

SCHOLARS WEEK

Social Media Plan



**Western Washington University
Bellingham, Wash.**

WELCOME

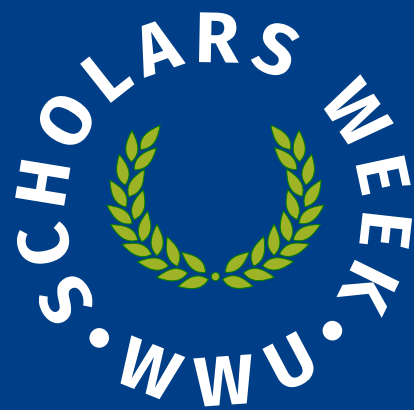
Welcome to the Western Washington University Scholars Week Social Media Guide. We hope that in reading this guide you are able to better navigate Instagram for Scholars Weeks purposes.

The following document was made to support you in all of your Scholars Week endeavors. Please consider the following recommendations to ensure that WWU Scholars Week is easily recognizable by audiences. Thanks!



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SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM

INSTAGRAM

We believe Instagram is the most appropriate social media platform to represent WWU Scholars Week. As WWU students are our target demographic, this platform is most effective in reaching them.

Numerous studies back up this reasoning such as the research Pew Research Center conducted in 2023 which accounted for various factors such as age, gender and level of formal education. The study found that 78% of 18 to 29-year-olds use Instagram (Pew Research Center 2024). This is the second most-used platform for this age demographic behind YouTube. Despite YouTube being the number one used platform among our target audience, we don't believe the nature of long-form video content will adequately deliver the majority of our intended content.

The Pew Research Center study also revealed that "A majority of adult Instagram users in the U.S. say they use the site at least once a day, and 38% say they use the site several times per day" (Pew Research Center 2021).

INSTAGRAM'S COMM. FUNCTION

Scholars Week's presence on Instagram will serve multiple functions, contributing to the event's longevity and audience engagement.

Firstly, it will establish and sustain the event's presence within the WWU and Whatcom County communities. The Instagram profile will act as a visual and informational archive, showcasing the identity and evolution of Scholars Week.

The Instagram profile will provide an engaging platform that complements the website content. It will be valuable for prospective students curious about Western's educational programs and current students interested in getting involved or attending the event.

Additionally, the platform offers effective two-way communication methods with audiences. This includes encouraging hashtag use, commenting, survey responses, and addressing FAQs about Scholars Week. Instagram's diverse content creation tools will be helpful for creating promotional reels of participants' presentations.

INSTAGRAM'S COMM. FUNCTION

Most importantly, a Scholars Week Instagram profile will provide a space for a broad audience to celebrate academic excellence. It will allow current WWU students, alumni, participants' families and friends, and the Bellingham and Whatcom County communities to engage with and learn from the scholarly work of students.

BRANDING ELEMENTS

For the Scholars Week Instagram, we recommend maintaining an image that aligns closely with the website while recognizing the opportunity and necessity for certain deviations. The profile should include a picture of the Scholars Week logo, a handle that fully incorporates "wwuscholarsweek," public profile settings, a Scholars Week hashtag in the bio, and a Linktree with links to the Scholars Week website, funding pages, archives, and other relevant social media pages.

Our branding guide identifies Scholars Week's main stakeholders as students, alumni, college and department heads, event staff, student participants, and other categorized attendees. While it is important to consider all stakeholders, our primary audience on Instagram is students and student participants, making them our main priority for content creation. To engage this audience effectively, we should maintain our original brand tone while allowing for a bit more informality and fun. Our content should prioritize being engaging, inclusive, creative, and inspiring. While a certain level of formality and professionalism should be maintained, content needs to be brief, attractive, and attention-

BRANDING ELEMENTS

grabbing, which sometimes means deviating slightly from the norm.

In terms of visual branding, we recommend strictly adhering to the branding guide for colors and fonts and including the logo whenever possible in the content. However, there is room for creativity, especially with graphics. While keeping our appropriateness and color theme in mind, we can have more fun with the graphics used in our content to grab users' attention. Deviate within reason to ensure our content remains engaging and true to our brand identity.

WHO TO FOLLOW

Regional and Local Colleges/Universities:

- Bellingham Technical College
- Whatcom Community College
- Northwest Indian College
- Skagit Valley College
- Everett Community College
- Peninsula College
- Sehome High School

Local Organizations:

- Village Books
- Bellingham Public Library
- Downtown Bellingham Partnership
- City of Bellingham

WWU Instagram Accounts (academic clubs, Associated Students, colleges & departments)

- WWU KUGS
- WWU PRSSA
- WWU Athletics
- WWU Campus Recreation Center
- WWU SPJ Chapter
- Students for Climate Action
- WWU Arabic Student Association
- WWU Native Student Association

WHO TO FOLLOW

- WWU Disability Access Center
- WWU Associated Students
- Wavelength
- WWU Departments & Colleges
- WWU Scholarship Center

Local Publications

- My Bellingham Now
- The Bellingham Herald
- Cascadia Daily News
- Skagit Valley Herald
- WWU student publications (Klipsun, The Planet, The Front, Occam's Razor, Jeopardy)

International Organizations

- Poynter Institute
- Associated Press

Please note that these are all **recommendations. We advise you to find other similar accounts to follow and connect with.*

HASHTAGS

- Utilize RiteTag to access what hashtags are trending
- Limit to 3-5 hashtags per post
- Hashtags are typically posted below the post caption, but could also be placed in the comments section
- Hashtags are helpful to get your content in front of new audiences
- Utilize Instagram hashtag generators (Newberry, Christina. 2023)
- Hashtags should fall into one of the following categories: product or service, industry niche hashtags, campaign hashtags, user-generated hashtags, Instagram community hashtag for industry (Forsey, Caroline. 2023)
- Keep it short (10-15 characters)
- One consistent hashtag across all posts (Drexel Brook)

HASHTAGS

Hashtag Brainstorm

#wwuscholarsweek

#wwuSW24

#wwuposteressions

#wwu3MT

#celebratewwuscholars

#wwuscholars

#wwuvikingscholars

#celebratescholarswwu

#scholarsweek3MT

#wwustudentresearch

#wwuSW

#wwuacademicexcellence

BEST PRACTICES

Do's

- Use appropriate language: Ensure all language used in posts and comments is professional and appropriate
- Manage comments: Promptly delete inappropriate comments and block accounts that post hateful content
- Adhere to branding guidelines: All content must be consistent with the WWU Scholars Week Branding Guide
- Prioritize photos over infographics: Photos tend to garner more engagement and attention than infographics
- Obtain permissions: Always ensure you have permission to post any photo or visual content by using a photo release form
- Write compelling captions: Craft engaging and informative captions (Instagram, 2023).
- Highlight key information: Lead with the most important information
- Maintain a consistent tone: Use a consistent professional tone across all posts
- Keep copy concise: Ensure the text is short and to the point

BEST PRACTICES

Do's cont.

- Encourage action: Use simple, direct text to encourage audience engagement
- Think inverted pyramid: Organize content with the most critical information first
- Post at optimal times:
 - Regular posts: 11 a.m. on Wednesdays (Newberry, Christina, 2023)
 - Reels: 9 a.m. and 12 p.m., Monday to Thursday
- Ensure accessibility: Make all content accessible to individuals with disabilities. For example, when promoting an event, include information on where viewers can learn more about accessibility for the event
- Maintain a cohesive grid: Ensure the Instagram grid is visually cohesive and consistent
- Create savable content: Develop content that encourages users to save it for future reference

BEST PRACTICES

Dont's

- Ignore the WWU Scholars Week Branding Guide: Adhering to the branding guide is crucial for maintaining a consistent and professional image
- Lack of variation in post content and styles: Posting repetitive content can lead to audience disengagement, so it's essential to diversify posts
- Disregard hateful or inappropriate comments or direct messages: Promptly delete inappropriate comments and block offending accounts to maintain a respectful community
- Use Low-Quality Images or Videos: Always use high-quality visuals to maintain a professional appearance.
- Overlook User-Generated Content: Encourage and share user-generated content to foster community and engagement.
- Fail to Engage with Followers: Respond to comments and messages to build a genuine connection with your audience.
- Ignore Trends and Updates: Stay informed about platform updates and trends to keep your content fresh and relevant.

POSTING THEMES

How-to:

- **Participant sign-up:** Create step-by-step guides on how to sign up for Scholars Week, including deadlines, requirements, and tips for creating effective presentations
- **Entering the Raffle:** Share detailed instructions on how students can enter the Scholars Week raffle, including eligibility criteria, entry methods, and prize information

Behind-the-Scenes:

- **Set-up reel:** Produce engaging reels that showcase the setup process for Scholars Week, highlighting the work of volunteers, event staff, and the transformation of event spaces

Cross-promotion:

- **Coordinate with academic entities:** Collaborate with academic departments, clubs, and organizations on campus to share and promote Scholars Week content, ensuring a wider reach and stronger community engagement.

POSTING THEMES

Countdown Posts:

- Reveal amenities at Scholars Week: Use countdown posts to gradually unveil amenities and special features at Scholars Week, such as raffle details, participant awards, and exclusive events

Navigation Guide:

- Pre-Scholars Week Reel: Create a reel before Scholars Week starts, showing students how to navigate to each event location, including maps, tips, and landmarks for easy identification

Participant testimonials

- Answering questions such as; What are they presenting, what made them want to present and what are they most excited for

Audience gauge

- Post Scholars Week community feedback post, asking people to comment and share what they liked and didn't like about that year's event

POSTING PLAN / WEEKLY CALENDAR

Event sign-ups go live

Theme: FAQ & How-to

Let the audience know that Scholars Week season is officially open. This is the time to address commonly asked questions about signing up for the events (Who can? When does it close? What must I have prepared? Etc.) The post is our opportunity to reach students on a platform they overwhelmingly exist in order to recruit more presenters. Text should be brief but informative in order to keep readers engaged. Recommended to post at 2 p.m. the date sign-ups go live (Sprout Social 2024).

Example caption: Welcome Scholars! It's that time of the year again: Scholars Week event sign-ups are open. Undergrads and graduate students can enter to present in our Poster session, 3MTs, Creative writing presentations or Faculty/student collaborations. For more information, check our website linked in our bio!

#wwuscholars #scholarsseason



POSTING PLAN / WEEKLY CALENDAR

Sunday before Scholars Week

Theme: Introduction & Anticipation

Garner excitement the night leading up to opening day of Scholars Week. This could include snapshots of the set-up, a behind-the-scenes reel of what the planning and execution has looked like up to this point, clock countdown on Instagram story, etc. Make sure to include people in the content - this is more likely to engage audiences compared to object-based content

Example caption: The 24 hour countdown has begun! The Scholars Week crew is setting the stage for a week full of celebrating academic excellence. We're beyond excited to share the research and creative works of WWU students. Check out the link in bio for a detailed schedule of events for the week. Stay tuned for more event information!

#wwuacademicexcellence #wwuscholarsweek

POSTING PLAN / WEEKLY CALENDAR

Monday of SW

Theme: Did You Know?

Provide teaser information about Tuesdays events to raise awareness and excitement around the Faculty/Student Group Collaborations. This could look like a culmination of fun facts pulled from select presentation attendees will see at the Faculty/Student Group Collaborations.

Example caption: Day 1 of Scholars Week is in the books! The Scholars Week crew is gearing up for tomorrow's Faculty/Student Group Collaborations. You won't want to miss these incredible presentations. Students and faculty will be presenting on a variety of interesting topics including Marine Life in Bellingham Bay, A Media Ethics Analysis of the Pink Tax, How to Get Into Your Foraging Frenzy Era, and SO MUCH MORE!

Presentations of Faculty/Student Group Collaborations: Tuesday, May 14, Carver Hall of Fame Room (CV 221), 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

#wwuscholarsweek #studentresearch
#celebratescholarswwu



POSTING PLAN / WEEKLY CALENDAR

Tuesday of SW

Theme: Engagement and participation

Provide teasers of the various amenities that Scholars Week will be featuring at the Poster Session. This could include close-up pictures revealing some of the contents of the raffle. Also, include in-depth snapshots of interviews with Poster Session participants - What are they presenting, what made them want to present, what are they most excited for?

Example caption: Show your Western pride tomorrow at the Scholars Week Poster Session. PLUS stop by the event and enjoy a raffle of WWU merch and prizes, vote for your favorite presentation and so much more. Show your support tomorrow at the Poster Session, Wednesday, May 15, Carver Gym, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. See you there!

The biggest event of the week, the Poster Session, provides a space for students to present their research and creative works with the community.

#wwuvikingscholars #wwuscholarspresent



POSTING PLAN / WEEKLY CALENDAR

Wednesday of SW

Theme: Play-by-play of the poster session

This is our breakdown of Scholars Week's biggest event. By the end, we want to see a day in summary from set-up to take-down. We want to show that the people behind and involved with Scholars Week aren't just professionals, but people. This is an opportunity to stray from the candids we usually aim for and instead show our scholars working and smiling, posing in front of the fruits of their labor. This is our opportunity to show how we make events happen. This post would need to be one at the end-of-day or multiple throughout (largely in story form, think SW 2024 story takeover).

Example caption: Scholars Week is a labor of love. Thank you to all the staff, students and alumni that make it happen each year. Cheers to a successful Poster Session!

#postersession #wwulovesscholars

POSTING PLAN / WEEKLY CALENDAR

Thursday of SW

Theme: Not Over Yet

We need to make people understand that Scholars Week is NOT over yet. Today is the day we celebrate graduate students with Creative Writing Presentations and the Three-Minute Thesis. What we need to achieve with this post is a call and response to scholars to join in the celebration of our graduate students and all they do for us.

Example caption: It's not over yet! Thursday means celebrating our WWU graduate students, so join in. Check out 3MT and Creative Writing Presentations and take in all the fine work our graduate students have to offer.

#wwugradstudents #celebratevikings #wwuSW

POSTING PLAN / WEEKLY CALENDAR

Friday of SW

Theme: Support the colleges

Since so many colleges are getting involved in scholars week, it is important that their efforts don't go unnoticed or get forgotten in the midst of everything going on during the week. We should encourage people to find information or provide information about each individual college participating in scholars week, and what events they can look forward to.

Example caption: This Friday the fun multiplies as the colleges of Western get involved. Multiple colleges across campus will be hosting their own events this Friday to celebrate and highlight their students, so make sure to get involved.

#wwuscholarsweek #celebratevikings
#celebratescholars



POSTING PLAN / WEEKLY CALENDAR

Saturday/Sunday After

Theme: The Fun Continues

Once the main events of Scholars Week are over, we need to keep momentum on social media to maintain interest. One way to do this is through our raffle. Over the weeken we should announce winners of the raffle, explain where people can pick up their prizes, and say thank you for a wonderful scholars week once again.

Example caption: Although Scholars Week is coming to a close, for some winners the fun continues! The winners of our Scholars Week raffle may pick up their prizes from the Carver Gym. Thank you all for participating in our raffle and for making Scholars Week such a wonderful time for everyone involved.

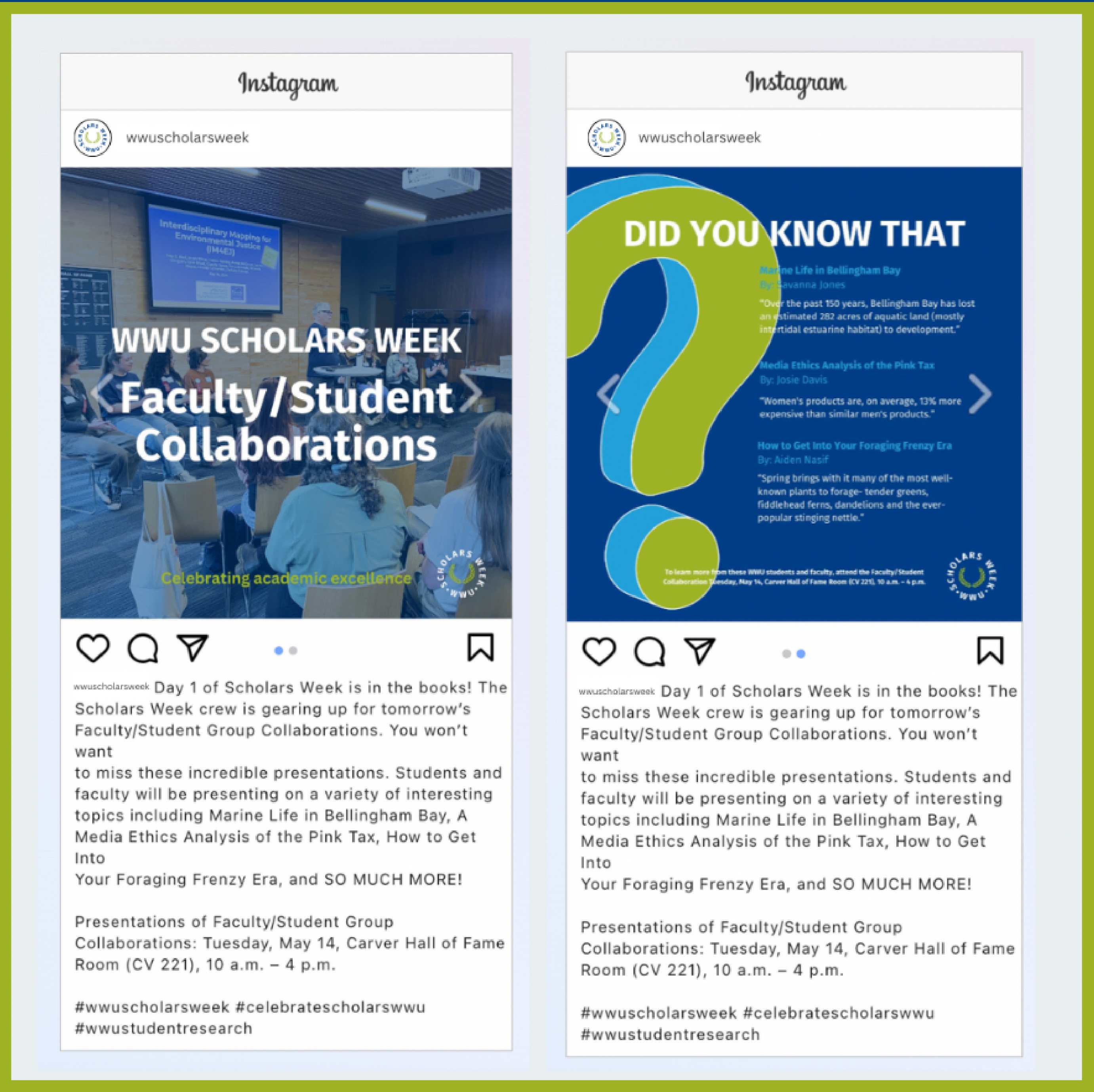
#wwuscholarsweek #celebratescholars



SAMPLE POSTS

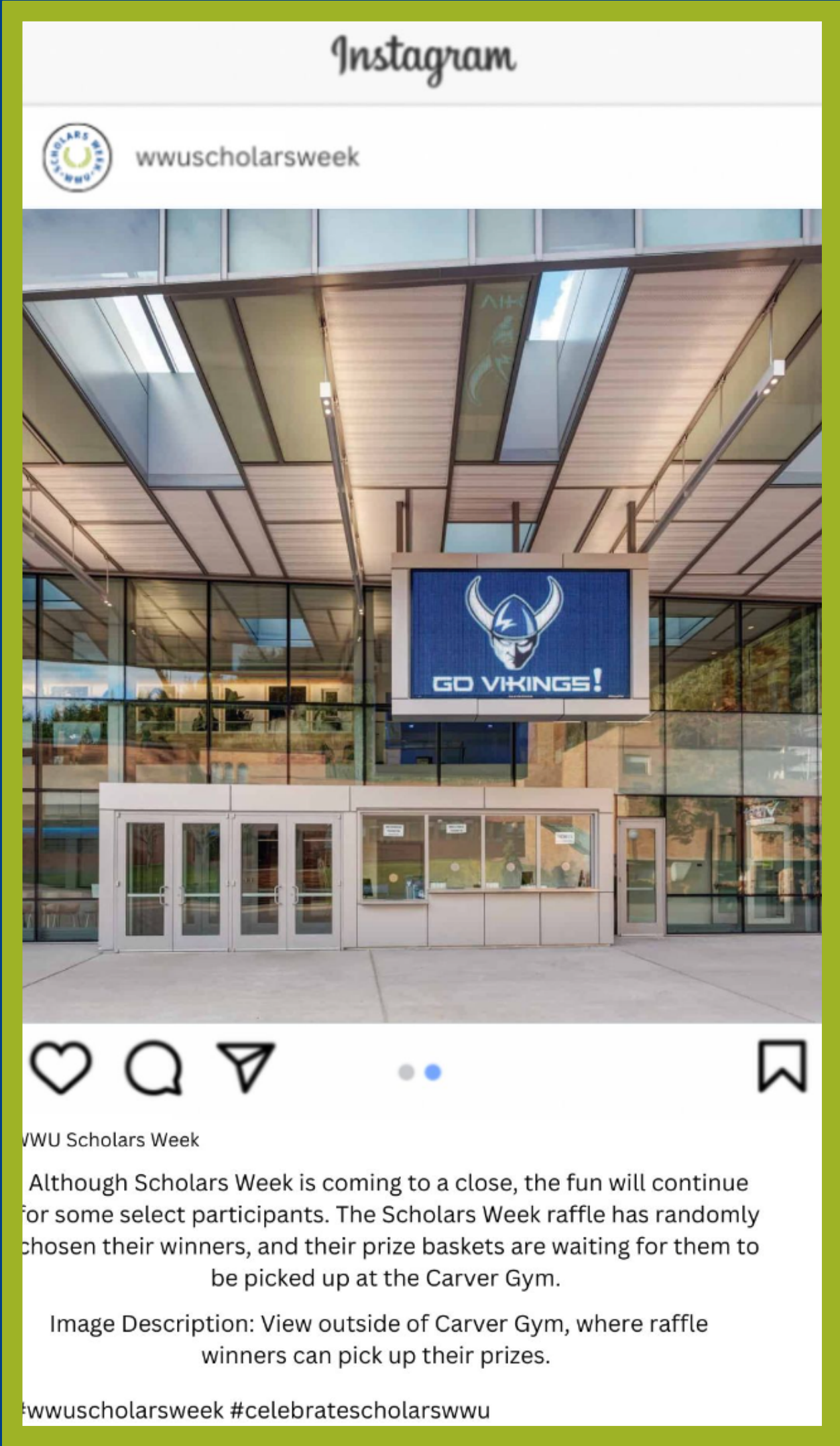
Here are some sample post to get the feel for what a Scholars Week Instagram should look like.

Good luck!



SAMPLE POSTS

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3



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