



## Developing a Chinese Social Media Program

Due to internet censorship, many of the most popular social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube are blocked in China. To better serve our Chinese students, who make up the largest group of international students at Boston University, we launched a Chinese Social Media Program in 2013.

Our Chinese social media channels connect with diverse audiences both in China and the United States, including parents, alums, current and prospective students, and the media. They seek to share information about the University and individual schools and colleges, as well as help students with the transition to studying in Boston. All texts posted on Chinese social channels are in Chinese.

### Boston University's Presence on Chinese Social Media

Sina Weibo and WeChat are the two main social media platforms we use to engage Chinese audiences. While both Chinese social channels have a specific focus, there is engagement and cross-sharing when appropriate and strategic.

[Sina Weibo](#), a hybrid of Twitter and Facebook, serves as a main source of information for the Chinese community. We use Weibo to distribute BU Today content and share institutional news, student stories, research excellence, campus events, and more.

[WeChat](#), a closed all-in-one mobile communication app for messaging, voice and video calls, news feeds, social communication, and wealth management, is the most popular social network in China. Individual users can set up personal accounts on this platform. For brands and companies, WeChat offers three types of official accounts: Subscription Account, Service Account, and Corporate Account. You can learn more about the difference between personal WeChat accounts and Official WeChat accounts [here](#). The Boston University WeChat channel is an information-oriented subscription account, which allows us to broadcast one newsletter per day to our subscribers. We use our WeChat channel to enhance community engagement, as well as to help Chinese students transition to Boston and the University.

You can also find Boston University's presence on [Zhihu](#), China's Quora. We crosspost social content to this channel, and monitor the conversations on Zhihu to generate topic ideas.

### Working with BU's Chinese Social Media Program

We use our Chinese social media channels to represent the University as a whole, as well as to shine a light on individual schools, colleges, and departments. Our team works closely with the University's editorial team and video production team to translate and repurpose engaging



stories for our Chinese social media channels. We also create original content, such as student interviews, pre-arrival readiness information, and listicles of BU fun facts. And, we are always looking for interesting stories throughout campus to highlight. We are here to help you expand your audience and reach on Chinese social media.

Here are several ways to work with our Chinese Social Media Program:

- Flag content targeting Chinese audiences or international students developed by your department, school, center, or program
- Recommend members of the BU Chinese community to be featured on our Chinese social channels
- Recommend student bloggers or vloggers to create content for our WeChat channel
- Share events for international students hosted by your department, school, center, or program
- Share compelling visual assets focusing on student life
- Co-host WeChat Q&A event
- Create a one pager on the program, course, or service you'd like to promote on Chinese social media for translation

### **Leveraging WeChat Groups for Community Building**

Like WhatsApp, WeChat allows users with personal accounts to set up groups and share information in group chats. If your department wants to leverage WeChat groups to connect with Chinese students, alums or parents, you can follow [this step-by-step guide](#) to apply for a personal WeChat account using a valid mobile number. To be mindful of data privacy and brand development, we suggest applying for a new device and a mobile number for business purposes, instead of using a personal mobile number to set up the account.

Once the account is created, you can update your profile information and get your account QR code in the “Me” section in the app. We highly recommend sharing this QR code via email and on your other social channels to help people find you on WeChat. You'll need at least two contacts on WeChat to set up a group. You can find the step-by-step instructions [here](#) on how to create or join a group chat.

We recommend [setting up a group notice](#) for each group. Please feel encouraged to include the [community guidelines](#) we created for the main University social media channels in your group notice.

Our team can offer guidance regarding the specific social platforms that might best fit your needs and discuss the ways you can amplify your message via those platforms. If you'd like to



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have further discuss developing a communication strategy for Chinese audience, please send an email to Carol Duan at [duanr@bu.edu](mailto:duanr@bu.edu).