

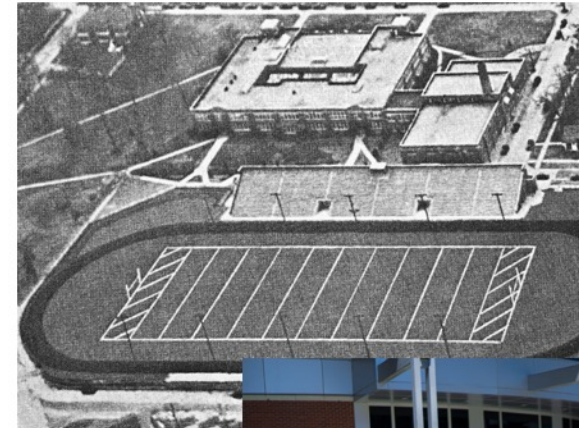
The background of the slide is a composite image. The top portion shows a bright, sun-dappled scene of trees and foliage. The bottom portion is a darker, blue-tinted image of a group of students. Some students are wearing t-shirts with 'UAFS' printed on them. The overall aesthetic is academic and community-oriented.

Knowing Your Audience: Fostering an Authentic Social Voice Through Student Generated Content

Who we are:

University of Arkansas – Fort Smith

- ▶ Regional public university founded in 1928
 - ▶ Began under the bleachers of our local high school
 - ▶ Operated as a community college for 70 years
 - ▶ Now offering 80+ bachelors degrees, 2 masters degrees, and a number of associate and certificate programs



Who we are:

- ▶ Our regional reputation is integral to our success
- ▶ More than 80% of our 6,000 enrolled students come from the four counties surrounding Fort Smith.
- ▶ Student advocates tell our story to their hometowns & home high schools, and become trusted allies for “inside information” about UAFS

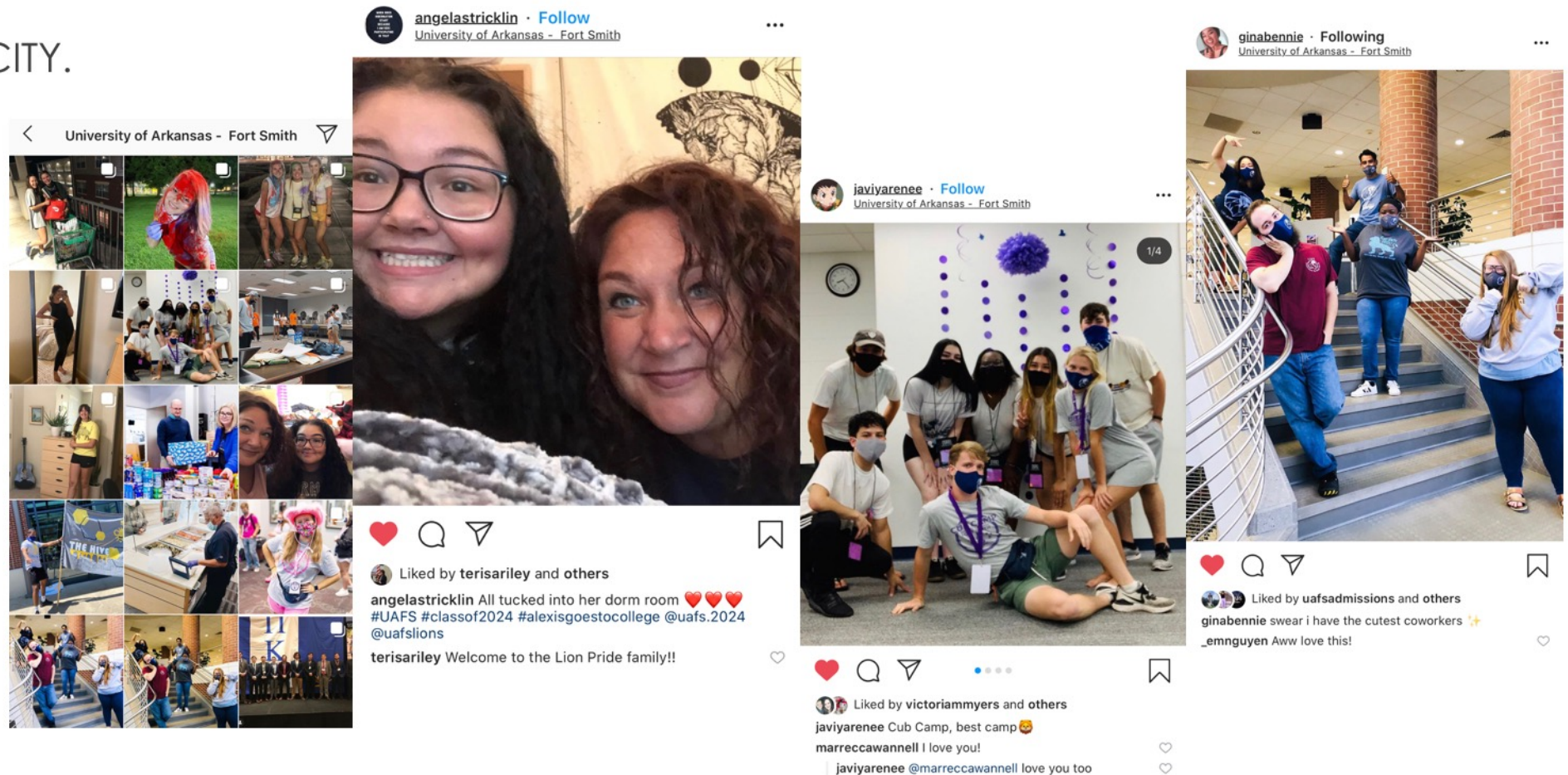


Who we are (on social):

- ▶ Our social strategy begins and ends with engagement.
- ▶ Our first goal is:
 - ▶ “To recruit and retain students through strategic outreach and listening.”
- ▶ Student generated content and authentic student voices are imperative to reaching this first goal, and their importance continues throughout our social strategy.

Who we are (on social):

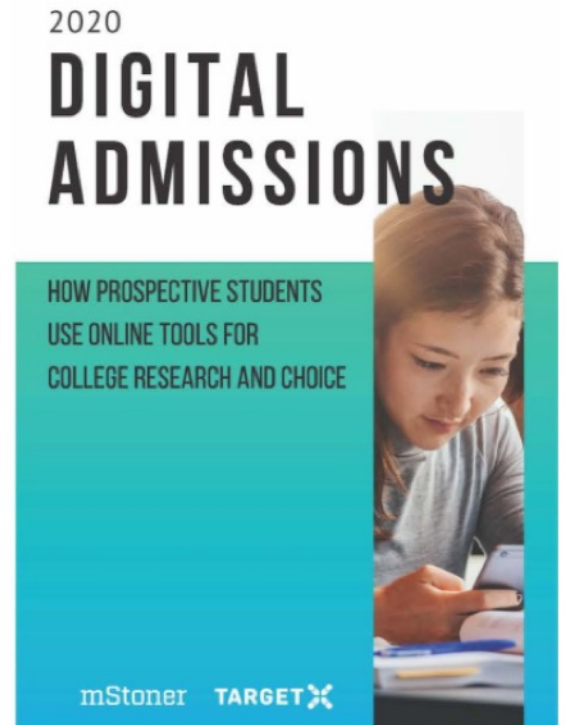
► AUTHENTICITY.



The Data:

The 2020 Digital Admissions Report by MSTONER & TARGETX

- ▶ **63%** of respondents liked or followed a university on Instagram
- ▶ **58%** of used social media in their college research
- ▶ **68%** use social media to research college once they'd decided where to apply.



- ▶ Gen Z is wary of curated brand image and voice. This generation is **on to us**.
- ▶ They know when we are marketing, and even though marketing our priorities, assets and values is still important, they are going to look to current students to **verify** that we are living what we post in real life.
- ▶ 61% of incoming students rated current student content as Very or Extremely important (the highest of any category.)

Our Post:



Student Post :



Tactics:

Social Media Student Employees:

- ▶ Content calendars to help plan content,
- ▶ Long-term projects and campaigns,
- ▶ Keep an ear to the ground for campus events, student concerns and areas that deserve more attention.

They also become faces for the university and create opportunities for potential students to make connections.



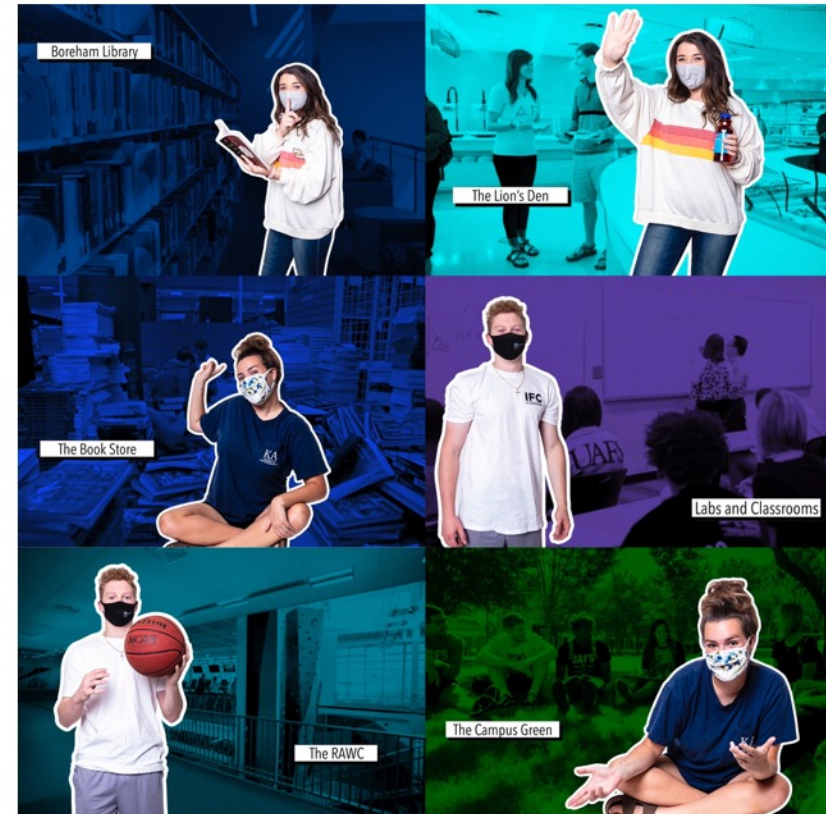
Tactics:

Campus Ambassadors

- ▶ Volunteers for talent & submitted content

Social Listening

- ▶ Share posts from across campus,
- ▶ Learn about niche operations and groups,
- ▶ Foster collaboration



To avoid traveling all over campus, we asked Taely and two frequent volunteers to pose in our office so we could create some informative graphics for social without too much contact.

Results:

Student creators help us release
content that is:

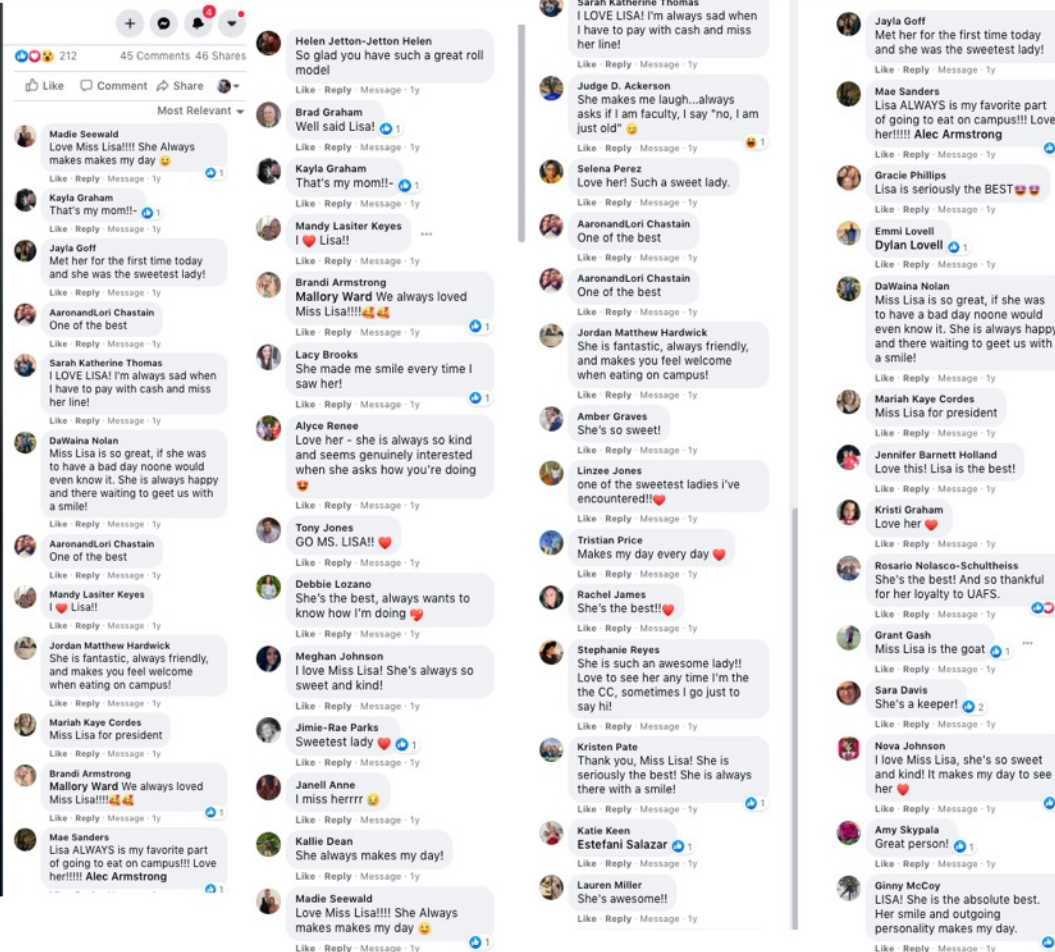
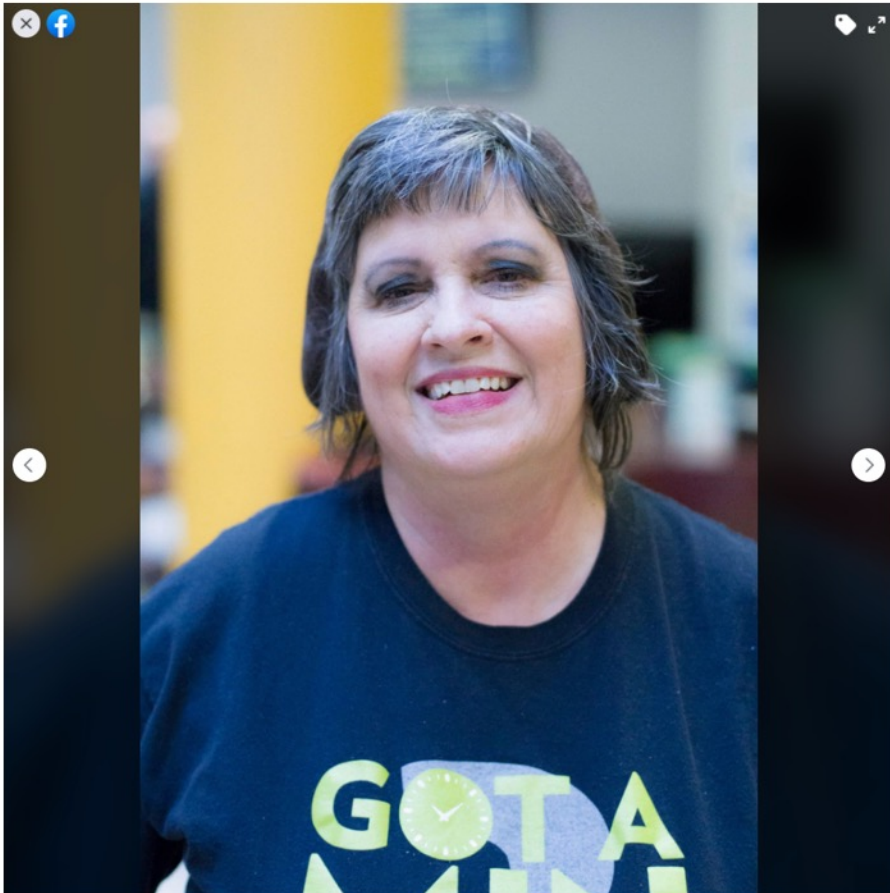
Authentic
Engaging
Transparent
& Fun

Authentic:

- ▶ **Friday Features.**

- ▶ Entirely Student Led
- ▶ Interviews with all campus community members
- ▶ Provides an inside look into campus life, written from a student perspective.

Authentic:



2,132
engagements

45 comments on
the original post

46 shares

Authentic:



Welcome back from spring break, Lions! Our Friday feature (COVID-19 edition) is Benjamin Baker. Benjamin is a sophomore originally from Cedar Falls, Iowa, working on getting his bachelor's degree in music. After graduation Ben plans on going to grad school and eventually getting his doctoral degree in musical performance before going on to be a bass professor. Ben wants to be able to help and inspire young musicians to pursue their dreams.

The switch UAFS has made to online class due to COVID-19 has affected Ben's learning environment in a big way. "As a music major, having a collaborative atmosphere with all of my colleagues present to make music together is a big part of my degree plan. Making a transition to online makes that not possible. I'm not by any means excited about being online. I also enjoy seeing all of my friends on a regular basis. I would much prefer to be physically in class."

The transition for some students to online classes has been difficult, but UAFS has been diligent in making sure this transition went as smoothly as possible. Ben says his instructors have been vital in helping him ease into online-only classes. "The faculty within the music department have been very communicative and helpful with having plans and making decisions regarding how the rest of the semester will work."

Though the change is definitely not one he welcomes, Ben said that the adjustment has been made easier by his experiences at UAFS, which have helped him become a more determined and detail-oriented person. "Being a student has given me a lot of responsibilities that I've had to be self-sufficient in staying motivated to accomplish." While Ben has been staying busy with his classes, he is also enjoying his time at home, particularly caring for eight 2-week-old Lab puppies.

We hope the rest of our students are able to enjoy their time at home while also working hard in their classes. If you or someone you know would be interested in being a UAFS Friday Feature, just DM us. Stay safe, keep washing your paws, and Go Lions!

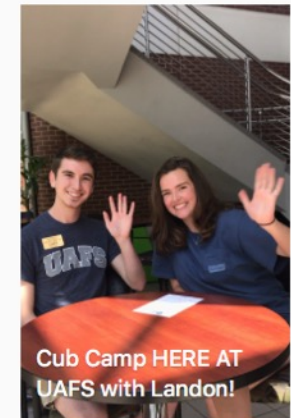
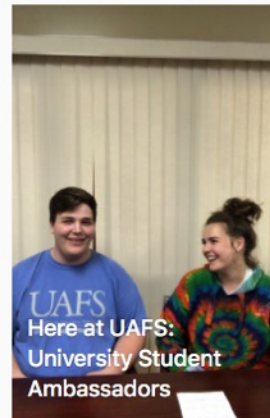
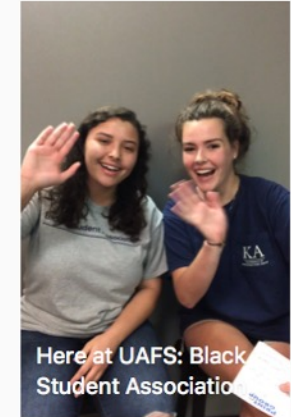
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Engaging:

- ▶ We know that social media is a powerful tool for increasing engagement.
- ▶ A year ago I would have said we use social to engage students online in hopes to help them build communities on campus - But now, **social media is the community.**
- ▶ We have use every resource we have to engage our students who are learning remotely, many for the first time, and help them build safe spaces to explore their interests, have difficult conversations and make important connections.

Engaging:

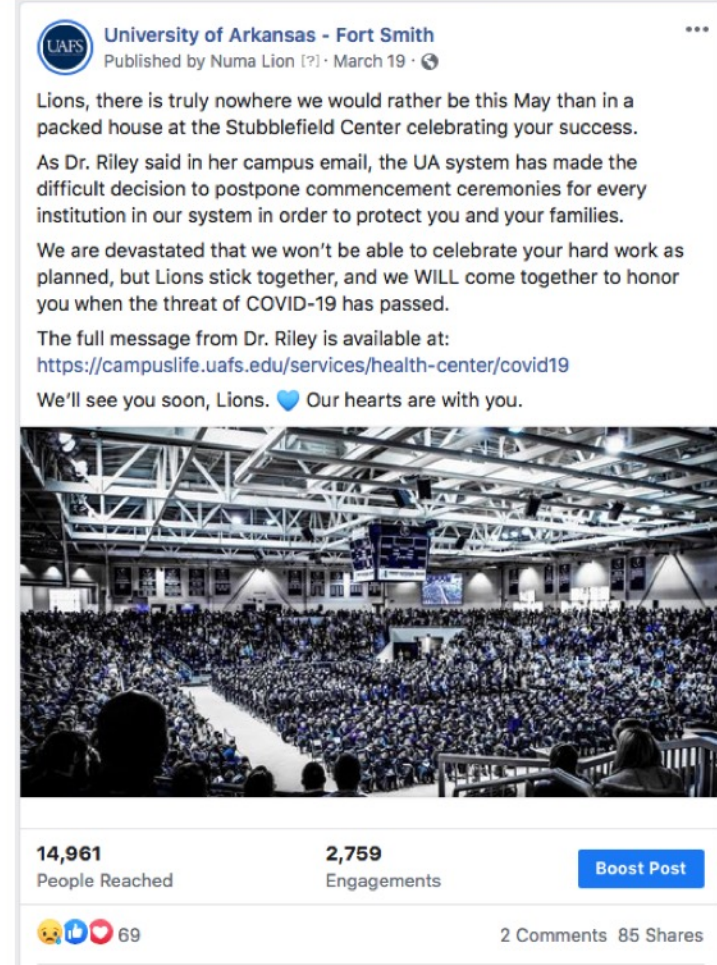
- ▶ Here @ UAFS features Instagram TV interviews with leaders on campus.
- ▶ Usually this means the presidents of campus organizations
- ▶ But when our new chancellor began last July, she made a special appearance on Here @ UAFS so students could get to know her before the start of the semester.



Transparent:

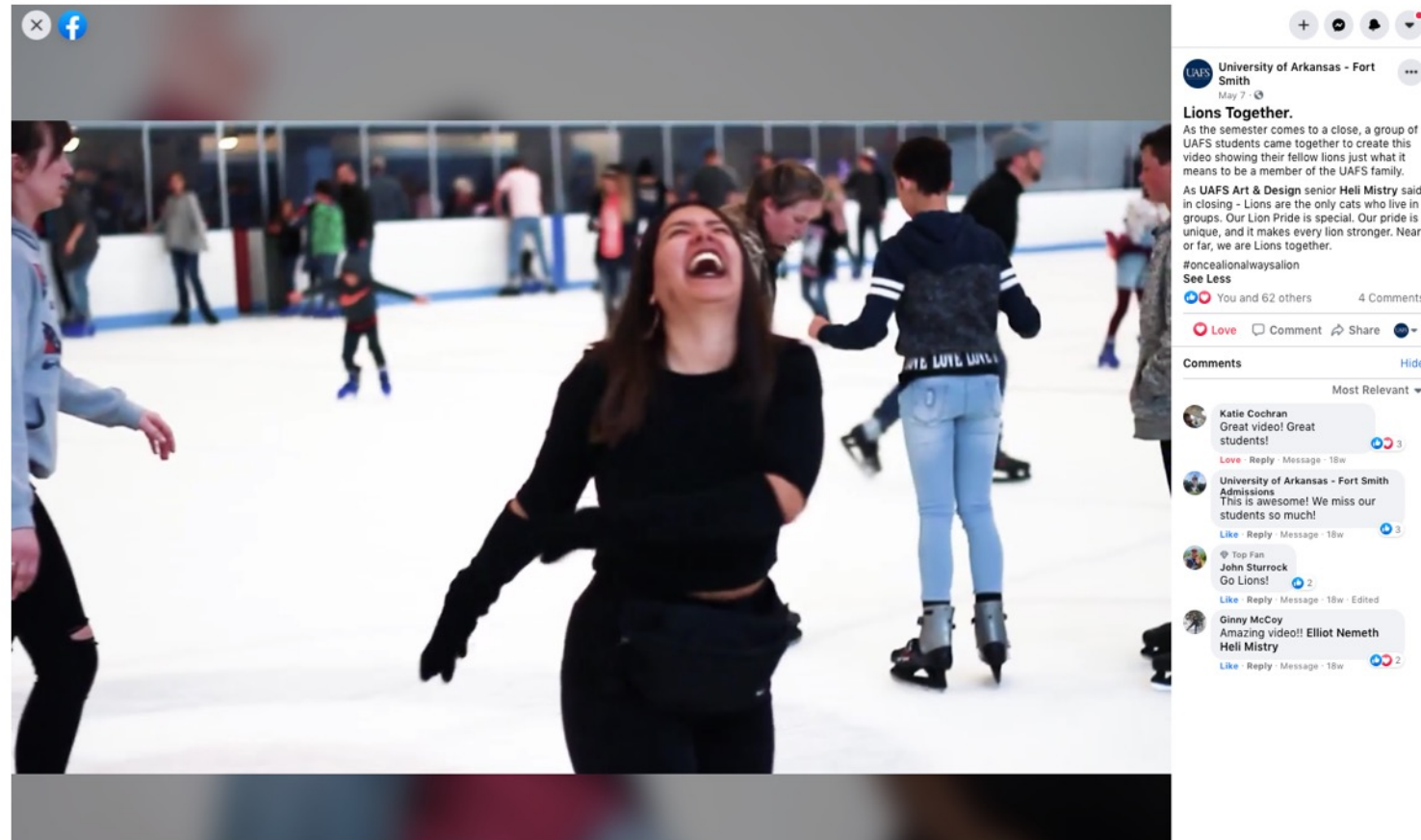
- ▶ This spring we had to cancel our commencement.
- ▶ Through social listening we'd read their posts dreading our announcement, and I'd talked to my student workers who were seniors.
- ▶ Knowing their fears, we led with compassion in our announcement, and collaborated with our chancellor to post her empathetic message along with our social post.

Having a chancellor who focuses on students and leads with empathy is incredibly helpful with this!



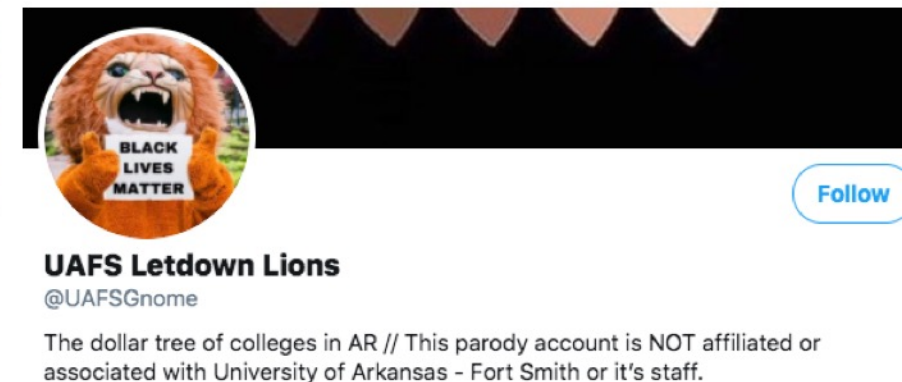
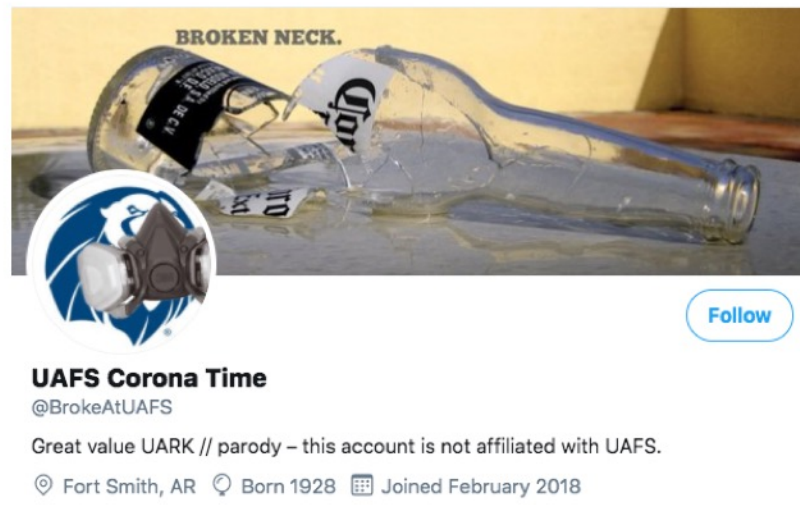
Transparent:

Entirely student created.



Transparent:

- ▶ The students making content aren't just the ones who post lovingly about our university.
- ▶ Parody accounts anonymously critique our mistakes, our missteps and our failures.
- ▶ Their voices are just as important as those who praise the university.
 - ▶ And the insight they give us is sometimes even more valuable



Transparent:

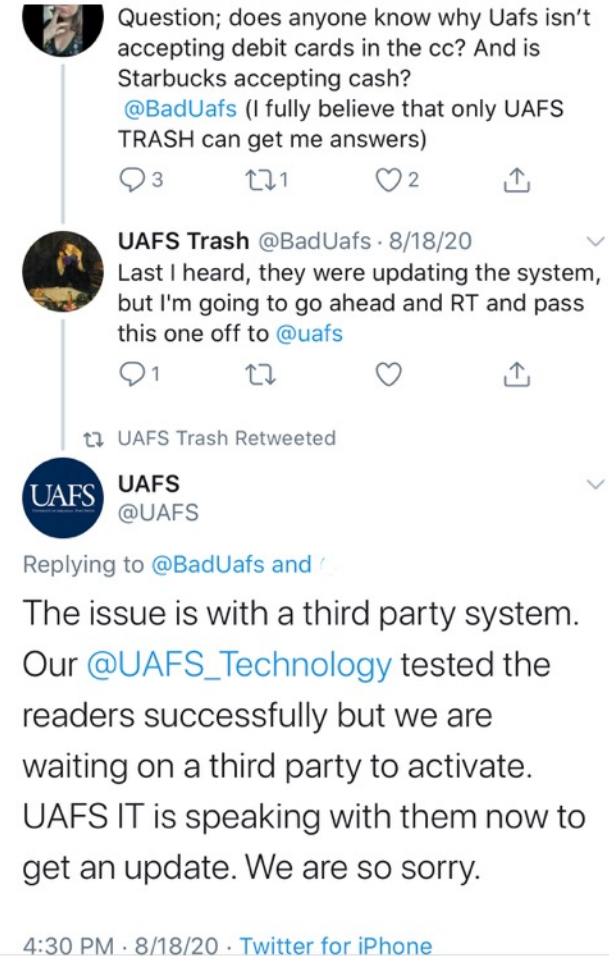
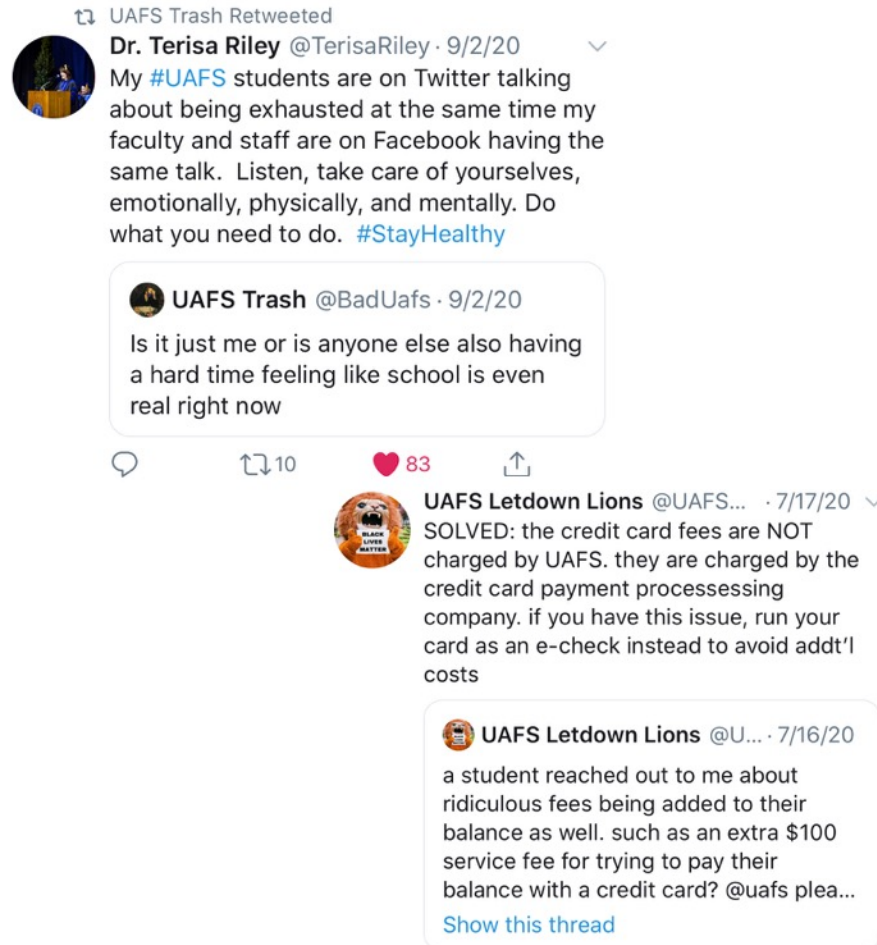
These accounts show us where we need to improve & give students a voice.



Transparent:

We engage our parody accounts by:

- ▶ Answering questions
- ▶ Working on the problems they share
- ▶ Engaging our chancellor
- ▶ Sharing updates and solutions



Transparent:

- ▶ Because we respond quickly and honestly, and build trust as individuals and as an institution, our parody accounts also help us share when we get things right.
- ▶ Engaging with the other parody accounts in our state spreads their reach even further.

Quote Tweets



things that don't work at UCA · 4/1/20
well I'm glad SOMEONE has students best interests at heart without being asked to



UAFS Trash @BadUafs · 4/1/20
when you didn't have to go through the effort of writing a petition cause you already knew that Mother Terisa had your best interest at heart



GIF



3



16





UAFS Trash
@BadUafs

The only time we're thrilled to be losing to UARK at something

This data is current as of **September 4, 2020.**

Active Positive COVID-19 Cases*

17	0
Students	Employees

*Active Positive Cases refer to individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19, have not been cleared by the Arkansas Department of Health, and have had some form of contact with the UAFS campus during the Fall 2020 semester.

2:45 PM · 9/5/20 · [Twitter Web App](#)

2 Retweets 45 Likes

Transparent:

- ▶ They even agreed to participate in this presentation!



UAFS Trash

Do you have advice for people who are afraid to engage with criticism?

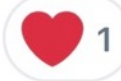
8/29/20, 9:23 PM ✓

Absolutely. Especially in this time, where students are incredibly disillusioned with the education industry as a whole, not taking constructive criticism is shooting yourself in the foot



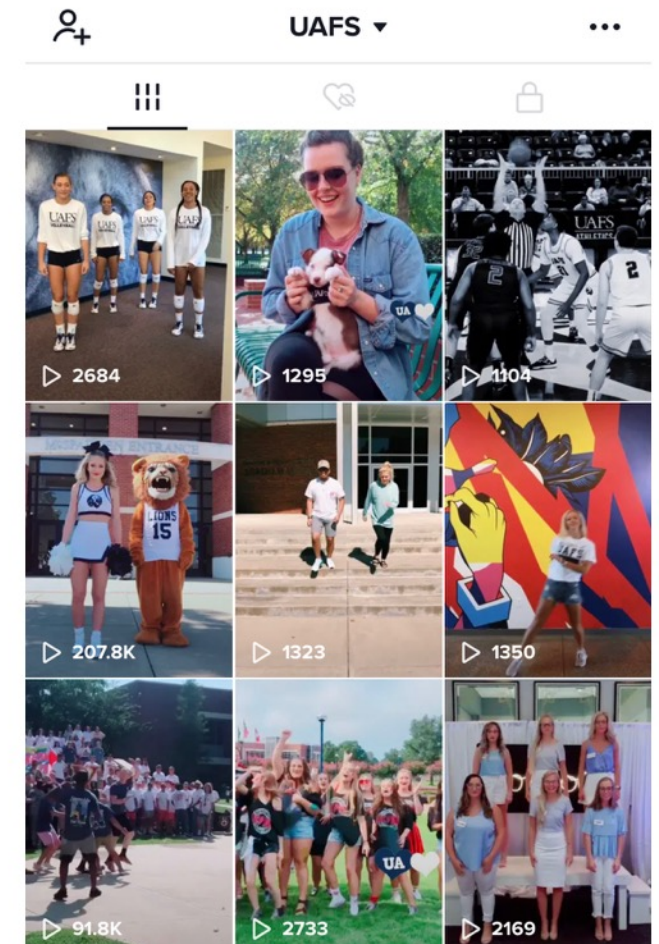
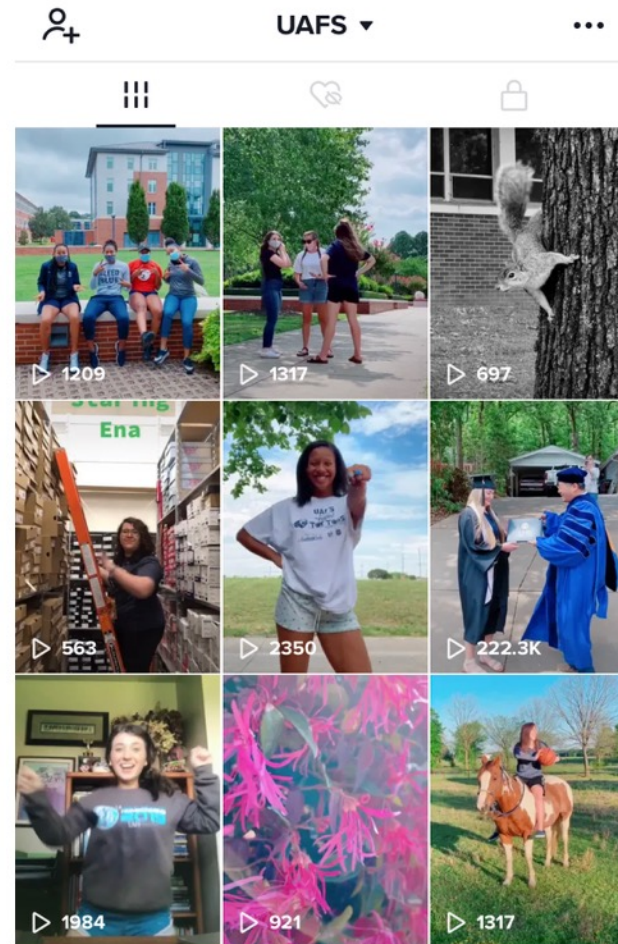
8/29/20, 9:12 PM

Start. Immediately. Not engaging with criticism or shutting it down all together reflects negatively on the university brand. Prospective students are paying more attention to this than you think.

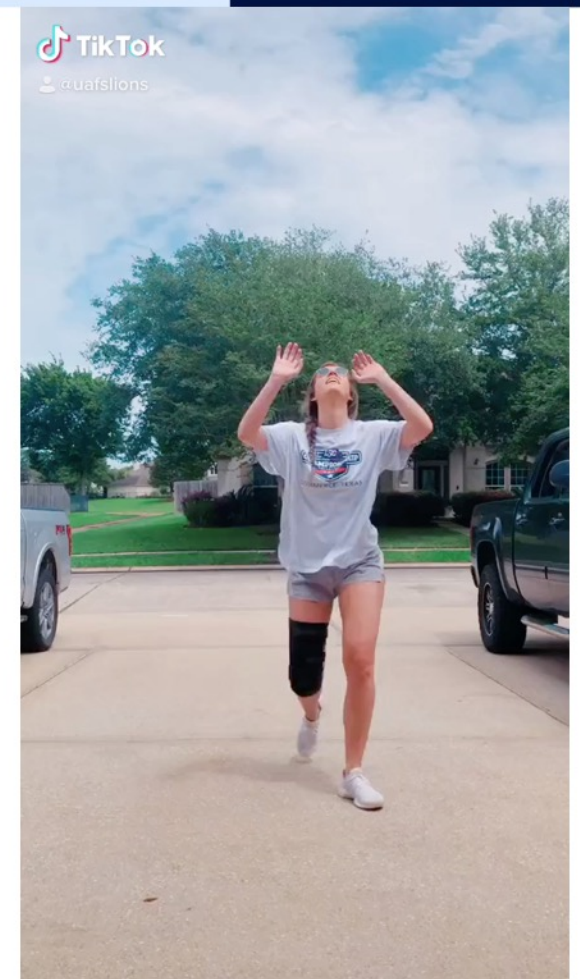
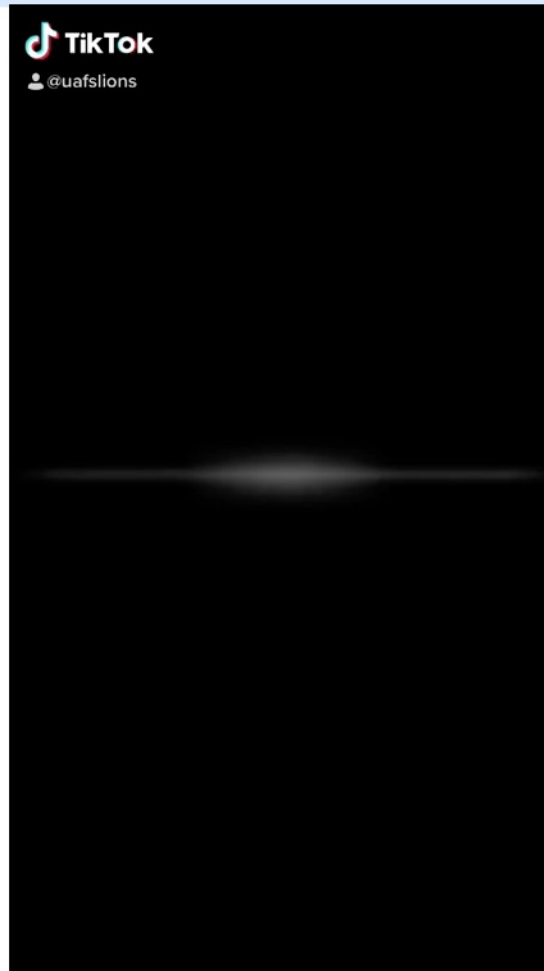


& Fun!

- ▶ One of our favorite places to recruit students to submit content is Tik Tok!
- ▶ Tik Tok has to be FUN.
- ▶ The algorithm favors creators who post all the time – but if you don't have time for that (we don't!) just make sure your content is entertaining. It has to be true to the platform.



& Fun!
Fun!



The End.

Any questions?