NIC Communication Guidelines

The North Idaho College Communications and Marketing Department coordinates all college internal and external communications.

Media Protocol

**Media Inquiries**

The North Idaho College Communications and Marketing Department coordinates all college media relations. The Vice President for Communications and Governmental Relations, the Director of Communications and Marketing, and the Communications Coordinator serve as official spokespeople of North Idaho College and convey the official college position on issues of general college-wide impact or significance or situations that are of a particularly controversial or sensitive nature. Inquiries from the media about such issues shall be immediately referred to the Director of Communications and Marketing. Depending on the specific circumstances, the vice president, director, or coordinator may designate another college official to serve as spokesperson on a particular issue in which they have experience or expertise.

**Crisis Communications**

In the event of a crisis or emergency situation, the Vice President for Communications and Governmental Relations will handle all contacts with the media, and will coordinate the information flow from the college to the public in accordance with the Crisis Communication Procedures that is a part of the NIC Crisis Manual. In such situations, all campus departments shall refer calls from the media to the office of Communications and Marketing.

**Media Outreach**

The Communications and Marketing Department promotes the college through earned media: securing feature stories and generating press releases regarding special accomplishments, events/activities, programs, and plans. NIC is responsible for ensuring that FERPA violations do not occur in the release of information to the media. All contacts with the media, including press releases, must be coordinated with the Communications Coordinator.

Since positive media solicitation is an integral element of the college's communications strategy, any ideas for articles or pieces that would positively portray the college, its work, or its community shall also be directed to the Communications and Marketing
Director or Communications Coordinator. Likewise, the office of Communications and Marketing shall be notified about negative occurrences that are likely to rise to the level of a news story.

**Internal Communication Protocol**

*Employee Communication*

The NIC Communications and Marketing Department coordinates all official communication for NIC employees. Any mass communication (or communication intended for “all employees”) must be coordinated through the Communications and Marketing Office to determine the proper communication strategy and channels. It is acceptable for committee chairs or the leaders of shared governance groups to target communications toward segmented groups that do not include all employees (such as committee membership, Staff Assembly, Faculty Assembly, divisions, etc.). However, using these tools to target all employees is restricted and must go through the Communications and Marketing Office. For example, using Staff Assembly and Faculty Assembly email lists to communicate with all employees is prohibited.

*Student Communication*

Any mass communication (or communication intended for “all students”) must be coordinated through the Communications and Marketing Office to determine the proper communication strategy and channels. It is acceptable for department leaders or designees to target communications toward segmented groups that do not include all students (such as club membership, class rosters, athletics teams, etc.). However, all communication that must reach the entire student populations must be initiated by the Communications and Marketing Department.

**Social Media Protocol**

*Guidelines*

These guidelines are intended to help North Idaho College maintain standards for the use of NIC social media sites and ensure adherence to official college policies and procedures. These guidelines apply to all college entities and social media sites established for college purposes, including but not limited to sites established by the college and its divisions, departments, and student clubs/organizations. They are not intended to reflect personal social media sites established by college employees or students for personal use. All college social media sites must be structured in an appropriate, ethical, professional and lawful manner; reflect the college’s mission, values and brand; and adhere to all college policies and procedures.

*Proper Usage*
Prior to establishing a social media presence for college use, employees must notify their supervisor and students must notify their club/organization advisor; must contact the NIC Communications and Marketing Director to review and consent to NIC Social Media Guidelines; supply username and password to the NIC Communications and Marketing Director and receive set-up assistance and/or instruction if necessary.

The Communications and Marketing Department maintains the official institutional social media sites with a broad audience, including but not limited to prospective students, current students, employees, board members, alumni, donors, and supporters.

**Official college social media sites include:**
Facebook Fan Page: [www.nic.edu/facebook](http://www.nic.edu/facebook)
Cecil’s Friend Page: [www.nic.edu/facebookcecil](http://www.nic.edu/facebookcecil)
Twitter: [www.nic.edu/twitter](http://www.nic.edu/twitter) or @NorthIdaho
Pinterest: [www.pinterest.com/nidahocollege](http://www.pinterest.com/nidahocollege)
YouTube: [www.nic.edu/YouTube](http://www.nic.edu/YouTube)
Flickr: [www.flickr.com/photos/northidahocollege/sets/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/northidahocollege/sets/)

Only social media sites with target audiences or communication needs that are different from the official North Idaho College social media sites will be authorized to have a page/site/account of their own. All official social media administrators, user names, and passwords will be maintained by the Communications and Marketing Office.

A college-approved social media site will must adhere to:
A. Communications and Marketing Department branding standards (i.e. use of college logos, word marks, photos, etc.)
B. Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations (restricted information includes personal or identifying information, such as student identification numbers, employee identification numbers, Social Security numbers, date of birth, addresses, phone numbers, etc.)
C. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)
D. All official College Policies and Procedures as listed in the [NIC Policy Manual](http://www.nic.edu/), including but not limited to:
   1. Policy #3.03 Non-Discrimination Policy
   2. Policy #3.08 Computers and Rules of Acceptable Use and Privacy
   3. Policy #3.11 Privacy

Inappropriate use of the college social media sites such as posting offensive, abusive and/or harassing messages; divulging confidential student, employee or college information; or failing to follow NIC Social Media Guidelines as outlined in this document may result in loss of social media sites and/or privileges and/or disciplinary action.

Using the college’s social media sites and accounts indicates that you have read and consent to abide by these guidelines.
Participation Agreement

All college employees or students authorized to participate on the college’s official social media sites or as administrators of sites of their own agree to regularly update and monitor public usage of the social media site, including responding to posts or messages from other social media users when appropriate and ensure that all of the aforementioned usage guidelines are met.

Recommendations

- Use of social media sites on behalf of North Idaho College shall be used in support of the college’s mission and values and support a positive image of North Idaho College’s brand.
- Avoid social media dialogues or speculation related to official college internal policies or operations of which you are not designated to represent the college’s official viewpoint.
- Your social media site reflects not only North Idaho College, but also your division, department or student club/organization. Utilize standards that convey your department/division/organization in a manner that is positive and professional.
- Administrators of college-authorized social media sites are acting as representatives of North Idaho College. Administrators shall use grammar and language in a professional manner and should exercise discretion and respect for employees, students, associates and community members (social media fans).
- Social media site administrators shall treat the college social media sites as a form of public and permanent record.
- Social media is as much about listening as it is about posting news and information. Be actively engaged in social media sites, responding to questions or comments posted as well as distributing information.
- Social media administrators shall take steps to ensure that all information is accurate prior to posting.