Committee for Commemoration and Landscapes: Social Media

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Social media is one of the modern world's most popular tools for communication, particularly among younger generations. The Committee for Commemoration and Landscapes does not currently run social media accounts, which I believe is harming its accessibility and outreach potential.

Social media accounts for schools' history groups are becoming widespread. Two schools that exist in similarly historic cities and have history committees not dissimilar to our efforts, the University of Virginia and Clemson University, run active social media accounts. Each of those accounts have between one and two thousand social media followers, not a few of them students. It is clear that social media thus is workable for a group with a mission like the CCL's and can be a good tool to promote visibility and increase interest in programming.

This increased visibility that creation and maintenance of social media accounts would bring to the CCL may improve funding possibilities, and very likely would attract both new members and supportive community members. As it stands, CCL programming is advertised largely through word-of-mouth and personal invitation; while both methods can work well, they feel a bit ineffective on a campus comprised of well over 10,000 faculty, staff, and students. Social media, with its far more widespread potential, is a logical stepping stone to improve access to information about the CCL as we work to get a website online.
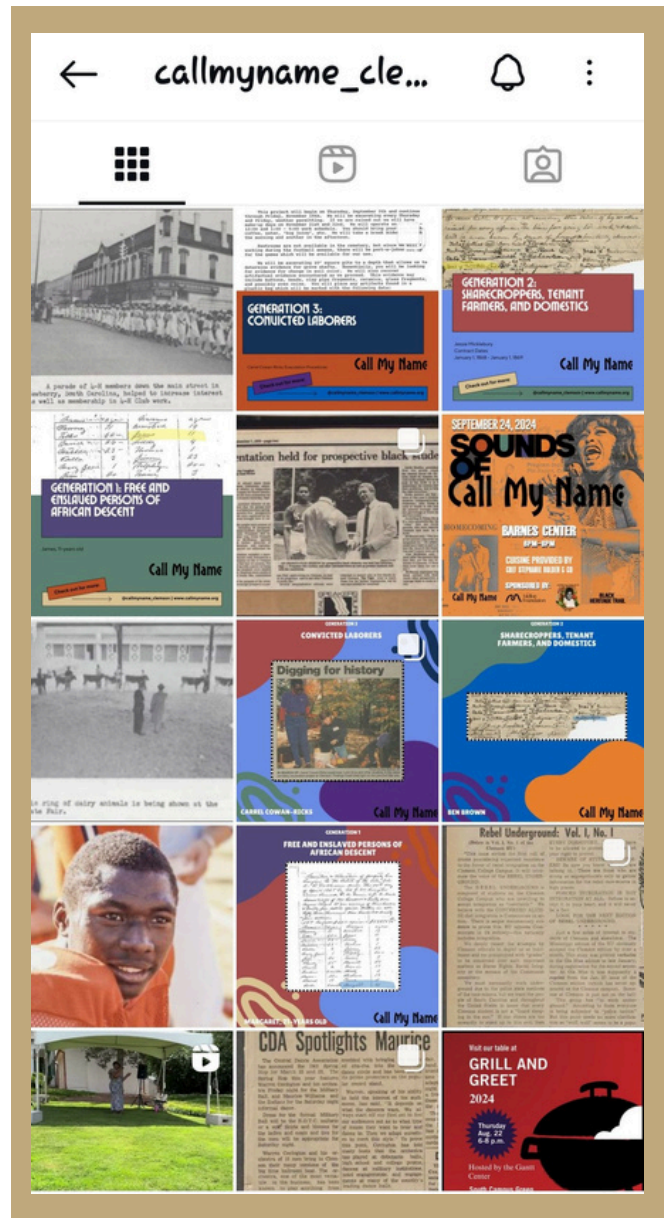
The maintenance of social media accounts is a particularly viable outreach option with regard to students. For students, viewing a group or brand's social media page are much easier to share with others, as well as express approval or interest

on. Social media is also a much more casual medium than existing CCL projects like the Discovering Our Past website. That informal setting may be an ideal one for sharing student research, done either as part of the CCL or in a class. Sharing student research on the CCL's social media pages may further incite interest in the Committee, and also may inspire more student contribution.

Overall, it is evident that social media accounts could improve on the CCL's current outreach methods, building further connections with students and increasing student interest in both the history of our College and conducting historical research.

Screencapture from Clemson's Call My Name Project Instagram, Sept. 4 2024
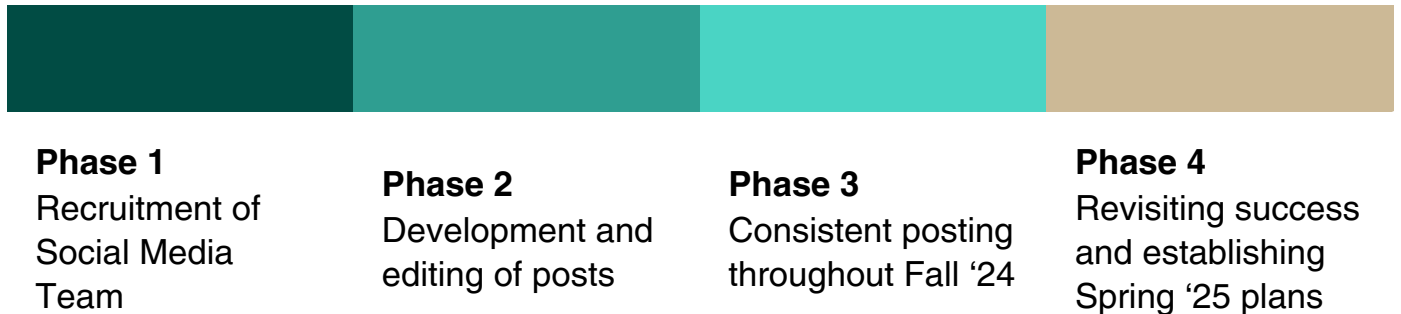
Themes:

A more public-facing, accessible, and student-centered approach on social media will promote students recognizing themselves in the past and understanding themselves and their school in the context of Charleston and its history.

Social media provides a quicker and easier way to communicate with the CCL community than the existing word-of-mouth and email list communication methods, translating to a more ambulatory group.

Proposed Timeline

Phase 1
Recruitment of Social Media Team

Phase 2
Development and editing of posts

Phase 3
Consistent posting throughout Fall '24

Phase 4
Revisiting success and establishing Spring '25 plans

Steps

BY EARLY OCTOBER

- Identify a team to support the social media pages through the Fall '24 semester.

BY MID OCTOBER

- Work with University Marketing to understand the brand standards that must be maintained on social platforms, as well as to obtain the appropriate images for profile pictures and guidance for biographies and usernames.
- Create accounts on social platforms using some common email address. Be sure to make them accessible–use an identifiable username with 'cofc' in it. Social platforms that accounts are highly important on are Facebook and Instagram. Social platforms that might be good to exist on are X (formerly Twitter), YouTube, TikTok, and Threads (owned by Meta).
- Follow other CofC pages–as many as possible. Invite them to follow the CCL accounts back, to begin legitimizing the accounts (instead of people believing them to be spam).
- Make sure that every resource the CCL puts out is readily available from any of the social platforms. This will likely look like linking them in the biographies of the various
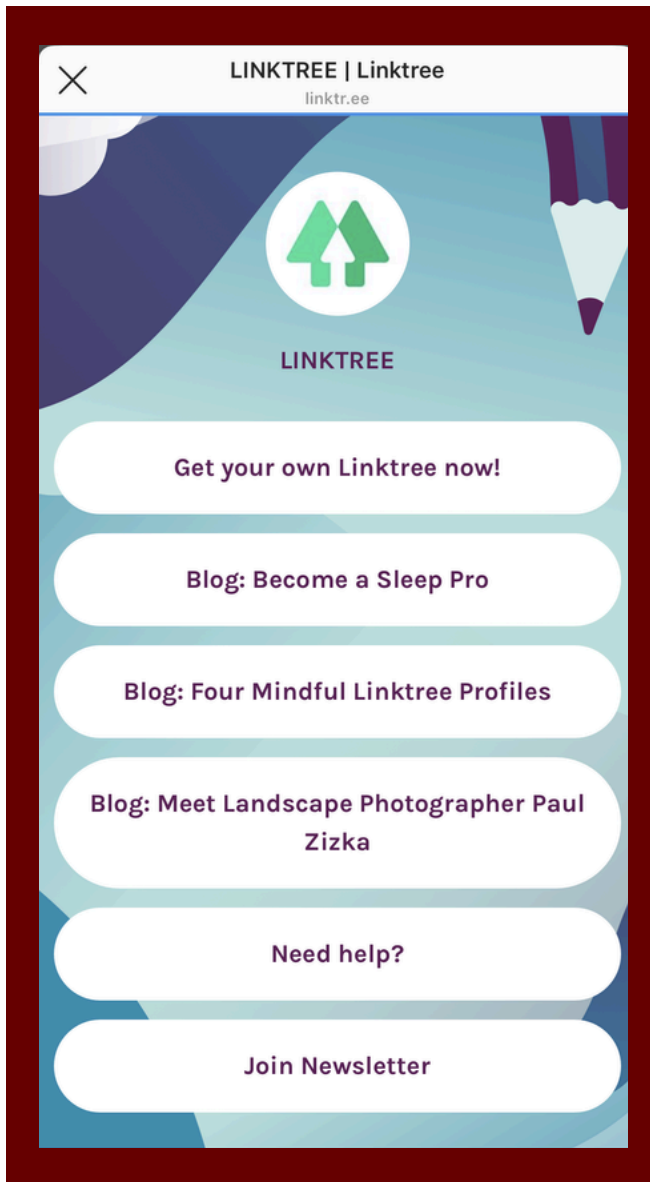
Linktree Visual

- websites–Link Tree is a popular tool for this task. Link the CCL's other social media accounts, and link the Discovering Our Past Website and CCL LibGuide, along with any other publicly available resources.
- Identify a CCL member (or several) to oversee posts to the social platforms. Ideally, the CCL will be posting two-to-three times a week, along with posting fairly regular 'stories' (at least on Instagram and Facebook), so identifying somebody with the capacity to edit posts that frequently is vital. That could look like editing and scheduling posts a month at a time.

BY LATE OCTOBER

- Develop an editing protocol, determining what format posts should be in, and establish a method for fact-checking the information provided.

BY EARLY NOVEMBER

- Develop posts, solicited from all of the CCL members. The word count limit and number of pictures vary between platforms, so some posts will have to be adapted for a different site. These posts might be about any topic related to CofC or Charleston history, but they should emphasize brevity and academic integrity (citing sources). Development of these posts should be an ongoing task.
- Begin posting regularly, through the end of the semester. The 'schedule posts' tool might be valuable.

Valuable Resources:

[University Marketing Brand Guidelines](#)
[University Marketing Style Guide](#)
[College Social Media Policy](#)
[How to Use Facebook](#) - This guide is aimed at businesses looking into advertising, but nonetheless is a good resource.

[How to Use Instagram](#) - This guide is also aimed at businesses looking into advertising, but nonetheless is a good resource.

[Clemson's Call My Name Instagram](#) - This Instagram page belongs to what effectively is Clemson's version of the CCL. They post every day, which is unfeasible for the CCL as it stands, but serves as a good model for us.

[Clemson's Call My Name Facebook](#) - It looks as though they have linked their Facebook and Instagram to make the same posts on both, but a look at a different format.

[William and Mary's The Lemon Project Instagram](#) - William and Mary's version of the CCL.

[William and Mary's The Lemon Project Facebook](#) - William and Mary's version of the CCL.

[LinkTree](#) - Clemson's Call My Name Instagram bio has one, if you'd like an example. Theirs has very few links—Link Tree accommodates in theory unlimited links.
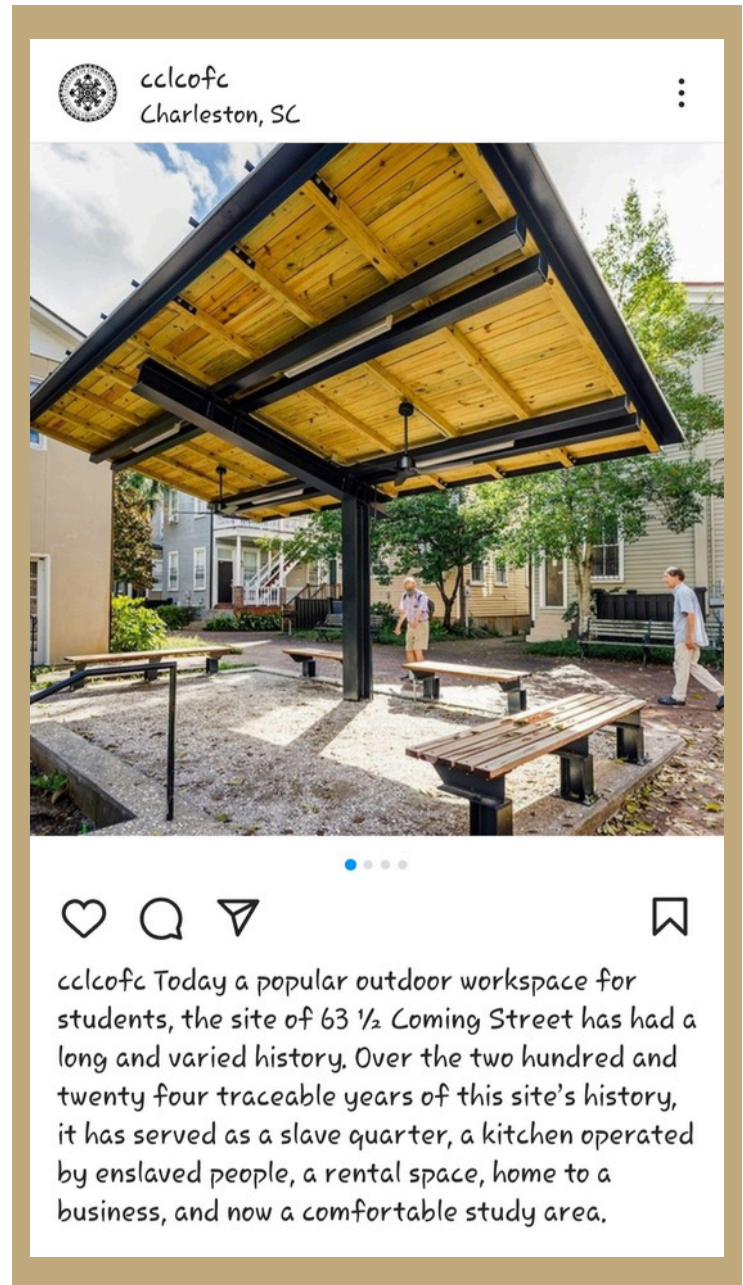
Screencapture from the CCL Instagram account's first post, Sept. 23