

## Social Media and Norwich

The Internet has changed the way we communicate with one another. As a result, a variety of interactive communication channels, called social media, have developed. These platforms allow the public to interact and build relationships through the sharing of ideas, resources and media. Norwich University now has the extraordinary opportunity to communicate with prospective students, current students, parents, alumni, faculty and staff in a whole new way.

These are powerful tools that offer unprecedented opportunities to show the world what we have to offer. It is important, however, to learn to use them effectively in order to grow your social media presence, avoid complications and be aligned with the Norwich University brand. Because there are many platforms that can be used in a variety of ways, the Office of Communications is overseeing all social media presences associated with Norwich to advise in best practices and ensure Norwich's branding and message are consistent across platforms.

### Norwich social media presences may be found on:

- [Facebook](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [YouTube](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [Wikipedia](#)
- [Pinterest](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- Flickr
- Vimeo
- Google+

### Social Media Guidelines:

Social media platforms have had significant impact on organizational reputations and blurred the line between personal and institutional voices. In order to protect those reputations and separate institutional and personal communication, adhere to the following:

**Norwich faculty or staff may create official sites, professional sites and personal sites.** An official site is one that represents and speaks on behalf of the University or a Norwich department. Official sites will be created by the Office of Communications and adopted by the appropriate department for maintenance. If you would like to create an official site, contact the Office of Communications at ext. 2535 to set up a meeting. A professional site promotes a Norwich course/program, club, organization or an individual's profession at the University. Personal sites are for private use and are in no way affiliated with Norwich University.

**Respect University time and property.** University computers and time are reserved for institutional-related business. Participate in personal social media on your own time.

**Be professional.** When posting on professional or official sites, remember to be respectful and apply the same behavioral standards online as you would while working.

**Be transparent.** When posting as a representative of Norwich, clearly state your name and role at the University.

**Think twice before you post.** There is no such thing as a “private” social media site. Information you post or share may be viewed or used by anyone. Be sure what you post will not come back to haunt you.

**Keep personal views separate.** It is your job to uphold the University’s mission and values, especially when posting on professional or official sites. If you would like to comment on political or social issues, do so on a personal site.

**Include disclaimer on personal sites.** If you identify yourself as a Norwich faculty or staff member during a personal posting, be clear the views you share are not representative of Norwich.

**Protect personal information.** Do not give out personal information—addresses, phone numbers or emails—of yourself or any other Norwich community member on professional or official sites. Use University contact information and follow applicable University privacy and confidentiality policies.

**Obtain permission.** Before posting images or videos of students or others, ensure you have consent.

**Use a generic account.** For professional and official sites, create a generic username and password for your social media account so administrative controls can be easily transferred between account coordinators. To create a generic Norwich email account, contact ITS at [helpdesk@norwich.edu](mailto:helpdesk@norwich.edu) or ext. 2456.

**Be accurate.** Professional and official sites reflect upon the University, so it is important to ensure that information is accurate and spelling correct.

**Respect Norwich branding.** To learn more about appropriate use of the Norwich logo and brand, view [Norwich’s logo and style guidelines](#).

**Follow crisis communication protocol.** The primary role of social media during a crisis is to direct people to the Norwich website, [www.norwich.edu](http://www.norwich.edu), which will display our emergency website with updated information.

**Respect copyright law.** You must have permission to use copyrighted material such as music, art, photos, video and text.

**Obey terms of service.** Read and obey the Terms of Service outlined by individual social media platforms.

## **Social media crisis communication protocol**

The primary role of social media during a crisis is to direct users to the Norwich website, [www.norwich.edu](http://www.norwich.edu). If a crisis were to occur, most University social media sites should remain silent with the exception of primary, official University presences (e.g. pages managed by the Office of Communications).

Your Norwich social media channel should remain silent during a crisis, unless your followers are actively posting about it on your presence. In the event a response is necessary:

- Do not comment on an individual's posts unless you are dispelling rumors, sending them to the emergency website, [www.norwich.edu](http://www.norwich.edu), or giving media outlets contact information to our Media Relations Manager. Keep all responses neutral and factually oriented. Social media should be used as a calming force.
- Avoid being redundant. Do not post updates linking to the [www.norwich.edu](http://www.norwich.edu) website repeatedly.
- Listen to and monitor conversations happening on the University social media channel you manage. Take note of criticisms or praise and save the information in a document to share with the University social media manager.

## **Social Media Best Practices:**

**Be timely.** Social media provides a way to share information instantly with the world, and visitors expect timely posts and responses. Be sure posts are current and relevant, and that you make at least one post per week so the site does not become stagnant.

**Be conversational.** Talk to the audience like you are speaking with someone face to face. Avoid complex words when simple ones will do. Consider posting content that is open-ended and encourages responses.

**Create rules of use.** Circumstances may arise where it is necessary to delete a post or limit access of a social media user who posts inappropriate content or spam. If a rules-of-use is created, it will support your actions. Post the rules in a place where visitors can view them. For an example, visit [Norwich University Facebook Rules of Use](#).

**Monitor comments.** Be prepared to respond to comments. Not all comments will be positive. Therefore, it is important to respond to negative remarks professionally. Use additional facts or information to help resolve the issue.

**Be active.** A social media presence requires care and attention. If visitors see the last site activity was a month ago, they may not come back.

### Helpful resources:

- [Branding: Norwich's logo and style guidelines](#)
- [Managing a Facebook page](#)
- [Twitter basics](#)
- [YouTube support](#)
- [LinkedIn learning center](#)
- [Using Pinterest as a business](#)
- [Wikipedia editing tutorial](#)
- [Instagram basics](#)

There are a variety of benefits in having a social media presence associated with Norwich. That does not mean, however, these are appropriate tools for everyone. **If you wish to develop a Norwich social media presence, contact [Tanya Mills](#), social media manager, at ext. 2535 or [tmills1@norwich.edu](mailto:tmills1@norwich.edu) for guidance.**

A record of official and professional sites' account usernames and passwords are kept by the social media manager. Account information is recorded to improve continuity and to ensure administrative controls are easily transferrable between account coordinators.