



# North Idaho College

## NIC Communication Guidelines

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

### Media Protocol

#### *Media Inquiries*

NIC Communications and Marketing coordinates all college media relations.

Day-to-day media inquiries are handled by the college's Communications Coordinator.

The Chief Communications and Government Relations Officer serves as the official spokesperson of North Idaho College and conveys the official college position on issues of general collegewide impact and situations that are particularly controversial or sensitive in nature. Inquiries from the media about such issues shall be immediately referred to the Chief Communications and Government Relations Officer. Depending on the specific circumstances, the President or Chief Communications and Government Relations Officer may designate another college official to serve as spokesperson on a particular issue in which they have experience or expertise.

#### *Crisis or Emergency Communications*

In the event of a crisis or emergency situation, the Chief Communications and Government Relations Officer 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 part of the **NIC Crisis Manual**. In such situations, all campus departments shall refer calls from the media to the Chief Communications and Government Relations Officer.

## ***Outreach to the Media***

Communications and Marketing promotes the college through earned media by securing stories and generating news releases regarding special accomplishments, events/activities, programs and the people and places of NIC. All employees are responsible for ensuring that Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) violations do not occur in the release of student information to anyone, including the media. All contacts with the media, including preparing and distributing news releases, must be coordinated with the Communications Coordinator.

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

## **Internal Communication Protocol**

### ***Employee Communication***

NIC Communications and Marketing coordinates all official communication for NIC employees. Any mass communication (or communication intended for “all employees”) that an employee, department, or office wants to send must be coordinated through Communications and Marketing to determine the proper communication strategy and channels. Usually the most common method is through NIC’s employee electronic newsletter, the NICNow, that is distributed on average daily, Monday through Friday.

It is acceptable for college committee chairs or the leadership of shared governance groups to send communications to segmented groups that do not include “all employees” (such as committee membership, staff assembly, faculty assembly, divisions, etc.). Vice Presidents of the college are also able to selectively send out “all-employee” communications and are encouraged to work with Communications and Marketing regarding timing and delivery method.

Any other “all-employee” communication must go through the President’s office or the Chief Communications and Government Relations Officer’s office. Using any method to circumvent this process, for example, combining the 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”) will be coordinated through Communications and Marketing to determine the proper communication strategy and channels used. 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, scholarship recipients, etc.). However, all communication that reaches the entire student population must be initiated by Communications and Marketing. This is to ensure communication is effective in its messaging and strategic in its timing and method of delivery.

## **Public Records Requests**

All public records requests may be submitted online here:

<https://www.nic.edu/forms/InformationRequest.aspx>

FAQs on Idaho’s Public Records Law is available here: <https://www.ag.idaho.gov/office-resources/public-records/>

## **Social Media Protocol**

### ***Guidelines***

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

### ***Proper Usage***

Prior to establishing a social media presence for college use, any staff, faculty, or student must contact NIC’s Digital and Community Engagement Manager to review the proposed social media channel. If approved, the username, password, and additional information will need to be supplied to the NIC Digital and Community Engagement Manager.

NIC's Communications and Marketing office maintains the official institutional social media channels with a broad audience, including but not limited to prospective students, current students, employees, board members, alumni, donors, community members and supporters.

### ***Official North Idaho College Social Media Sites***

Facebook Fan Page: [www.nic.edu/facebook](http://www.nic.edu/facebook) or @northidahocollege

Cecil's Friend Page: [www.nic.edu/facebookcecil](http://www.nic.edu/facebookcecil) or @cecil.cardinal

Instagram: [www.nic.edu/instagram](http://www.nic.edu/instagram) or @northidahocollegeofficial

Snapchat: @niccardinals

Twitter: [www.nic.edu/twitter](http://www.nic.edu/twitter) or @northidaho

YouTube: [www.nic.edu/YouTube](http://www.nic.edu/YouTube)

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

A college-approved social media channel must adhere to:

- A. College branding standards (i.e. use of college logos, wordmarks, photos, etc.)  
NIC Brand standards can be found at [nic.edu/branding](http://nic.edu/branding).
- B. Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations (prohibits release of student information including personal or identifying information that is not directory information etc.).
- C. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) regulations.
- D. Protected employee information or confidential college information.
- E. All official College Policies and Procedures as listed in the [NIC Policy Manual](#), including but not limited to:
  1. Policy No. 3.03 Non-Discrimination Policy.
  2. Policy No. 3.08 Computers and Rules of Acceptable Use and Privacy.
  3. Policy No. 3.11 Privacy.
- E. College Policy and Procedure No. 2.01 Retention of Records.

Inappropriate use of college social media channels such as posting offensive, abusive 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 channels and/or privileges and/or disciplinary action.

The currently approved social media channels for any college entity include:

- Facebook

- Twitter
- Instagram

All changes to existing social media channels must go through Communications and Marketing first, if, for any reason, a username, password or contact information needs to be changed.

### ***Participation Agreement***

All college employees or students authorized to participate on/in the college's official social media channels or as administrators of sites of a college entity agree to regularly update and monitor public usage of the social media channel, including responding to posts or messages from other social media users when appropriate and ensure that the social media usage guidelines are met.

### ***Recommendations***

- Use of social media sites on behalf of North Idaho College shall be in support of the college's mission, vision and values and provide a positive image of the NIC 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.
- All college social media channels reflect the integrity and professionalism of not only North Idaho College but also the division, department, team or student club/organization. Utilize standards that convey the department/division/organization in a manner that is positive and encourages engagement.
- Administrators of college-authorized social media channels 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.
- Administrators shall treat the college social media channels 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 channels, 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.

Using the college's social media channels and accounts indicates that you have read and consent to abide by these guidelines.

## **College Bulletin Boards**

### ***Overview***

Bulletin boards throughout North Idaho College campuses (including all buildings on the main Coeur d'Alene campus, Workforce Training Center, Parker Technical Education Center, Aerospace Center, and outreach locations in Kellogg, Sandpoint, Bonners Ferry, and Post Falls) are part of the college's official strategic communications. They are intended for posting of news and events targeted toward current NIC students and are reserved primarily for use of internal college clubs, departments, and organizations. A staff member in each building will be assigned as the official monitor of the building's bulletin board.

### ***Guidelines***

News and events sponsored by college clubs, departments, and organizations (with appropriate content) may be posted by representatives of those organizations on public bulletin boards without prior approval of the building bulletin board monitor (except in the gymnasium).

Only building monitors may post or remove flyers from the bathroom Plexiglas displays. These displays are labeled "For office use only - do not remove or replace".

## **Communications Branding**

### ***Overview***

North Idaho College is committed to a clear, consistent brand identity and communications standard – internally and externally – as part of an overall coordinated institutional identity program. Just like graphic branding, brand guidelines are designed to establish consistency in all forms of communications for the college.

Brand guidelines are available here: <https://www.nic.edu/branding>