posts dedicated to promoting the institution's achievements and engaging followers through visual and interactive content. The study underscores the importance of frequent, consistent posts that provide engaging, multimedia content to build brand loyalty and maintain student interest (Motta & Barbosa, 2018). The findings suggest that, although universities generally utilize social media, the effectiveness of their strategies can vary significantly depending on the frequency and type of content posted.

Bock, Poole, and Joseph (2014) conducted a critical evaluation of branding's impact on student recruitment, highlighting the importance of segmentation in crafting an effective branding strategy. Their research emphasizes that students are not a homogenous group;

therefore, universities must identify and target different segments based on their preferences and expectations. In this context, social media can be an effective means to communicate directly with these diverse student populations. The authors argue that institutions with strong social media strategies that cater to segmented student interests are more likely to attract and retain students. This reinforces the importance of a well-targeted, data-driven social media presence as a component of university branding (Bock, Poole, & Joseph, 2014).

Oradini and Saunders (2008) explored the use of social networking platforms within higher education, emphasizing the potential of these tools to foster both social and academic interaction. Their study of the University of Westminster's social networking site, Connect, revealed that students used the platform primarily to build communities around common interests, whether related to coursework or extracurricular activities. The study found that such platforms enable students to take control of their learning experiences, promoting a sense of agency that is often missing in traditional educational settings. This is particularly relevant to the discussion of social capital theory, which posits that social media can foster a sense of belonging and community among students, contributing to better engagement and retention (Oradini & Saunders, 2008). The findings support the idea that social media can be an effective tool not only for communication but also for building meaningful relationships that enhance the student experience.

Maresova, Hruska, and Kuca (2020) explored the branding potential of social media in higher education, focusing on Facebook activity among the world's top ten universities. Their study highlights how these institutions use social media to communicate with stakeholders, including current and prospective students, alumni, and the broader academic community. The

research found that all the universities studied posted content frequently, at least once per day, and used a mix of visual content, such as photos and videos, to engage their audiences. Moreover, they noted that universities that actively engaged with their followers, through comments and interactive posts, tended to have a stronger brand presence and a more engaged audience. This aligns with the findings of Motta and Barbosa (2018) and further emphasizes the importance of frequent and interactive social media content in building and maintaining a strong university brand (Maresova, Hruska, & Kuca, 2020).

Theoretical frameworks such as the uses and gratifications theory and social capital theory are central to understanding how and why universities utilize social media. The uses and gratifications theory helps explain why students engage with certain types of social media content. Motta and Barbosa (2018) found that content that meets students' needs for information, entertainment, and social connection tends to generate higher levels of engagement. This theory suggests that universities must tailor their social media strategies to meet the specific needs and interests of their target audiences to maintain engagement.

In addition, the social capital theory provides insight into how social media can create a sense of community and belonging among students. Oradini and Saunders (2008) demonstrated that students who engage in online social networks often form communities based on shared interests, which contributes to a greater sense of belonging within the university. This sense of belonging is crucial for student retention and overall satisfaction with their university experience. Social media platforms, when used effectively, can foster these connections and strengthen the bonds between students and the institution.

Despite the growing body of research on social media use in higher education, there are still gaps in understanding how universities can optimize these platforms to better engage students. While studies like those by Maresova et al. (2020) and Bock et al. (2014) provide valuable insights into branding and engagement strategies, further research is needed to explore how demographic factors—such as students’ academic disciplines or extracurricular interests—affect their interactions with university social media. Moreover, while the uses and gratifications theory explains why students engage with certain types of content, more research is needed to understand the best practices for different types of content and how they can be adapted to different student segments.

The existing literature emphasizes the importance of a well-planned, targeted social media strategy in higher education. Universities that successfully engage students through frequent, interactive posts and content that meets students’ informational and social needs are more likely to build a strong brand and foster a sense of community among their student body. However, there is still a need for further research to explore the nuances of student engagement on social media and how universities can tailor their strategies to meet the diverse needs of their student population

2. Methods

This study employs a mixed-methods approach to comprehensively evaluate AU's use of Instagram. The rationale is to combine quantitative analysis with qualitative data to provide a more nuanced understanding of how students interact with AU's digital outreach.

2.1 Data Collection

Data collection for this project consists of two primary methods: surveys and social media metrics analysis. Surveys will be administered to both AU students to capture their perceptions of AU's social media presence. These surveys will gather data on several key areas, including motivations for engagement, content preferences, and perceptions of effectiveness. Specifically, respondents will be asked to rank their reasons for following AU's social media accounts, such as seeking information, entertainment, or social connection. The survey will also ask which types of posts—informational, community-building, or promotional—students find most engaging and valuable.

Additionally, questions will focus on how students perceive the impact of AU's social media in fostering community, promoting events, and enhancing their connection to the university. Participants will provide demographic information, including their academic discipline, extracurricular involvement, and year of study, allowing for an analysis of how these factors influence their social media behavior. The survey will use closed and open-ended questions to provide quantitative data and qualitative insights. It will be distributed through AU's internal communications platforms to reach a diverse sample, including students from various academic departments, class years, and extracurricular involvements.

The second part of data collection focuses on quantitative analysis of AU's social media metrics from Instagram. Metrics such as follower count (as of October 31, 2024), post engagement (likes, comments, shares), and overall content performance will be analyzed over the past year (November 1, 2023 - October 31, 2024). The sampling rationale for the quantitative analysis will focus on posts from their Instagram account (@american university), which is AU's most active and public-facing account. All posts made during the study period will be included in the analysis and categorized into three main content types: informational posts (including updates, academic information, and announcements), community-building posts (featuring student stories, events, or celebrations of achievements), and promotional posts (focused on promoting AU-related programs, initiatives, or external recognitions). Engagement metrics will be calculated using a combination of total interactions and more detailed metrics, such as engagement rate, which measures interactions relative to the size of AU's follower base.

2.2 Instruments and Tools

The survey instrument will be constructed using Google Forms, allowing for wide distribution and ease of data collection. The survey questions will be informed by the research questions, using Likert scales to measure attitudes toward AU's social media effectiveness and multiple-choice questions to capture basic demographic information. Open-ended questions will be used to explore more profound insights into students' experiences and preferences. Data will be collected using native platform analytics tools for the social media metrics. These tools will provide data on post-performance, audience demographics, and follower trends. The data will be exported into Google Sheets for further analysis and visualization.

2.3 Sampling Rationale

The sample for the survey component will include students from AU, emphasizing capturing a diverse range of participants across different academic disciplines and extracurricular involvements. A target sample size of at least 50 respondents will be sought to ensure robust and generalizable findings. The sample will be obtained through convenience sampling, utilizing AU's email lists, social media groups, and other internal communication channels to distribute the survey. For the quantitative analysis, all public posts made by AU on its Instagram account during the selected one-year period will be included. No posts will be excluded, as the goal is to comprehensively analyze all types of content shared by AU during this time frame.

2.4 Data Analysis Plan

The data collected from Instagram will be analyzed using descriptive statistics to identify trends in engagement over time. This includes calculating the average engagement rates for different types of posts, tracking follower growth, and identifying which types of content are most successful in generating high engagement. Survey responses will be analyzed using a content analysis approach, where common themes related to motivations for engagement, perceptions of effectiveness, and preferences for different types of content will be identified. Open-ended responses will be coded into categories to identify patterns and key insights.

2.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations for this study will include ensuring the anonymity and confidentiality of all survey participants. No personal identifying information will be collected, and all data will be stored securely per AU's data protection policies. Since the social media data being analyzed is publicly available, no ethical issues are anticipated related to the use of this

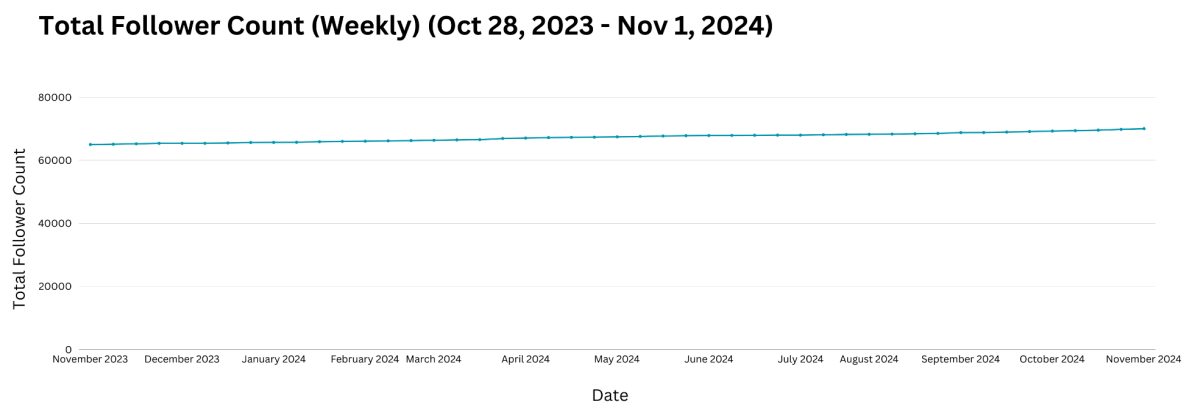
data. Several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the study's reliance on self-reported data through surveys may introduce response bias, as participants may not fully represent the broader student body. Additionally, while the analysis of AU's social media will provide valuable insights, it may not capture all dimensions of student engagement, especially those that occur offline or through non-digital channels. Finally, the selected year being analyzed coincides with the campaigns of the 2024 U.S. presidential election, which could influence and potentially alter the observed social media engagement trends.

Results and Analysis

1. Quantitative Data

The quantitative analysis of AU's Instagram account (@americanuniversity) from November 1, 2023, to October 31, 2024, reveals significant insights into its growth, engagement trends, and content performance. The account experienced consistent growth throughout the year, gaining a total of 5,022 net followers, moving from 64,982 to 70,004 by the end of the period (Figure 1.6). On average, the account gained 357 followers per month or 81 followers weekly, as shown in Figure 1.4. This steady increase reflects an effective strategy for audience retention and growth during the observation period.

Figure 1.4



During the period, 199 posts were published, averaging 16 posts per month. These posts garnered a total of 205,586 engagements, with likes constituting the majority at 201,472 and comments contributing 4,114. The average engagement per post was 1,033.1, demonstrating solid interaction levels relative to the total number of posts.

All posts were categorized into community-building, informational, and promotional content. Community-building posts, which accounted for 86 posts (43.2%), were the most effective, with an average of 1,188.7 engagements per post. Informational posts, totaling 77 posts (38.7%), lagged behind, averaging 908.7 engagements per post. Promotional posts, which made up 36 posts (18.1%), struggled the most with engagement, highlighting the need for more creative or relatable approaches to resonate with the audience (Figure 1.2, Figure 1.3).

To further illustrate the disparity in engagement, Figure 1.1 shows a detailed breakdown of key post performance metrics. The average post on @americanuniversity's Instagram account garnered 1,033.1 total engagements, with 1,012.4 likes and 20.7 comments. In contrast, the best-performing post, published on January 1, 2024, achieved 3,298 total engagements, including 3,271 likes and 27 comments, underscoring the audience's preference for visually appealing, festive, and campus-centered content (Figure 3.1) On the other hand, the worst-performing post, shared on October 23, 2024, displayed an image of the AU Tenleytown Metro Station. Despite its detailed caption promoting a YouTube video, it garnered only 10 engagements (3 likes and 7 comments), underscoring the challenge of engaging the audience with promotional content (Figure 3.2). The most commented-on post, published on October 7, 2024, memorialized the tragic events of October 7, 2023. With 2,231 likes and 597 comments (totaling 2,828 engagements), the post reflected the audience's emotional connection to community-centered messages (Figure 3.3). This comparison illustrates the disparity in audience response to different content types and emphasizes the importance of tailoring post strategies to maximize engagement.

Figure 1.1

Total Engagement Distribution Per Post

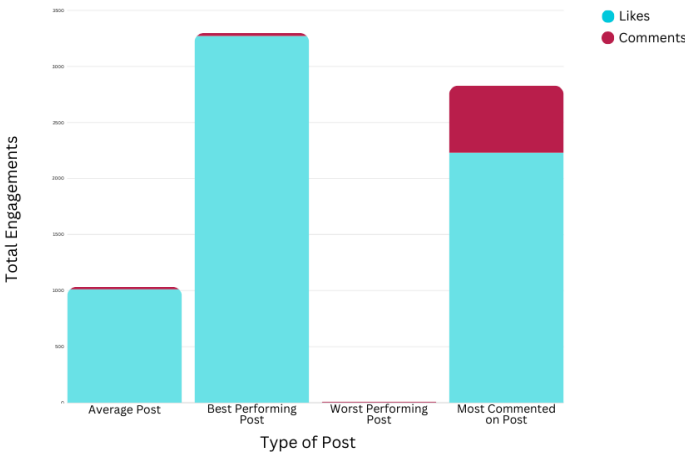


Figure 3.1

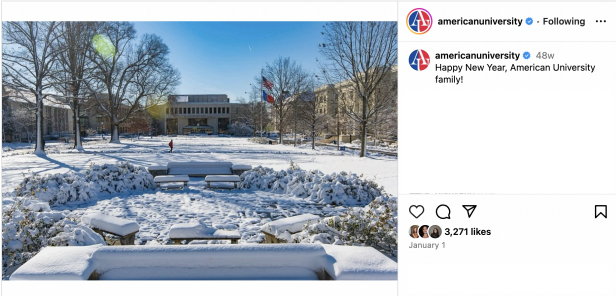


Figure 3.2



Figure 3.3



Notable trends emerged from the analysis, highlighting key factors driving engagement on @americanuniversity's Instagram account. Posts featuring students performed particularly well, as classmates and peers frequently engaged to show support, underscoring the value of leveraging student stories to foster a sense of community. External events, such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, significantly influenced engagement and sentiment, with posts like the October 7 memorial eliciting strong emotional responses and revealing polarized opinions that reflect broader tensions within the AU community. Seasonal and festive content, exemplified by the successful New Year's post, resonated strongly with the audience, demonstrating a clear preference for timely and visually appealing themes. In contrast, promotional content, such as the October 23 post promoting an external YouTube link, struggled to capture interest, highlighting the need for more creative and relatable approaches to drive engagement.

Despite the overall success in growth and engagement, several data limitations should be acknowledged. Engagement was calculated solely based on likes and comments, as data for shares, views, and impressions was unavailable, limiting a comprehensive understanding of audience interaction. Consequently, an accurate engagement rate could not be determined due to the absence of these key metrics. Additionally, the analysis focused exclusively on main feed posts, excluding Instagram Stories, which may have provided further insights into audience behavior and content performance.

Overall, the analysis suggests that @americanuniversity's Instagram audience responds most positively to community-focused and visually compelling posts. The findings, supplemented by graphs and featured post images, provide actionable insights for optimizing the university's social media strategy. Specifically, the university should amplify

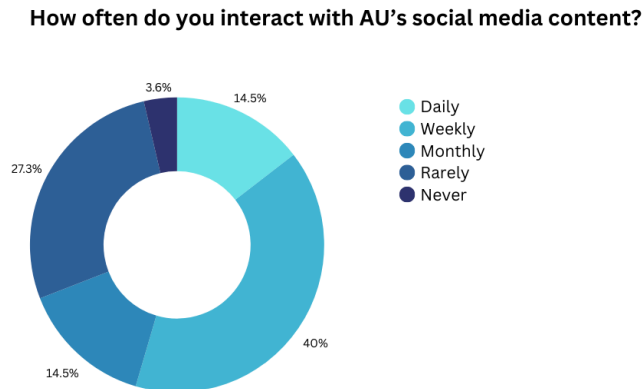
community-building content, reimagine promotional strategies to increase relatability, and continue leveraging seasonal themes to engage its audience effectively. Additionally, sensitive topics must be approached with care, balancing perspectives to maintain inclusivity and foster constructive dialogue.

2. Qualitative Data

The survey collected responses from 55 undergraduate students across various demographics, providing a diverse representation of the student body at AU. The participants included students from all academic years, with 16 seniors, 14 sophomores, 13 juniors, and 12 freshmen (Figure 2.2). Students from the College of Arts & Sciences constituted the largest group (36.4%), followed by the Kogod School of Business (20%) and the School of International Service (18.2%) (Figure 2.1). The majority of respondents identified as female (63.6%), while 36.4% identified as male (Figure 2.3). A significant proportion of students (52.7%) were involved in extracurricular activities, underscoring their active engagement with university life. This diverse sample provides a robust foundation for analyzing qualitative data on perceptions of AU's social media.

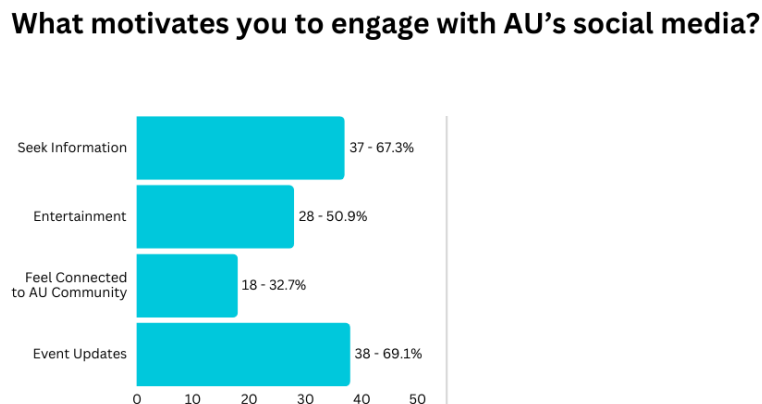
Instagram was deemed the dominant platform among respondents, with 100% of students indicating they use it, followed by X (formerly Twitter) at 28 users, TikTok at 18 users, and both Facebook and LinkedIn at 14 users each. A small number of respondents (5) reported using other platforms (Figure 2.5). All participants indicated that they follow at least one official AU social media account, showcasing high baseline engagement. However, the frequency of interaction varied significantly. While 27.3% of students interacted with AU's Instagram content weekly, only 14.5% engaged daily or monthly. Another 27.3% engaged rarely, and 3.6% reported never engaging (Figure 2.7). This range in engagement patterns highlights varying levels of connection and interest among students with AU's social media presence.

Figure 2.7



The survey also provided meaningful insights into the perceptions and engagement patterns of undergraduate students regarding AU's social media. A recurring theme was the role of social media in fostering connections among peers, with 69.1% of respondents citing event updates as a key motivator for engagement (Figure 2.9). Students emphasized that social media platforms enable them to find and connect with others, contributing to a stronger sense of community at AU. Highlighting student experiences was also a notable point of interest, with many students suggesting that showcasing diverse stories and achievements could build inclusivity and relatability.

Figure 2.9



There was strong preference for authentic content. Approximately 30.9% of respondents recommended increasing the authenticity of posts, expressing a desire for less curated and more genuine content that reflects real student experiences. Additionally, 41.8% of participants identified student-centered content as the most effective way to improve engagement (Figure 2.11). Some students also noted that supporting student-run initiatives and promoting their accounts on official AU platforms could help strengthen community ties and foster collaboration.

Another major theme was the role of social media in enhancing campus engagement. A significant portion of respondents (67.3%) indicated that they engage with AU's social media to seek information, while 50.9% also viewed entertainment as a motivating factor (Figure 2.9). Event-related content and posts that boost school spirit were particularly valued, with students noting that such posts encourage participation in activities and foster a sense of pride in the university.

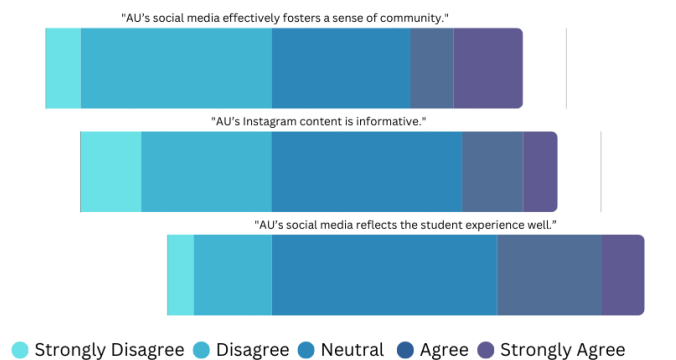
Despite the positive sentiments about social media's potential, some challenges were highlighted. Several respondents expressed concerns about content visibility, stating that they rarely see posts from official AU accounts even though they follow them. Others pointed out the need to balance content for current students and prospective applicants, ensuring both groups feel addressed and engaged. Furthermore, 38.2% of respondents called for enhancing informational content, while 10.9% suggested including centralized links to improve accessibility and usability (Figure 2.12).

There were also varied perceptions of AU's social media effectiveness and relevance. When asked if AU's social media fosters a sense of community, 40% of students disagreed, while 29.1% remained neutral. Only 23.6% agreed, including 14.5% who strongly agreed, and

7.3% strongly disagreed. Regarding the informativeness of AU’s Instagram content, 40% of respondents were neutral, 29.1% disagreed, and 12.7% strongly disagreed, while 20% agreed, including 7.3% who strongly agreed. Similarly, opinions on whether AU’s social media reflects the student experience leaned toward neutrality, with 47.3% neutral, 21.8% disagreeing, and 5.5% strongly disagreeing. In contrast, 21.8% agreed, and 9.1% strongly agreed. These results highlight mixed perceptions among students, with significant opportunities to enhance AU’s social media presence in fostering community, providing valuable information, and representing the student experience effectively (Figure 2.10).

Figure 2.10

Student Perceptions of AU's Social Media Effectiveness and Relevance



These responses indicate that students value AU’s social media for its ability to build connections, highlight achievements, and enhance campus engagement. However, they also see opportunities for improvement, particularly in content authenticity, visibility, and student-centered initiatives. These insights provide a roadmap for enhancing the effectiveness of AU’s social media strategy.

3. Recommendations & Insights

The analysis of American University's (AU) Instagram activity from November 1, 2023, to October 31, 2024, reveals actionable insights and provides a clear path for enhancing its social media strategy. This section synthesizes the data findings into strategic recommendations aimed at maximizing engagement, broadening audience reach, and fostering a deeper sense of community.

A key insight is the effectiveness of community-building content, which achieved the highest engagement rates among the analyzed categories. Posts featuring students and community-centered themes, such as those highlighting achievements or events, resonated strongly with the audience. To capitalize on this, AU should prioritize and increase the frequency of posts showcasing authentic student stories and experiences. By emphasizing inclusivity and diversity in featured content, the university can create a relatable and engaging social media presence that reflects the breadth of its community.

Authenticity emerged as a central theme in qualitative feedback, with many students expressing a preference for less curated and more genuine content. Incorporating candid photos, user-generated posts, and behind-the-scenes glimpses of campus life can align the university's Instagram strategy with audience preferences. This approach not only enhances relatability but also builds trust among students and prospective audiences.

While promotional content underperformed in terms of engagement, it represents an area for significant improvement. Reimagining promotional strategies to include storytelling, humor, and visually appealing designs can help bridge the gap between audience expectations and

content delivery. Aligning promotional posts with trending topics or leveraging influencers within the student body can also help increase their relevance and relatability.

Seasonal and festive themes proved to be highly successful in engaging the audience, as demonstrated by the outstanding performance of posts centered around holidays and major events. Developing a content calendar that incorporates such themes can help maintain consistent audience interest and interaction throughout the year.

Another critical area for improvement is content visibility. Despite the high baseline engagement of followers, several students indicated that they rarely encounter posts from AU's official accounts. Leveraging Instagram Stories, Reels, and other algorithm-friendly formats, combined with strategic use of hashtags and geotags, can significantly improve content reach. Additionally, cross-platform promotion and centralized links to other university resources can enhance accessibility and usability.

The survey also underscored the importance of balancing content for current students and prospective applicants. AU's social media strategy should adopt a dual-focus approach, ensuring both groups feel represented and engaged. For example, creating posts that highlight alumni achievements alongside current campus events can bridge the interests of these diverse audiences.

Finally, the university should continue to approach sensitive topics with care and balance. Posts addressing such issues, like the October 7 memorial, elicited high engagement but also polarized opinions. By fostering inclusivity and encouraging constructive dialogue in these posts, AU can maintain its commitment to representing diverse perspectives while minimizing potential backlash.

AU's social media strategy can be significantly enhanced by prioritizing authentic and community-focused content, reimagining promotional efforts, leveraging seasonal themes, and improving content visibility. By addressing these recommendations, the university can strengthen its digital presence and foster a more engaged and connected campus community. These insights provide a roadmap for long-term success in optimizing AU's social media impact.

Conclusion

In an era where digital engagement plays a pivotal role in shaping the university experience, American University's social media strategy offers valuable lessons on the importance of authenticity, community-building, and responsiveness to student needs. Social media has evolved into a primary avenue for universities to foster connections, build trust, and create a sense of belonging among their student body. This study demonstrates that while AU's Instagram presence has achieved notable successes in fostering student engagement, significant opportunities remain to optimize its approach. The platform has effectively leveraged community-focused and authentic content to engage its audience, but its promotional strategies require reimagining to better resonate with students' preferences and expectations. By prioritizing relatable, inclusive content and leveraging strategies such as seasonal themes and algorithm-friendly formats, AU can further solidify its digital presence and enhance its connection with both current and prospective students.

The findings underscore the critical role of social media in cultivating a sense of belonging, facilitating meaningful interactions, and promoting institutional loyalty, all of which are essential for student satisfaction and retention. However, as the digital landscape continues to evolve rapidly, it is essential for universities to remain adaptive, continually assessing and refining their strategies to meet the changing preferences of their audiences. For AU, this means embracing innovative approaches such as expanding the use of user-generated content, diversifying its storytelling techniques, and utilizing emerging social media features to maintain

relevance and engagement. Additionally, fostering dialogue and inclusivity is paramount to ensuring its social media platforms reflect the diverse voices of its community.

By addressing these needs and remaining committed to an adaptive and data-driven approach, AU can position itself as a leader in higher education social media engagement. The insights from this research not only highlight immediate strategies for improvement but also provide a foundation for long-term success in the digital space. Through continuous innovation and inclusivity, AU can set a new standard for how universities use social media to connect with their audiences, creating a model for institutions seeking to thrive in an increasingly digital and interconnected world.

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Figures & Tables

1. Instagram Analytics Data

Figure 1.1

Total Engagement Distribution Per Post

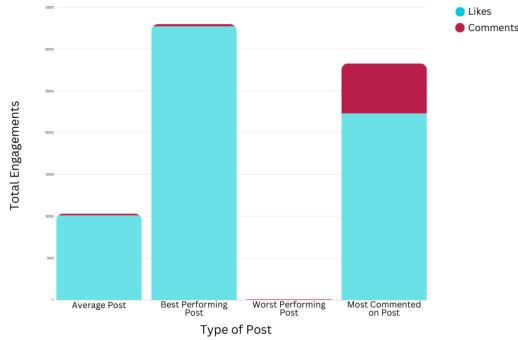


Figure 1.2

Post Type Distribution During Period

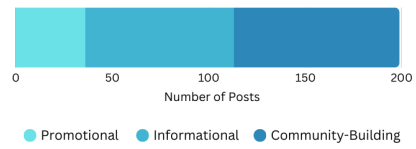


Figure 1.3

Average Engagement by Content Type

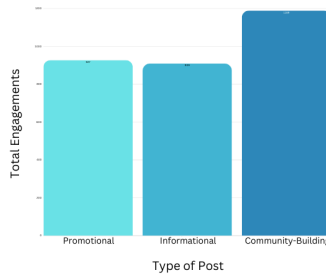


Figure 1.4

Total Follower Count (Weekly) (Oct 28, 2023 - Nov 1, 2024)

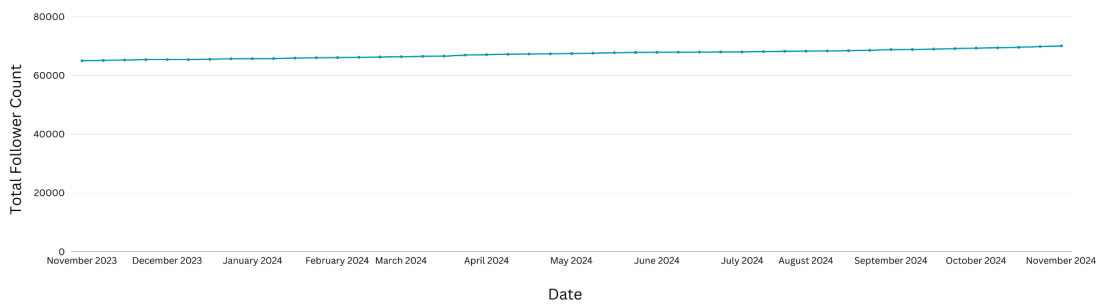


Figure 1.5

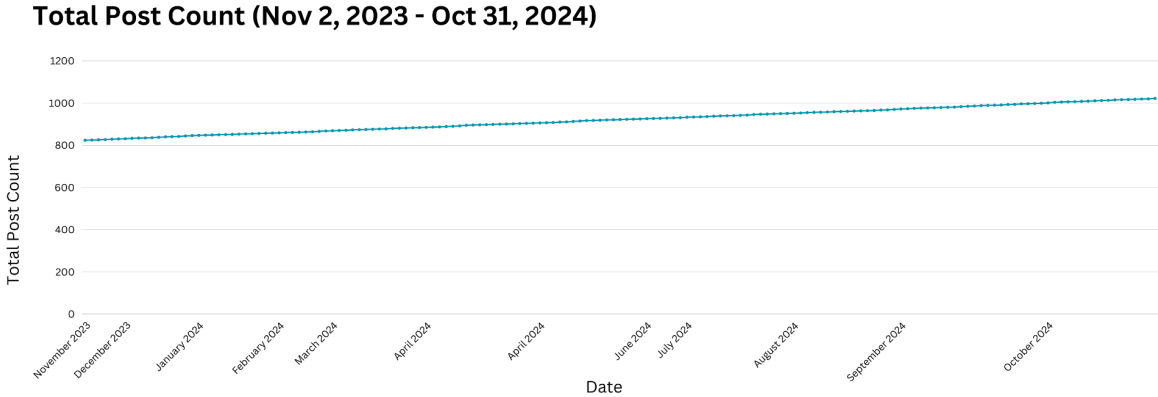


Figure 1.6

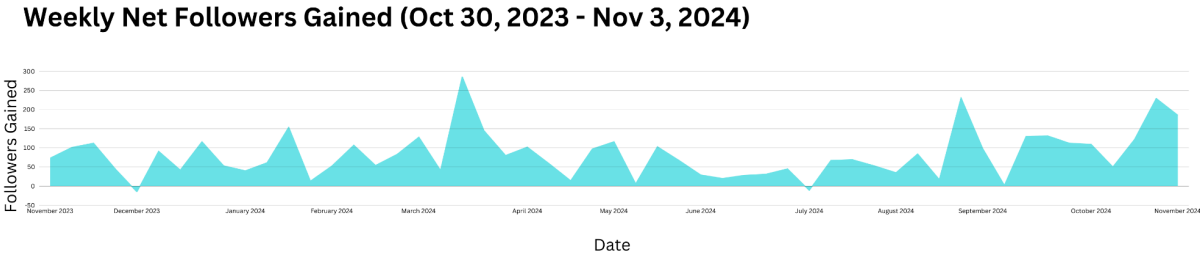
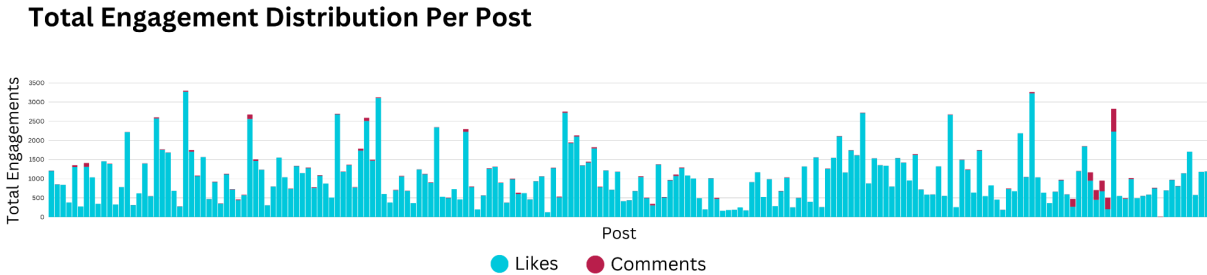


Figure 1.7



2. Survey Results

Figure 2.1

What School/College are you a part of?

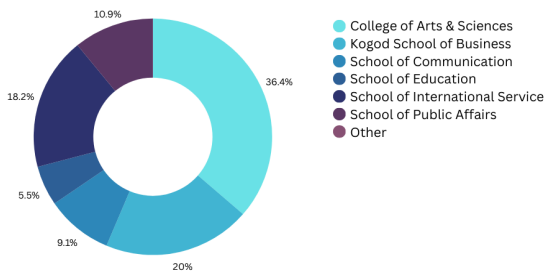


Figure 2.2

What year are you in your studies?

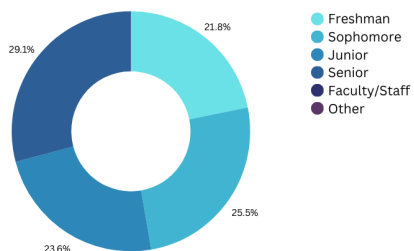


Figure 2.3

What is your gender?

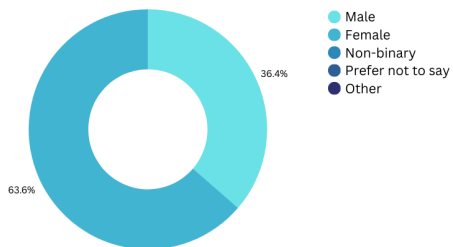


Figure 2.4

What is your racial or ethnic background?

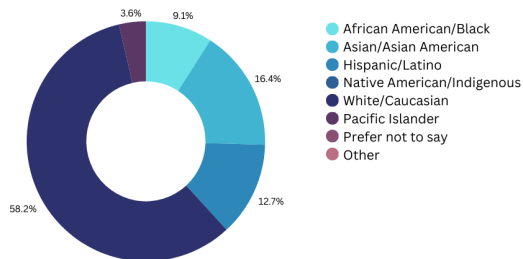


Figure 2.5

Which social media platforms do you use most frequently?

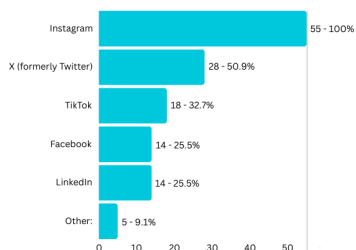


Figure 2.6

Which AU social media accounts do you follow on Instagram?

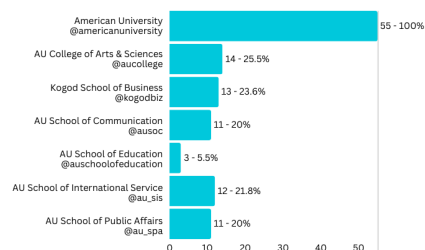


Figure 2.7

How often do you interact with AU's social media content?

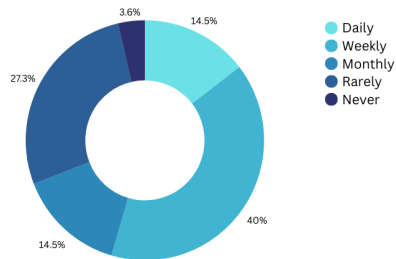


Figure 2.8

What type of content do you find most engaging on AU's social media?

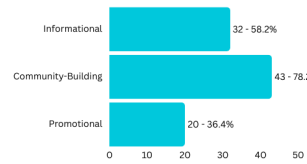


Figure 2.9

What motivates you to engage with AU's social media?

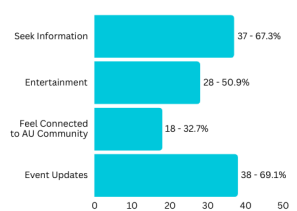


Figure 2.10

Student Perceptions of AU's Social Media Effectiveness and Relevance

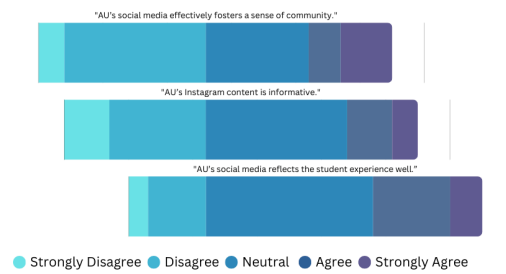


Figure 2.11

What's one thing you would change about AU's social media strategy?

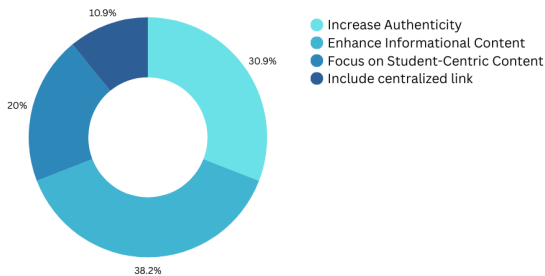
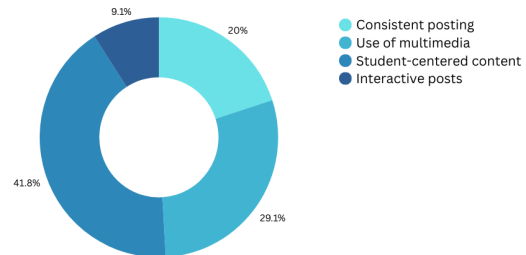


Figure 2.12

Which of the following do you think improves social media engagement the most?



3. Instagram Posts

Figure 3.1

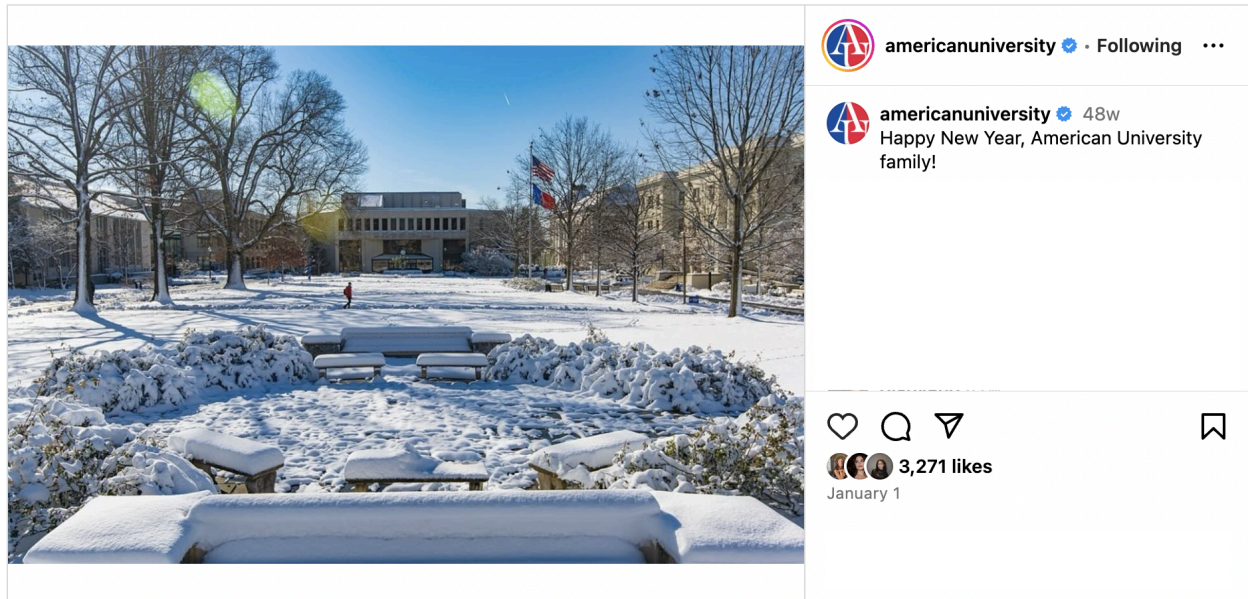


Figure 3.2



Figure 3.3

