

YouTube Channel Best Practices

YouTube is the preferred video hosting solution for the College of Arts & Sciences. Not only is it the world's largest video sharing community and video search engine, it also works well with websites built on our Department Web Framework as well as many other platforms. Creating a channel takes less than an hour and if you follow the best practices below it can become a sustainable part of your communications.

► **Channel Icon:** This should be an 800px by 800px .jpg image. The college recommends creating an icon that is consistent with UW branding and using that same icon for all of your social media outlets. If you need help creating a channel icon, contact CAS Marketing and Communications. To upload a new channel icon hover over the current image and click on the pencil icon that will appear near the top right of the image.

► **Channel Art:** The art you use here will influence the overall look and feel of your page and will be used across multiple devices including computers, TVs and mobile phones. This guide from YouTube contains specifications for creating your art. The college does not recommend placing branding in your channel art because it can become obscured or lost due to the dynamic resizing that takes place when users switch devices. A band can be placed along the top of the safe area (see guide) to create the patch and band effect. Contact CAS Marketing and Communications for more information on creating channel art.

► **Left Hand Navigation:** This navigation is unique to each YouTube user. You do not need to customize this section.

► **Featured Video:** When you setup your YouTube channel you will be prompted to select an "unsubscribed trailer." This is a video that will appear when someone who isn't yet subscribed to your channel visits your page. Choose your best and most relevant video for this section. You can change your unsubscribed trailer at any time by hovering over and then clicking on the pencil icon in the upper right of the featured video section.

► **Best Practices for Videos:** There are many, many uses for video and production quality can vary tremendously. However there are a few things you can do to keep the look of your YouTube channel consistent. The college recommends starting videos on your channel with recognizable branding. Branding can be as simple as a centered departmental logo on a purple background or as complex as an animated intro for each of your videos.

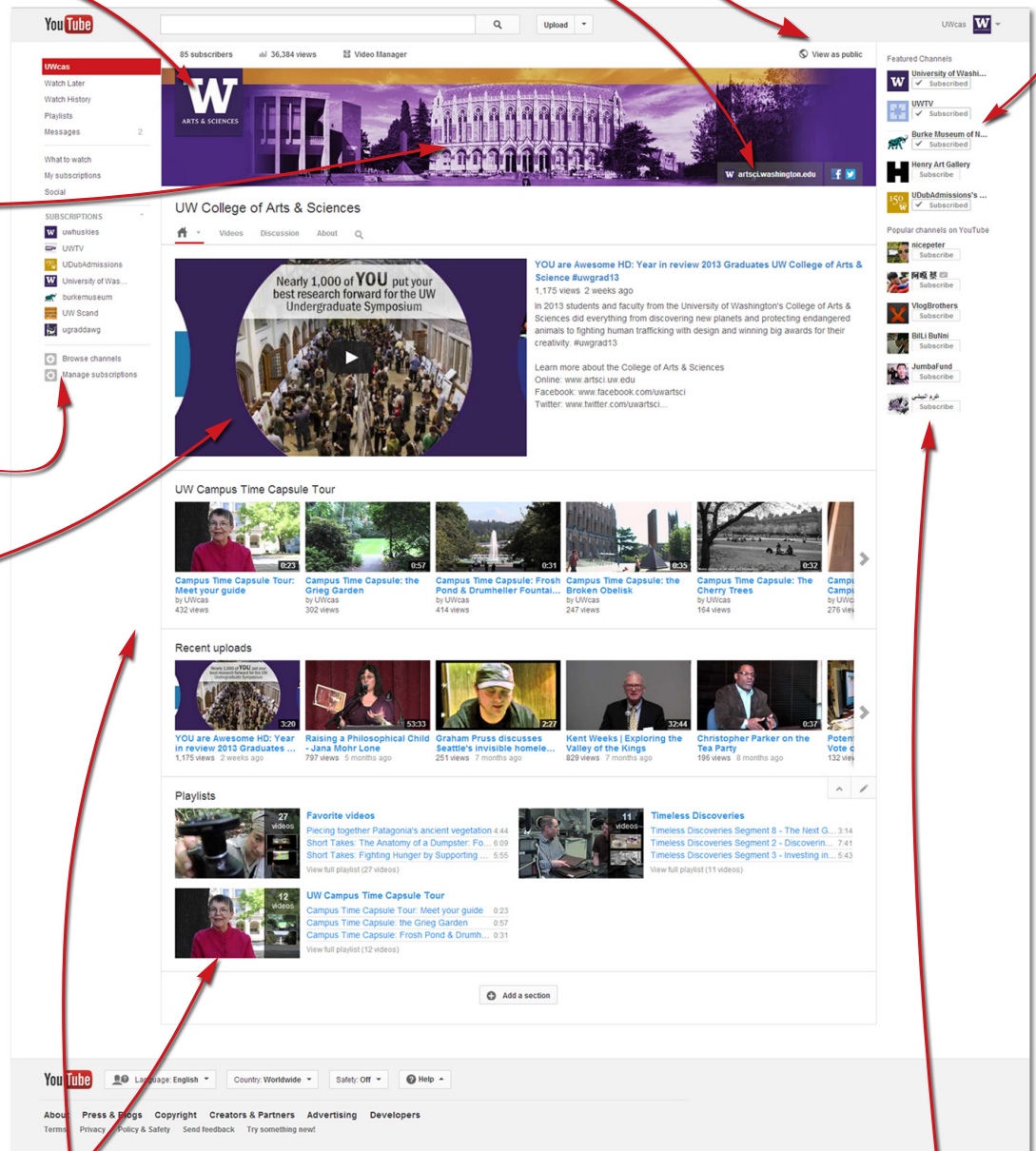
Video is a powerful tool for communication but not everyone can fully partake in its messages. You can expand the reach of your videos by including closed captioning. You can upload a timed caption file or type out the captions under the "captions" tab on YouTube's video manager.

The name and description of your video can have a significant impact on your video's discoverability. Well written description and an informative title will make sure that people find your video when they are searching for related topics. Your description should include links to your social media and website, and briefly cover the topics in your video.

► **Website and Social Media:** You should include a link to your departmental website and social media properties on your YouTube channel. To add links, hover over the upper right of your channel art. When the pencil icon appears, click on it and then click on "Edit Links" and follow the instructions on the page.

► **View as Public:** Clicking here will allow you to see what your channel will look like to visitors.

► **Featured Channels:** This is where you can showcase content related to your own. The college asks that all our departments feature both the University channel and the Arts & Sciences channel at a minimum. To edit your featured channels navigate to the "About" tab under your channel name below your channel art. Once there hover over the "Featured Channels" section and click on the pencil icon in the upper right of the section.



► **Playlists:** These help you arrange information in a way that is accessible to your viewers. Playlists are also a way to highlight outstanding content. For instance, if you had a series of interviews with students and also uploaded a series of lectures you could break the interviews and lectures into separate playlists to prevent them from being jumbled together. You will have the option to create horizontal playlist or vertical playlist.

Horizontal playlists work well for a smaller number of videos arranged around a theme like the student interviews. Vertical playlists work well for dense information or sequential videos like a lecture series. To edit a playlist, hover over its section and then click on the pencil icon in the upper right. To add a new playlist, scroll to the bottom of the page and click on the "Add a Section" button.

► **Related/Popular Channels:** The related or popular channel list below your featured channels is created by YouTube. You can disable this list by hovering over the list title and clicking on the disable button that will appear. However, if you disable the related channel feature, your channel will not show up in this list on other pages. YouTube claims that over 50% of views now come from their related channel and video features.