UF/IFAS Social Media Comment Management Guidelines

All social media platforms include a space for outside users to post comments. Comments are one of the most meaningful forms of engagement on social media. But the comment section can also be a tricky place to navigate for a communicator. This handout provides direction on how to respond to those comments.

What can I do about comments on UF/IFAS social media platforms?

FACEBOOK
• First, make sure your profanity filter on Facebook is set to strong. settings > profanity filter > strong.
• The platform allows you to delete and hide comments, but we recommend you do this ONLY when the comment fits the criteria described below.

INSTAGRAM
• Find your published post and hit the … in the top-right hand corner. Then hit “turn off commenting.”
• If there’s a debate in the comments on one of your posts, you may want to pin your response to the discussion to the top of the comment section. You can do this by swiping left on a comment.
• The platform allows you to delete and hide comments, but we recommend you do this ONLY when the comment fits the criteria described below.

TWITTER
• The platform allows you to hide comments, but we recommend you do this ONLY when the comment fits the criteria described below.

YOUTUBE
• You can disable comments on videos by settings > video manager and then choose a video. Then hit edit > info and settings > uncheck allow comments.

What if someone posts a negative comment?
• We realize that when UF/IFAS social media posts receive critical or insulting comments, it can be hurtful, and your normal reaction is to eliminate the post. But according to the law, the fact that a comment makes someone upset IS NOT SUFFICIENT JUSTIFICATION to delete, hide it, or block the user.
• UF/IFAS is part of the University of Florida which is a public institution. Because of that, if we start limiting comments on social platforms, we are restricting individual free speech rights. DO NOT hide or delete any comments on social media unless:
  » The comment constitutes a violation of the law.
  » The content is irrelevant to the topic at hand. (A comment about UFOs on a post about dairy cows.)
• Do not respond to negative comments

Can I just turn off comments at the time I post my content to avoid the issue?

It is acceptable to disable commenting at the time of posting or shortly after posting (before any comments). On platforms that allow you to filter who can reply, it is only acceptable to adjust settings to make it to where you’re the only commentor.

Can I block a user?
• Most platforms allow you to block users, but UF/IFAS does NOT recommend blocking a user as this can be seen as censoring.

All UF/IFAS official social media accounts MUST follow the requirements described above.

For questions on comments please contact Aaron Alexander at a.alexander1@ufl.edu.