JMU Counseling Center Social Media Analysis

Current Social Media Presence

Instagram (@jmucc_canines)
Statistics as of March 5, 2020
Total followers: 842
Number of posts: 243

Content Overview
The JMU Counseling Center Instagram feed is made up primarily of posts advertising Counseling Center workshops and inspirational/uplifting posts featuring images of the Counseling Center therapy dogs. Occasionally, a post will consist of an inspirational post and a picture of something other than a therapy dog, though the informational and therapy dog posts occur with more frequency.

The informational posts advertise workshops or other events, and typically include a graphic with text and a caption. The graphics tend to use fonts and colors consistent with the JMU Marketing brand guide (see Fig. 1 and 2). Links to web pages with more information about the workshops or sign-up pages for events are usually located on the graphic, while words of encouragement to participate or attend are usually located in the caption.

Fig. 1
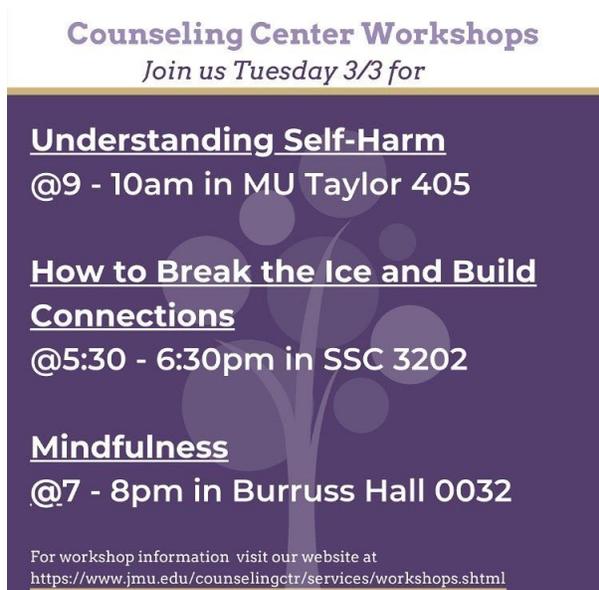
Fig. 2

Therapy dog posts are generally less advertisement-oriented than the informational posts. Occasionally, these types of posts will advertise when the therapy dogs will be in the office or include tips for improving mental health, but they appear most often alongside an inspirational quote. Hashtags associated with these posts are generally placed on the graphic, not in the caption (see Fig. 3). Further, the graphics tend to use fonts and colors consistent with JMU Marketing brand guidelines, and the JMU Counseling Center therapy dog logo is sometimes included as well (see Fig. 4).

Fig. 3
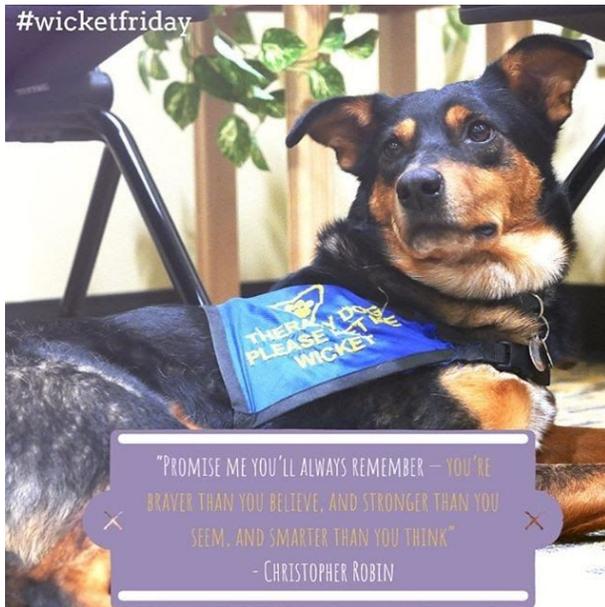
Fig. 4

The third, and less frequent, type of post that occurs on the JMU Counseling Center Instagram page is the inspirational quote posts without therapy dog pictures. These posts generally include a graphic featuring the quote and a landscape or floral image (see Fig. 5 and 6). The captions usually do not restate the quote, but encourage JMU students to have a happy Friday or a good weekend/school break.
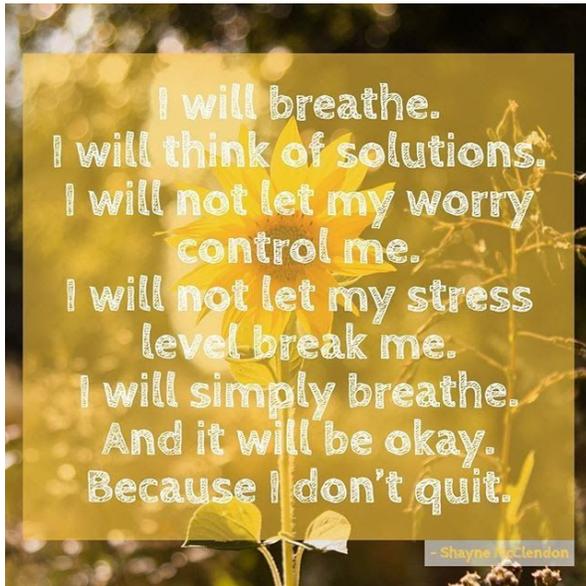
Fig. 5   Fig. 6

Facebook (JMU Counseling Center)
Statistics as of March 5, 2020
Total followers: 556
Number of likes: 520

Content Overview
Like the Counseling Center's Instagram, their Facebook feed consists primarily of posts advertising workshops and inspirational/uplifting posts. Many of the posts advertising Counseling Center workshops on Facebook use the same graphic as the Instagram post. A major difference between the feeds is in the use of hashtags. The Counseling Center uses more hashtags on Facebook than Instagram, and tends to place them in the body of the post rather than the image associated with the post.

The Counseling Center's Facebook posts also make less use of standard JMU branding guidelines. Many of the inspirational quote posts use colors and fonts outside the JMU brand guide.

Finally, Facebook allows more variety in terms of the types of media that can be posted, and the Counseling Center's feed includes links to music and YouTube videos, and event posts (see Fig. 7 and 8).

Fig. 7

Fig. 8

Recommendations (to discuss during meeting)

Hashtags

The JMU Counseling Center uses hashtags in their posts on Instagram and Facebook occasionally. Most often, the hashtags on Instagram posts appear on the image rather than in the caption. Moving the hashtags from the image to the caption would ensure that they are searchable for the Counseling Center's audience on the platform. When they appear in the picture or graphic itself, the hashtags are not clickable and cannot link the post to any search results on the platform. Making sure the tags are usable will help increase the Counseling Center's page engagement and visibility.

Links and QR Codes

Similar to hashtags, links and QR codes work best when they appear in the captions of posts rather than the images or graphics. Placing links to sign-up pages or event descriptions in the captions instead of the images or graphics will ensure that the Counseling Center's audience is able to use them. QR codes, another type of link that appears in the Counseling Center's social media posts, are most effective when used on print media. These types of links must be scanned using a scanning app or a built-in scanning mechanism in the camera on a smartphone. As a result, using them in posts on social media pages limits their usability.

Social Media Style Guide Meeting Agenda

Meeting Date: 03/24/20, 1PM
Location: Online (Zoom)
Attendees: Megan Palmer; Dr. Magali Laitem, Counseling Center's social media manager

Vision and Goals
The social media style guide will include a brief introduction with an outline of the Counseling Center's vision and goals, and the content following will be designed to advance the vision and goals.

To Dr. Laitem: What is the Counseling Center's vision and what are the goals for their social media presence?
- "I want to have our social media accounts be intentional to actually promote well-being and decreasing the negative effects of social media; this is meant to be an intentional way for us to reach students who may otherwise not know about us"

To Dr. Laitem: How are the Instagram and Facebook pages currently meeting (or failing to meet) that vision and those goals?
- "Lack of time to really prioritize doing the research to create the new content ahead of time, so that everything is scheduled out before the business of clinical stuff hits me"
- "Having a way to stay up to date on policy changes for both of those platforms"

To Dr. Laitem: What are 3 or 4 words that describe the Counseling Center's ideal voice?
- Dr. Laitem deferred to me, but we agreed that "intentional, positive, engaging" made sense.

Engagement
Because of the high likelihood of vulnerable populations viewing and following the Counseling Center's social media accounts, the social media style guide should specify standards for engaging with members of each platform's community.

To Dr. Laitem: Are there any current standards of engagement?
- The CC walks a fine line between encouraging their audience to read, repost/share, like, and comment on their posts and discouraging them from trying to engage with the CC on aspects of personal mental health and well-being

Scheduling Software

To Dr. Laitem: The social media style guide will contain standards for when and how frequently to schedule posts on both Instagram and Facebook. If there is scheduling software currently in use, that information will be included as well. If not, we can discuss the possibility of using a platform like HootSuite, which can be used for both Instagram and Facebook. Using a scheduling program will help maintain a consistent posting schedule, and allow the Counseling Center to plan ahead for posts focusing on events or workshops.

- The CC used to use Hootsuite, but as it no longer supports scheduling for Instagram, it became too much to keep up with
- Ideally, the CC will post to Facebook every Tuesday and Thursday
  - Tuesdays are "tune-in tuesdays"
  - Thursdays are "transformative thursdays"
- Ideally, they'll also post to Instagram every Wednesday and Friday
  - #wicketwednesdays
  - Inspirational quotes on Fridays

Branding Consistency and Image Use

The social media style guide will also include standards for branding consistency across the JMU Counseling Center social media accounts. In order to make the style guide effective and useful, this section will list standard fonts, colors, image types, and language to use when creating all social media posts.

To Dr. Laitem: Is there currently a standard place where the non-therapy dog photographs posted on the Counseling Center Instagram and Facebook pages are obtained? If not, the style guide will specify appropriate places for image acquisition.

- Therapy dog photos are taken by CC staff
- Jerrod and the Marketing GA know where non-therapy dog related photos are obtained, contact them for that information

To Dr. Laitem: Further, should the posts adhere to JMU branding guidelines (in terms of fonts and colors) strictly or loosely? Regardless, the information will be included in the style guide so that the Counseling Center can maintain visually consistent social media posts.

- The Student Success Center has its own brand identity, and the CC follows those guidelines for colors and fonts
- Jerrod has that information, so get in touch with him for HEX codes and font names
- Images for social media posts tend to come from the CC itself (like photos of the therapy dogs), otherwise the marketing GA talks with Jerrod about where to obtain photos (so Phil would know)

General Meeting Notes
- They have a Spotify account
- Used to have Twitter - research showed that college students use it less, so they dropped it
- Used to use Hootsuite (but that platform would no longer support scheduling posts for Instagram, so it became too much to keep up with)
- Outreach programming is advertised on both platforms
- There used to be a style guide for twitter, but there's never been one for FB
- Now the marketing GA is the only one really working on social media posts other than Magali and Jerrod (but it would be nice to be able to spread the load more evenly in the future)
- Falcon is a potential platform to use moving forward, but we don't have access at the moment