



NU SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY



Northwest
UNIVERSITY



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

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SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY OVERVIEW

PURPOSE AND APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

This document is intended to provide guidance and clear requirements for any social media accounts that represent Northwest University as an institution. This includes all corporate accounts ran by the Marketing department, along with all secondary accounts across all social media channels including, but not limited to, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, LinkedIn, and Tik Tok.

The following information is broken up into two sections: requirements and best practices for secondary accounts, and procedures for responding to social media comments, messages, trends, and emergencies.



SECTION 1

REQUIREMENTS AND BEST PRACTICES FOR SECONDARY ACCOUNTS

SECONDARY ACCOUNTS

A **secondary account** is defined as *any social media account representing a specific department, club, organization, or group at Northwest University*. All social networking profiles and administrators who use a social networking service as a representative of Northwest University (in your capacity as a faculty or staff member, student leader of a club or organization, or student athlete), must agree to abide by the following policies and procedures:

Northwest University encourages the use of social networking sites for communication between Northwest University, the community, our alumni and friends, allowing the University to share events, educational opportunities, and other information. Departments, student groups, athletic teams, clubs, etc., have the ability (but are not required) to maintain interactive and current social networking profiles that promote open discussion of topics related to Northwest University and its constituents.

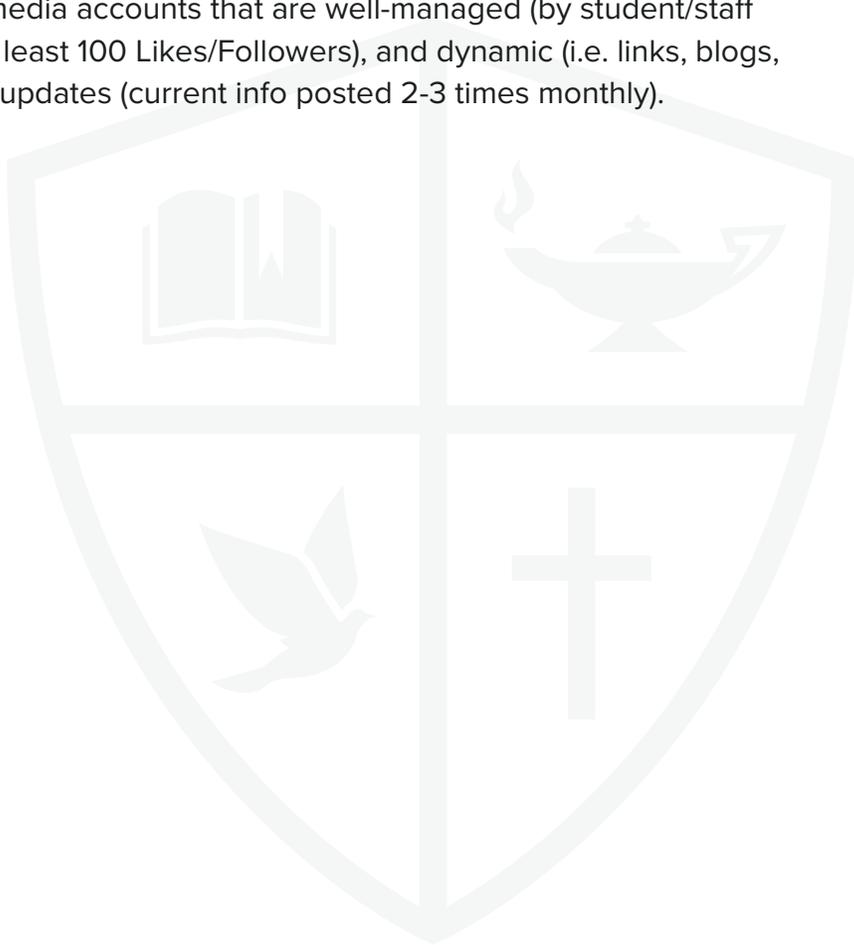
REQUIREMENTS AND BEST PRACTICES FOR SECONDARY ACCOUNTS

BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY

- **Protect confidential and proprietary information:** Adhere to all applicable university privacy and confidentiality policies. Do not post confidential or proprietary information about Northwest University, students, employees or alumni. Pay particular attention to the applicable federal requirements, such as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), as well as to NAIA regulations. Sharing such private information can result in legal action against you and/or Northwest University. Never comment on anything related to legal matters, litigation or any parties with whom the university is in litigation.
- **Respect copyright and fair use:** At all times, adhere to copyright laws, fair use guidelines and the intellectual property rights of others and of the university.
- **Ask the Marketing Department before using Northwest University logos or graphic symbols for endorsements:** Do not use the university's name to promote a product, business, issue, cause, political party, or candidate.
- **Terms of service:** Obey the terms of service of all social media platforms.
- No social media profile may in any way hinder the mission of the university.
- The Marketing Department must be aware of any profile using the Northwest University or NU name. If you are already moderating a social networking profile that uses the Northwest University name, please email socialmedia@northwestu.edu with account information to allow your profile to be added to the NU Social Media Accounts list.
- Any primary administrator must be an employee (faculty or staff member) of Northwest.
- Secondary administrators must be approved by the primary administrator.
 - Primary administrators are those who are ultimately responsible for the profile. They are responsible for the activity that occurs on the profile, including ensuring regular updates.
 - Secondary administrators are those who the primary administrator has given administrative access. For example, a student apart of the leadership of NU Student Government may act as a secondary administrator to post on the NU Student Government Facebook page, but should be overseen by the Director of Student Programs, who is ultimately responsible for the content that gets posted.
- Administrators must be honoring to God and respectful of Northwest University, students, staff, alumni, and the community in their posts and responses to posts.

REQUIREMENTS AND BEST PRACTICES FOR SECONDARY ACCOUNTS

- Administrators agree to follow Northwest University's Levels of Response Guide (see next page) in regard to negative or controversial posts. It is the primary administrator's responsibility to monitor profile activity frequently and respond accordingly.
- Northwest University and the organization, club, athletic group, or department represented must be clearly identified in the username and profile title. The Marketing Department can provide guidance in naming conventions.
- Northwest University would like to move towards a model in which the following are goals:
 - Maintaining substantive social media accounts that are well-managed (by student/staff representatives), well-visited (at least 100 Likes/Followers), and dynamic (i.e. links, blogs, photos or videos) with frequent updates (current info posted 2-3 times monthly).



REQUIREMENTS AND BEST PRACTICES FOR SECONDARY ACCOUNTS

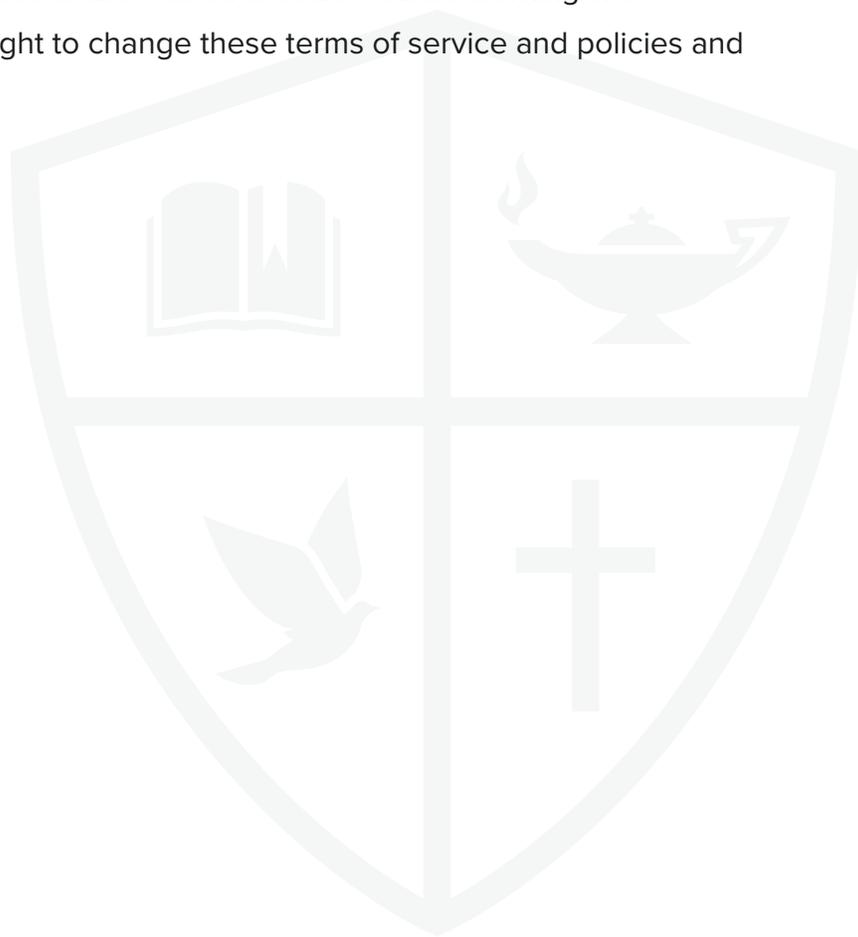
SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR ACCOUNT ADMINISTRATORS

- Moving towards departmental social media accounts that are unified and not divisive for the voice of Northwest University if not being followed/well-visited. For example, there is one main Northwest University Athletics Facebook page, but multiple sports team pages (ex. Northwest University Men’s Basketball). These are permitted if regularly maintained by individual team captains and coaches. If not, all content should be fed through the main Northwest University Athletics page.¹
- Branding of your profile includes what you name it, any link alias, and the image(s) you use to represent the profile, all of which must be approved by the Marketing Department whose responsibility it is to ensure that every Northwest University social media profile uses branding that accurately represents the university. Here are several considerations:
 - If using the university logo, it needs to follow our usage guidelines outlined within our [Brand & Visual Style Guide](#).
 - Profile images must be formatted so they display correctly in the site’s thumbnail version.
 - For Facebook pages, you will need to submit two images for approval: (a) 180x180 profile logo image and (b) 851x315 less than 100KB cover photo. If you need help with this process, please email socialmedia@northwestu.edu.
- Before beginning a social networking profile, permission must be granted by the Marketing Department as well as the head of the department, club, organization, or athletic team involved. Submit requests to start a page to the Marketing Department via email. Not all requests will be approved.
- Any profile that is not listed with the Marketing Department and utilizes Northwest’s name or logo or the name or logo of any of our athletic teams or organizations may be terminated with the site host (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.) for trademark violation.
- Inactive social media profiles that have not posted for 1 month or more may be discontinued.
- Any content on any profile which is found to be in violation of these policies may be removed by the Marketing Department after first going through the appropriate channels.
- The Marketing Department reserves the right to terminate the administrative rights of any person for any violation of these policies and procedures after first going through the appropriate channels.

¹ “Appropriate channels” is defined herein as the Marketing Department first contacts the site’s administrator listed with the Marketing Department. If the issue is not resolved at that level, then the Marketing Department will contact the Vice President directly responsible for that area, and the VP will direct how the Marketing Department should respond.

REQUIREMENTS AND BEST PRACTICES FOR SECONDARY ACCOUNTS

- Any profile that regularly violates these terms and conditions may be terminated by the Marketing Department after first going through the appropriate channels.
- Content (videos, photos, music, text, etc.) posted to a social networking profile by an administrator may be used by the university for any marketing or fundraising purposes as deemed appropriate by the university. Applicable copyright laws must be observed in postings by administrators.
- Under no circumstance is Northwest University liable for legal damages as the result of an employee's or student designee's actions associated with a social networking site.
- Northwest University reserves the right to change these terms of service and policies and procedures at any time.



REQUIREMENTS AND BEST PRACTICES FOR SECONDARY ACCOUNTS

ACCOUNT CONSIDERATIONS

Before launching a social media account on behalf of a university department, get approval from your Dean/Director. The department/group must commit to maintain the account, determine the goals of investing the university's resources in this effort and designate a person who will be responsible for the account, for creating content on a regular basis, and for passing on the account to new hires should that individual leave NU.

Once the department has determined it will establish an account, inform the Marketing department who the account administrator will be, and which platforms are being used. Once the account has been created, be sure to send the password and username to Marketing and/or add the marketing social media representative as another account administrator.

If your department is sponsoring an event or campaign and you'd like to create a unique account or event page, contact Marketing for guidance.

- **Account security:** When possible, departments/groups should use a northwestu.edu email to create social media accounts. However, some platforms (like Facebook and LinkedIn) require a personal profile to login. In this case, after creating the platform, the account administrator should reach out to Marketing immediately and grant admin access to a member of the Marketing team. This way, Marketing will have full access to the account, and the ability to make other people administrators if the original creator were to leave NU. Because of the security considerations associated with social media systems, student workers who are allowed to manage department or program social media accounts should be monitored by a faculty or staff member and should not be given full administrative rights to the account.
- **The Marketing department should have administrative access to the account at all times.** Though content management of department/unit accounts might be left to one or several individuals, all accounts created and managed on behalf of a university department/unit belong to the university, not the individual who created or manages it.
- **Previously created accounts and pages:** Departments or units of the university that have previously created social media accounts through personal logins by employees should contact Marketing immediately to add their accounts to Marketing's inventory.
- **Content on department accounts:** Use a high-quality image or icon that is in line with Northwest University's Marketing standards to represent the department in the account's profile/cover photos. If you don't have access to an appropriate image or would like help creating one, contact the Marketing department's photographer or design staff. Some imagery, such as the university seal, should not be used as art for social media accounts. Make sure the account includes an accurate description of the department and contact information as well as a link to Northwest University's website.

REQUIREMENTS AND BEST PRACTICES FOR SECONDARY ACCOUNTS

- **Maintenance of content:** All social media accounts and pages must be actively maintained with regular posting of content by those responsible for those accounts. If you need help discerning what makes for good content or developing a strategy for creating or managing posts, contact Marketing.
- **Accounts that are abandoned, with no content posted within a four-month period, may be deleted by Marketing.**
- **University Communications will not create or manage accounts on behalf of recognized student organizations:** Responsibility for the creation of a social media presence rests with the members of recognized student organizations. It is required that student organization leaders work with their advisors to devise a process to ensure continuity of access to accounts as membership changes over time. It is recommended that group advisors have the passwords and rights to administer the student organization accounts.
- **Ensure proper identification:** Student organizations must be clear in descriptions of their accounts that they are not departments or offices of the university.
- **Standards for social media conduct and messages:** All content published through social media accounts managed by student organizations is governed by existing policies in the Student Handbook, by the Northwest University Code of Conduct, and by this document.



REQUIREMENTS AND BEST PRACTICES FOR SECONDARY ACCOUNTS

BEST PRACTICES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Research:** Before starting a social media account, research similar organizations on social media networks for ideas on what works and what does not.
- **Strategize:** Identify who you want to reach (audience), types of content you intend to share and the primary goals. Start with just one social media venue and build a platform for your audience.
- **Make the time:** Don't start a social media effort unless you have the dedicated time and resources to post at least two times per week. Continual content is critical for a new channel to thrive.
- **Acknowledge who you are:** If you are representing Northwest University when posting on a social media platform, acknowledge this clearly. Provide your Northwest University contact information upon request. If you express an opinion on a site, make it clear the views are yours and not necessarily those of Northwest University.
- **Strive for accuracy:** Confirm facts before posting information on social media. Review content for grammatical and spelling errors. Correct errors promptly and transparently.
- **Be respectful and polite:** Understand that content contributed to a social media site will encourage comments or discussion of opposing ideas. In the same way that we foster respect for human differences on campus, make sure that your social media interactions are restrained and cautious, being especially careful about responding to criticism or engaging in online debate or sparring over an issue. Hostile, threatening or offensive content is prohibited.



REQUIREMENTS AND BEST PRACTICES FOR SECONDARY ACCOUNTS

LEVELS OF RESPONSE GUIDE

Social networks are interactive in nature and often become platforms of criticism and debate. As our social media involvement has increased, so too has the need for policies and procedures governing the use of that social media involvement by representatives of the university.

The following is Northwest University's Levels of Response Guide to social networking posts and must be followed on all social networking profiles which represent the university. If there is any question regarding an appropriate response, please refer the post to the Marketing Department for action.

LEVEL 1 » (No response necessary)

A general complaint, negative opinion, bad experience, rumor etc.

LEVEL 2 » (Response from primary site administrator)

A complaint based on fact that can be addressed, or spam or other advertisements from an organization not affiliated with Northwest University. The site administrator should respond politely to provide information or make a correction. An offensive post may be removed; a post using foul language must be removed.^{1,2}

LEVEL 3 » (Report activity to the Marketing Department for action)

Terms of Service (TOS), copyright, or trademark violations; defamatory postings or those depicting illegal or illicit behavior. The Marketing Department may contact the social media host (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, etc.) to report activity of the offender(s) in violation of the host's TOS. Fan or Friend may be blocked from viewing or posting on the profile again. Postings involving illegal or illicit behavior will be reported to the proper Northwest University Departments and/or authorities. Under no circumstances should a site administrator initiate a violation report with the host site. Such violation reports must come from the Marketing Department so they can be properly tracked and documented. Including but not limited to:

- Comments that constitute a personal attack or criticism of an individual.
- Hostile, threatening or obscene comments.
- Comments that violate Northwest University's employee policies or student honor code.
- Inappropriate content, foul language, threats or phishing/spam attempts.
- Commercial messages that are meant to use the university's social media sites as vehicles to promote ongoing businesses.
- Content in violation with state or federal laws.

² "Foul language" is defined as "blasphemous or profane (i.e., taking the Lord's name in vane or otherwise attacking or diminishing what is holy), obscene (sexually explicit), or vulgar."

REQUIREMENTS AND BEST PRACTICES FOR SECONDARY ACCOUNTS

LEVEL 4 » (Immediately report activity to the Marketing Department, who will contact the necessary Northwest University Departments and authorities)

Posting that involves threats of physical harm to any person and is clearly not satirical. Any posting that a reasonable person could construe as a possible physical or legal threat. Northwest University reserves the right to change the Social Media Levels of Response Guide at any time. An updated copy will be available online.



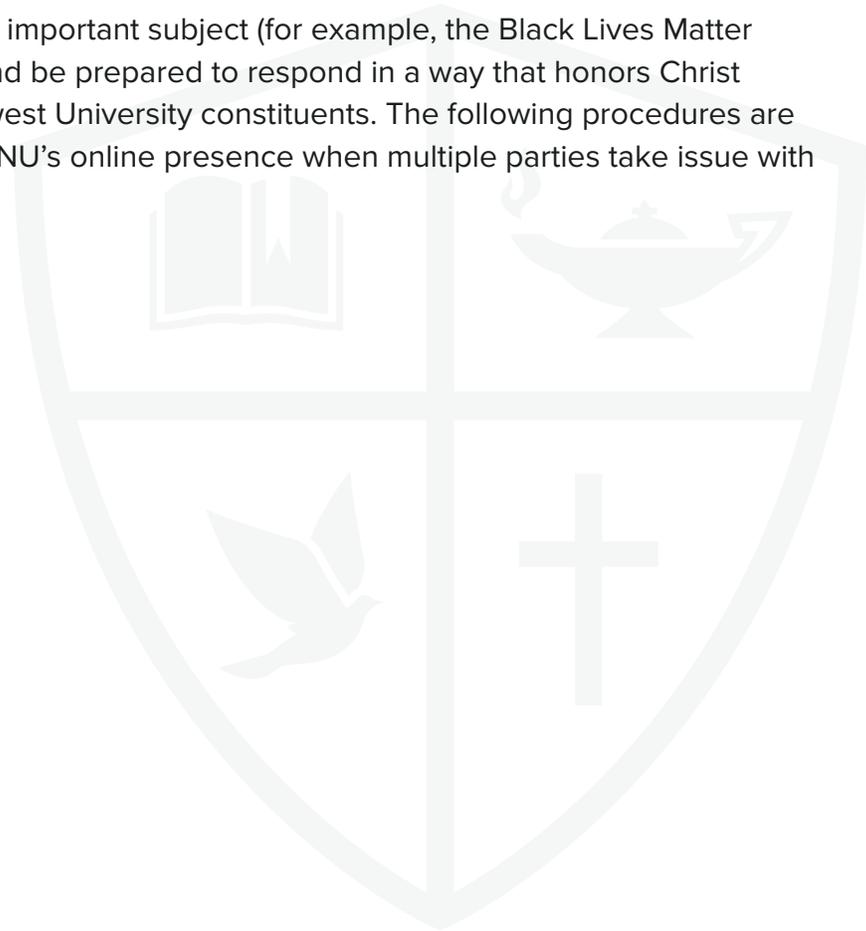
SECTION 2

PROCEDURES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA CRISES

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The social media landscape flexes and changes every year in response to world events, new trends, and more. In 2020, social media changed more than ever in light of the global, COVID-19 pandemic, the Black Lives Matter protests after the death of George Floyd, and more. Now more than ever, social media is the face of every company. This means that the general public expects a statement from companies any time a major event occurs, especially if there are moral implications.

When there are divisive opinions on an important subject (for example, the Black Lives Matter protests), we should expect criticism and be prepared to respond in a way that honors Christ and communicates clearly to all Northwest University constituents. The following procedures are intended to help streamline and guide NU's online presence when multiple parties take issue with the university or expect a statement.



PROCEDURES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA CRISES

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SECONDARY ACCOUNTS

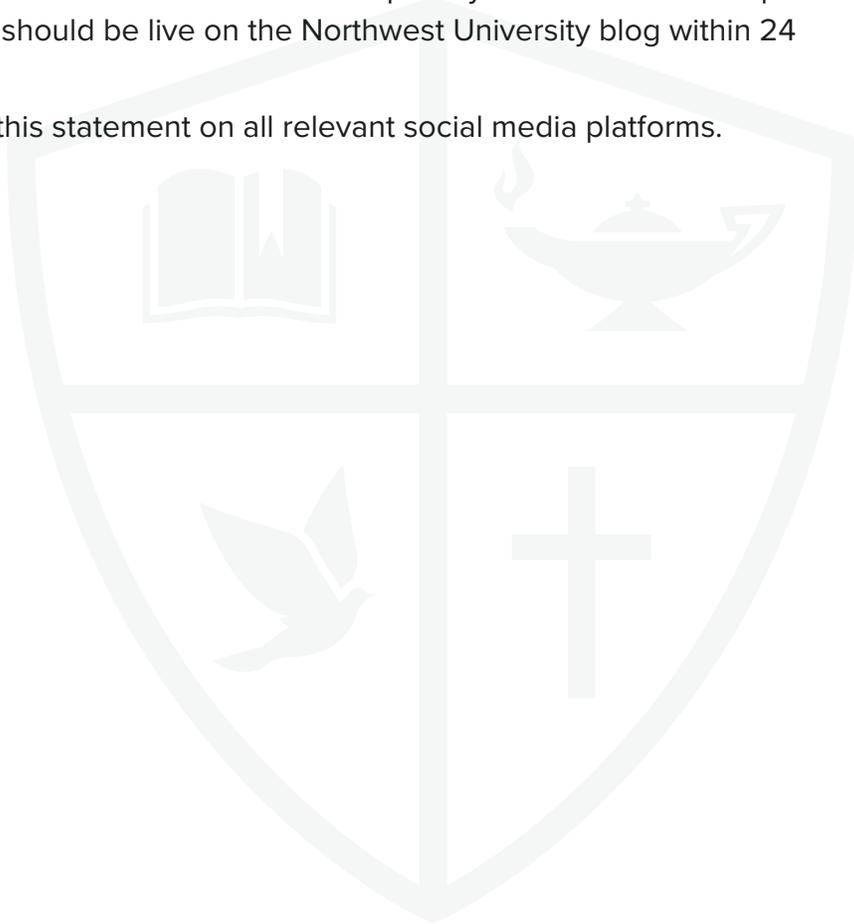
- If you receive a level 3 or level 4 comment, or an abundance of level 2 comments in a short period of time, contact the marketing department immediately. Before you respond, allow the Marketing department to review your response and provide guidance and suggestions. Official statements on behalf of the entire University will be driven by the president and the Senior Leadership Team. In this case, speak only for your department/group until an official statement can be made.
- Operating hours for social media should stay consistent with a typical 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM schedule. In times of high alert, the account administrator should be sure to check all accounts once every hour to stay consistent. In our increasingly connected world, users will always ask for organizations to release official statements faster than institutionally possible. That being the case, keeping responses within work hours is important to maintain the mental health of employees, especially when hurtful comments may be involved.
- In sensitive situations on social media, student workers should hand the responsibility back to staff supervisors, who will work directly with the Marketing department.
- Once a statement has been made, an email will be designated for users to direct their complaints. The Marketing team will provide guidance on who people should email, and when to give that email out to the public.



PROCEDURES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA CRISES

STATEMENT TIMELINE

- The official position of Northwest University on any sensitive topic will be dictated by the Senior Leadership Team and distributed by the NU Marketing Department. All communication on secondary accounts should be guided by Northwest University’s official statement.
- At the first notice of a social media crisis, the Marketing Director is to notify the President and Senior Leadership team to begin preparing a statement.
- Once the Senior Leadership Team has been notified, a statement should be drafted and submitted for approval. Approving the statement should take to priority at Senior Leadership meetings, and the official statement should be live on the Northwest University blog within 24 hours of notifying the team.
- The Marketing team will then share this statement on all relevant social media platforms.



PROCEDURES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA CRISES

STATEMENT CHECKLIST

- The following checklist is intended to guide the creation of any statement NU releases in response to a social media crisis. A thorough statement is the most helpful way to minimize backlash and cut to the heart of the issue. A complete statement should include:
 - Clear and decisive stance on the issue at hand
 - Biblical/faith-based references to back up NU's position
 - If appropriate, resources to help/get involved
 - A description of the measures NU is taken to address the issue
 - Clear direction on who to contact with questions and comments

As you post on behalf of Northwest University, we encourage you to do the following:

- Be Responsible
- Be Respectful
- Be Aware of Liability
- Be Thoughtful

Do not start or engage in conversations that are divisive or political in nature.

Northwest University reserves the right to change these terms of service and policies and procedures at any time.

“Whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.” Philippians 4:8 (NKJV)

The most updated version of this policy can be found on eagle.northwestu.edu.

University Marketing staff are available to provide assistance and answer questions at marketing@northwestu.edu.



**We, the people
of Northwest University,
carry the call of God
by continually building
a learning community
dedicated to spiritual vitality,
academic excellence,
and empowered engagements
with human need.**

