



Northern Virginia Community College Social Media Guidelines

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NOVA Social Media Guidelines

Purpose

Online social media enables the College, campuses, divisions, offices, organizations and individuals to share their insights, express their opinions and communicate information through online conversations. Social media at NOVA are primarily Web and mobile-based tools for sharing and discussing information. It is important for those who choose to participate in these conversations to understand what is recommended, expected and required when they discuss NOVA-related topics, whether at work or on their own time.

These are the official guidelines for participating in any of NOVA's official social media pages/websites. We expect all who participate in social media on behalf of Northern Virginia Community College to follow these guidelines. These guidelines will continually evolve as new technologies and social networking tools emerge.

Scope

These guidelines are for you if you are NOVA faculty, staff or administrators; students; contractors or others creating or contributing to any of NOVA's official social media. Please be aware that violation of these guidelines may result in the revoking of social media privileges.

NOVA's Current Official Social Media

NOVA officially hosts and participates in the following social media forums:

- NOVA Community College on Facebook
- NOVAcommcollege on Twitter
- NOVAcommunitycollege on Instagram
- NOVAaccess on YouTube
- Northern Virginia Community College on LinkedIn

Posting Policy

Social Media Use

- All posts and use of social media should be in compliance with the [faculty/staff handbook](#) or the [student handbook](#) for NOVA.
- Faculty/staff and students who post content for NOVA accounts should be mindful of the College's brand and reputation and should seek to support the College's educational goals.
- You are personally responsible for the content you publish on blogs, wikis or any other form of user-generated media. Be mindful that what you publish will be public for a long time; protect your privacy.
- Respect copyright, fair use and financial disclosure laws.
- Do not provide NOVA's or others' confidential or proprietary information. Please review FERPA and HIPAA regulations before posting.
- Do not cite or reference students, faculty, staff, administrators, partners or suppliers without their approval. When you do make a reference, if possible, link back to the source.
- Respect your audience. Do not use ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable in a workplace. You should also show proper consideration for others' privacy and for topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory.
- Post meaningful, respectful comments and when disagreeing with others' opinions, keep it appropriate and polite.
- Use first person when applicable and consider your audience.
- Try to add value. Provide worthwhile information and perspective. NOVA's brand is best represented by its people and what you publish reflects on NOVA's brand.
- Be mindful of ADA compliance when designing graphics for social media.

Authorized Postings

When NOVA communicates publicly as an institution, only those officially designated by NOVA have the authorization to speak on behalf of the College. Only messages posted on authorized NOVA sites/Web pages under the names NOVA Community College, Northern Virginia Community College or NOVA are considered official.

NOVA is committed to creating a community that encourages self-expression and has respect for the rights, dignity and property of others. We ask that all participants do their part to help NOVA achieve this goal.

Please do not post content that:

- is threatening, abusive, obscene, indecent or objectionable
- is deceptive, false or misleading
- violates the intellectual property rights of other people
- is illegal
- references a third-party website or is self-promoting spam
- is inappropriate, offensive or hateful

NOVA reserves the right to remove any content that we determine violates or is offensive to our community, or block users who violate NOVA guidelines, copyright, fair use, federal or state laws.

Be mindful of posting content that shares personal views like political opinions or provides links to sites that may contain viruses or implies endorsement of the site content.

Do not publish campus or college closings or cancellations; the Office of Emergency Management and Planning and the official college social media channels will post that information. You are free to share or repost that content.

Do not post unapproved content regarding college initiatives in process or non-public information. Please seek approval before posting on behalf of the College or wait until the information has been officially announced.

Do not reference NOVA as NVCC. Our brand identity states we should be referred to as NOVA or Northern Virginia Community College. In addition, do not post old logos including what is known as the "burning house" NVCC logo.

Use of NOVA Logos

Please review the [Identity Guidelines](#) for the College.

- the NOVA seal/formal wordmark should never appear on content posted to social media unless it has received approval from NOVAGraphics
- the wordmark should never be altered to represent unofficial groups or events
- the wordmark colors should not deviate from the official designs available on the website
- the mascot image should only be used by NOVA Athletics and the Office of Student Life

Request to Represent NOVA Through Social Media

NOVA campuses, divisions, offices, organizations or College-wide initiatives, such as Transfer, New Student Orientation, NOVA ESL or Northern Virginia Review may submit an online request to set up their own social media tools to represent NOVA. The following information must be completed and emailed to socialmedia@nvcc.edu:

- the email account used to set up the social media platform must use a nvcc.edu email address
- name of NOVA campus, division, office, organization or initiative to use the social media
- type(s) of social media to be developed
- name, phone number and email address of the person(s) who will be posting the information and maintaining the social media page/websites

The account password must be secured and be known by at least two individuals to prevent losing access to the account and to have the ability to remove posts that violates these guidelines.

Those who post on the social media platforms are considered content owners and are responsible for monitoring posts and comments, and verifying the content is accurate and relevant. All posts should adhere to these guidelines and other NOVA policies and procedures.

Please note that NOVA faculty/staff and students cannot accept payment to post on social media. We are state employees and this is considered a conflict of interest.

Any inquiries from the press should be directed to the Public Information Office and Marketing & Creative Services.

Posting to NOVA's Official Social Media

Any campus, division, office, organization or club of the College can have news and events posted to NOVA's social media. Send an email to the Office of Marketing & Creative Services at socialmedia@nvcc.edu with the information you want posted and WSDM will post it. WSDM staff maintain and post to all of the above listed official NOVA social media. Please include the following information in your email:

- name of the submitter
- phone number and email address of submitter
- name of the campus, division, office, organization or club associated with the message
- deadline for posting
- name of the social media where you want the message posted
- message (maximum word count 250; maximum characters for Twitter 140)

Please send any social media requests to socialmedia@nvcc.edu as possible to allow for scheduling. Posting will not be immediate and will be scheduled according to the event date and content relevance. We reserve the right to review and approve the content before posting. Not all content submitted will be posted.

Detailed Engagement Guidelines for Any Social Media

Be mindful of self-expression.

NOVA supports open dialogue and the exchange of ideas. NOVA considers blogs and other forms of online discussion and social networking as a form of communication among individuals. Do not post content that is threatening, abusive, obscene, indecent, objectionable, deceptive, false or misleading, illegal, inappropriate, offensive or hateful, violates the intellectual property rights of other people, references a third-party website or is self-promoting spam.

Select image/video use carefully.

Social media posts should include images and videos whenever possible. Please be mindful when selecting images and videos. Content should be appropriate in content, quality and length. In addition, make sure the content has the necessary authorizations and does not violate copyright laws.

Protect confidential and proprietary information.

Social computing blurs many of the traditional boundaries between internal and external communications. Be thoughtful about what you publish—particularly on external platforms. You must make sure you do not disclose or use confidential or proprietary information in any online social computing platform. For example, ask permission before posting someone's picture or publishing in a blog a conversation that was meant to be private or internal to NOVA. All statements

must be true and not misleading and all claims must be substantiated and approved. Be smart about protecting yourself, your privacy and NOVA confidential information.

Respect copyright and fair use laws.

For your own protection, it is critical that you show proper respect for the laws governing copyright and fair use of copyrighted material owned by others.

Be the first to respond to your own mistakes.

If you make an error, be up front about your mistake and correct it quickly. In a blog, if you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so.

Carry out your responsibility.

What you write is ultimately your responsibility. Participation in social networking on behalf of NOVA is not a right, but an opportunity. Please treat it seriously and with respect.

Social Media Used for NOVA Courses

Social media used as part of a NOVA course is the responsibility of the faculty member teaching the course to develop and maintain. Classroom use of social media is not considered an official NOVA social media site. Your Internet postings should not include NOVA's logos or wordmarks. The faculty member is legally responsible for his or her postings.

Posting to Personal Social Media

Be thoughtful about your content and audiences when posting on your own personal social media accounts. Be honest about your identity when engaging with others. In personal posts, identify yourself as a NOVA faculty or staff member by stating your name, and when relevant, your role at NOVA when you discuss NOVA and NOVA-related matters.

If you publish anything on a personal page, outside of NOVA, and it is related to the work you do or subjects associated with NOVA, please use a disclaimer, such as: "These postings are my own opinion and do not represent NOVA's positions or opinions."