

NNMC Social Media Best Practice Guidelines

INTRODUCTION

Northern New Mexico College recognizes that social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram have become popular and influential communication channels for our communities. It is important for Northern New Mexico College entities, faculty, staff, and students to be aware of how social technologies can help them share information, participate in important conversations, and collaborate on new ideas.

The purposes of Northern's social media pages include:

- Promoting development of social, professional and learning communities
- Supporting recruiting, retention and alumni relations
- Fostering conversation and friendship within our communities
- Enhancing the reputation of the college
- Building institutional loyalty and pride
- Stimulating community involvement by sharing news and events
- Drawing friends of the college more closely into our community

Publishing and engaging with people on social media carries a similar obligation as communicating via traditional media. The following best practice guidelines complement our Social Media policy and will help Northern's community use social media in a professional capacity.

Official Northern social media accounts must be managed responsibly because of their impact on the reputation of the College as a whole as well as its faculty, staff, students and alumni. College systems administrators may perform activities necessary to ensure the integrity, functionality, and security of Northern's electronic resources and image.

These recommendations apply only as far as Northern employees identify themselves as employees of the College, or are using Northern social media accounts.

Official NNMC Social Media Accounts:

- NNMC Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/NorthernNewMexicoCollege>
- NNMC Twitter: <https://twitter.com/NorthernNNMC>
- NNMC LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/edu/school>
- NNMC Instagram: www.instagram.com/northern_newmexico_college/
- NNMC YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/NNMC6>

NCAM also maintains a list of active college/department social media accounts on [Northern's Social Media Directory](#)

Questions to think about when considering creating a Social Media site

- Determine your audience(s). Current students? Prospective students? Alumni? Professional colleagues? Research associates?
- Does your audience regularly engage in social media?
- Does social media support the conversation you want to have with your audience?
- Does your organization/department/unit have enough content to keep users engaged on a regular basis?
- Does your organization have the resources to actively maintain a social media presence. If not, would a simple Northern webpage be sufficient?

Creating your Account and Identity

To set up an official Northern account on any social media platform, you will need to do the following:

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- **Submit an [application](#) to NCAM.** The application is also available on the [NCAM webpage](#). The application process will require you to select from your unit an account administrator responsible for managing page content.
- **Select a title.** Official accounts must have “Northern New Mexico College,” “NORTHERN” or “NNMC” as part of your page title.
- **Choose a page category (Facebook).** The “Company, Organization or Institution” page category and “Education” sub-category will best suit most college accounts. If your target audience is very specific (ex. 2014 ADN Graduates) a Group page may be the best choice. Please do not use a personal profile.
- **Work with NCAM to develop branding** in compliance with Northern’s brand standards (available on the [NCAM webpage](#)) and appropriate for your program, unit or department.
- **Provide basic information:** All official NNMC social media properties should provide contact information and email addresses so that visitors may report problems, etc.
- **Develop a plan for posting content and marketing your new social media account.** All entities should have a social media strategy and plan that has been approved by their unit leader prior to the debut of any social media site. Those who already have a social media presence should periodically review and update the plan to ensure that it is still relevant.

Creating the Right Content

- Focus on your audience. Why do they like Northern? What kind of information would they find interesting, and how might they like to engage with your social media?
- Different audiences want different kinds of content – students want to know what is going on across campus, tips to improve their grades, stories about enjoying campus life; alumni want to hear stories and news about their alma mater that will boost their pride and encourage them to connect, serve and donate.
- Create content that your fans will want to share with their friends.
- If you don't have time or resources to create content your audience will find engaging, perhaps a page on Northern’s website would be a better option.

Social Media Etiquette

- Be positive in your interactions with your fans or followers.
- Remember when you are posting on official Northern social media accounts, your content reflects on the College.
- Use sound judgment when creating your posts/images/tweets/etc. Once posted, your content can go anywhere.

Be Engaging and Helpful

- Remember that you are building a social community. Give your audience a chance to connect with, and help develop, Northern’s brand, identity and pride.
- Be a valuable and engaging source of information for them.
- Meet your audiences where they are, interest-wise. What academic or cultural events are going on that you can leverage to keep your audience interested in your page?
- In addition to Northern content, look for content from other sources that your audience will find interesting.
- Be Authentic. Listen and respond, participate and share.

Questionable Content

At times your audience will post content or comments that you, or members of your department, will find questionable. Developing a plan to respond to these situations before they arise will enable you to make informed, strategic responses rather than rash ones.

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103 Establish clear expectations of community members, as well as NNMC social media account
104 administrators and page managers. At a minimum, refer to our Social Media Policy (2570), Respectful
105 Campus Policy (2240), and review the introduction to this Best Practices Guidelines document (lines 1
106 through 25) regarding the purposes of Northern Social Media.

107 108 **Moderating posts**

109 Do not delete or ignore negative comments just because they are negative. Act quickly to address the
110 criticism given, and contact the person involved to see how you can help resolve the issue, if possible.

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112 Feedback should only be deleted or removed if it is in violation of applicable College policies and
113 standards of professional conduct; local, state, and national laws, or terms and conditions imposed by the
114 applicable social media platform being used. Unless the post is a violation of these policies, you should
115 attempt to resolve the issue without censoring your page. In many cases, pages that are well-utilized tend
116 to develop loyal users who will support or respond to criticism on your behalf. In other cases, negative
117 posts allow you to respond publicly, thus turning a negative situation into a positive one.

118 119 **Example of a negative post worthy of a public response:**

120 Jean: "I just read a Northern Broadcast today and cannot believe that your department reduced your
121 hours of service! Aren't you here to HELP students instead of making their lives more difficult?!"
122 Department Response: "Hi Jean! Thank you for your feedback. We appreciate that you care enough about
123 our services to comment about the change in hours at our department. Budget cuts have indeed reduced
124 our traditional service hours, however, we are now available to help you anywhere at anytime via
125 Facebook or email..."

126 127 **Example of a negative post worthy of a private response:**

128 Thomas: "I just got my financial aid award letter and found out that I won't be able to afford Northern this
129 semester! Thanks for being so expensive, NNMC!"
130 Department Response: "Hi Thomas. We're sorry to hear about your situation. Please call or email us, or
131 stop by the Financial Aid Office to see if there is anything we can do to help."

132 133 **What types of posts should be outright deleted?**

134 All official Northern social media accounts reserve the right to delete content that is off-topic, offensive or
135 abusive, (including, but not limited to, racist, sexist, homophobic or anti-Semitic statements) or ad
136 hominem attacks on individuals. Please contact social@nnmc.edu if you need help addressing
137 questionable content.

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139 If you delete a post by a user, you may consider sending him/her a private message detailing why the
140 posting was removed and how they can appropriately address concerns (aka have an educational moment
141 with him/her).

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143 If you have additional questions about setting up social media accounts for your department, or
144 addressing any other social media concerns, please contact NCAM at social@nnmc.edu.

145 146 **Northern Policies and Other Resources**

- 147 • Governmental Relations and Legislative Activity (2050)
- 148 • Freedom of Expression and Dissent (2200)
- 149 • Respectful Campus Policy (2240)
- 150 • Acceptable Computer Use (2500)
- 151 • Social Media Policy (2570)
- 152 • [NNMC Social Media Directory](#)
- 153 • Copyright and Fair Use Resources

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- 154 ○ [Campus Guide to Copyright](#)
- 155 ○ [UNM Resources Copyright Matters](#)
- 156 • [Campus Copyrights and Responsibilities: A Basic Guide to Policy Considerations](#)
- 157 • [FERPA and Students' Privacy](#)
- 158 • [Sexual Harassment/Title IX \(1320\)](#)
- 159 • [Workplace Harassment/Staff Handbook](#).
- 160 • [Student Handbook](#)

Social Network Tips

Tips for Facebook:

- 165 • Including photos and links in your posts will improve audience engagement with your site.
- 166 • Limit post text to 420 characters if possible, or viewers will have to click “read more.”
- 167 • Photos in posts appear best in a square shape or landscape orientation (6 x 4). Make the picture at
- 168 least 600 pixels wide to fill the post.
- 169 • The best time of day for posts to be seen is between noon and 2 pm and 6 and 9 pm. You can
- 170 schedule posts to publish at a particular date and time.
- 171 • Plan posts at least four hours apart and try to post at least once per week.
- 172 • You can invite other Facebook users or email contacts to like your page using the “build audience”
- 173 tab at the top of your page.

Tips for Twitter:

- 176 • Twitter is a microblogging social network. Unlike Facebook, which allows you to grow and reach out
- 177 to your audience through “friend connections,” Twitter is an outward-facing network. Twitter
- 178 encourages you to interact with people who you aren't connected to/following, based on your
- 179 interests, or a shared connection.
- 180 • Twitter limits tweets to 140 characters or less. Feel free to use abbreviations and shorthand or add a
- 181 link to longer content.
- 182 • Take advantage of hashtags (# symbol with a keyword) to spread your message. For example, if an
- 183 update has to do with veterans, you can use #Veterans. Also include #NNMC, #NorthernProud, or
- 184 #IheartNorthern so people know the update is about the College.
- 185 • You can add photos and short video to twitter posts.
- 186 • You can “favorite” (click the star) and “retweet” (arrows symbol) updates that your page likes and
- 187 wants others to see.
- 188 • Reply to tweets using the reply button or direct tweet them using their Twitter handle (@ and the
- 189 page name).
- 190 • Use a website like bitly.com or owly.com to shorten hyperlinks and save character space.
- 191 • You can use a website like twuffer.com to schedule tweets in advance.
- 192 • Direct Messages: You can use direct messaging system (DM) to respond directly to those who are
- 193 following you on Twitter. You can address criticisms or other negative comments directly, if
- 194 necessary.

Tips for Instagram:

- 197 • Instagram is a mobile platform and can only be used on a phone or tablet.
- 198 • Instagram is an image-oriented platform. This is where you should share photos and short videos.
- 199 • All photos on Instagram must be square. A good dimension is 400 pixels x 400 pixels.
- 200 • Be careful using filters for your pictures. Some enhance photos, while others make them look less
- 201 professional.

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- Use hashtags that relate to your subject to help people find your content. For example, if the photo is of a dance recital, you can use #Dance or #Dancer. It's fine to use several hashtags. Remember to use #NNMC and/or tag @NorthernNewMexicoCollege in your posts.