



## NNMC Social Media Professional Best Practices

### 1. General

Social media offers great ways for Northern New Mexico College (NNMC) to engage online with local, national, and global communities. Northern recognizes the importance and benefits of communicating through social media and encourages the use of social media technology to enhance communication, collaboration, and information exchange in support of its mission, programs, and initiatives.

Social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn and X 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 to:**

- Promote the development of social, professional, and learning communities
- Support recruiting, retention, and alumni relations
- Foster conversation and friendship within our communities
- Enhance the reputation of the college
- Build institutional loyalty and pride
- Stimulate community involvement by sharing news and events
- Draw friends of the college more closely into our community

**Publishing and engaging with people on social media carry a similar obligation as communicating via traditional media.** The following best practice guidelines complement our Social Media policy (2570) 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, 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 as far as Northern employees identify themselves as employees of the College or are using Northern social media accounts.

Official NNMC Social Media Accounts include Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, and X. Refer to Northern's Communications & Marketing office (NCAM) on [nnmc.edu](http://nnmc.edu) for our active social media directory, including:

- NNMC Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NorthernNewMexicoCollege>
- NNMC X: <https://x.com/NorthernNNMC>
- NNMC LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/school/northern-new-mexico-college>
- NNMC Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/northernnnmc/>
- NNMC YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@northernnewmexicocollege5843>

NCAM also maintains a list of active Official College/department social media accounts.



## 2. 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?

## 3. Creating your Account and Identity

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

- **Submit an application to NCAM.** The application is 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 “College and University” page category and “Education” sub-category will best suit most college accounts. If your target audience is very specific 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.

## 4. Creating the Right Content for Your Audience

- Focus on your audience. What kind of information would they find interesting from your department, 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.



## 5. Professional 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.
- Properly share/repost other's intellectual property within the same social media channel as the original, to keep its ownership, authorship and intent intact. It is unprofessional and inappropriate to copy/paste content that you have not created.

## 6. Be Engaging and Helpful

- Remember that you are building a social community. Give your audience a chance to connect with 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?
- 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.

## 7. Questionable Content

At times someone in your audience will post content or comments on your page 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.

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

If you see something on any Northern page that you think needs addressing, please contact [sandyk@nnmc.edu](mailto:sandyk@nnmc.edu).

## 8. Moderating posts

- As NNMC is a public institution and government entity, we do not delete negative comments just because they are negative.
- Best practice is to act quickly to address the criticism given, and contact the person involved to see how you can help resolve the issue, if possible.
- Comments or posts should only be deleted or removed if in violation of applicable College policies and standards of professional conduct; local, state, and national laws, or terms and conditions imposed by the applicable social media platform being used.
- Unless the post is a violation of these policies, you should attempt to resolve the issue without censoring your page. In many cases, pages that are well-utilized tend to develop loyal users who will

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support or respond to criticism on your behalf. In other cases, negative posts allow you to respond publicly, thus turning a negative situation into a positive one.

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

Anna: "I just read a Northern Broadcast today and cannot believe that your department reduced your hours of service! Aren't you here to HELP students instead of making their lives more difficult?!"

Department Response: "Hi Anna! Thank you for your feedback. We appreciate that you care enough about our services to comment about the change in hours at our department. Budget cuts have indeed reduced our traditional service hours, however, we are now available to help you anywhere at anytime via Facebook or email..."

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

Tomas: "I just got my financial aid award letter and found out that I won't be able to afford Northern this semester! Thanks for being so expensive, NNMC!"

Department Response: "Hi Tomas. We're sorry to hear about your situation. Please contact the Financial Aid Office to see if there is anything we can do to help."

*What types of posts should be outright deleted?*

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

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

If you have additional questions about setting up social media accounts for your department or addressing any other social media concerns, please contact NCAM at [social@nnmc.edu](mailto:social@nnmc.edu).

[Northern Policies](#) and Other Resources

- [Freedom of Expression and Dissent \(2200\)](#)
- [Respectful Campus Policy \(2240\)](#)
- [Acceptable Computer Use \(2500\)](#)
- [Social Media Policy \(2570\)](#)
- [NNMC Official Social Media Directory](#)
- [Copyright and Fair Use Resources](#)
- [NNMC Library Guide to Copyright](#)
- [FERPA and Students' Privacy](#)
- [Sexual Harassment/Title IX](#)
- [Workplace Harassment/Staff Handbook](#)
- [Student Handbook](#)