Social media is one of the easiest ways to connect with people in your social circle, across the country and worldwide. As a university, we’re invested in productive, stimulating and open communication and conversation on all levels, including social media.

Concordia University, Nebraska strives to maintain a strong presence on social media to interest prospective students in the university, to help keep current students engaged in their education, to promote long-lasting relationships with alumni and friends and to inform the public about events on campus and information they need to know.

Please follow these standards set forth by the Concordia University, Nebraska Marketing & Communication Department to ensure a consistent brand, visual identity and voice for the university.

## Registering Pages and Profiles

All social channels that represent the university should be registered through the Office of Marketing and Communication. This helps us remain aware of Concordia-related accounts, so we can share your content, follow what your page is doing and help monitor the university’s social accounts.

If you wish to create and maintain a new page, please register the page with the marketing office by completing the form on this page: [cune.edu/socialmediapolicy](http://www.cune.edu/socialmediapolicy).

You do not need to register your personal accounts with Concordia.

## Purpose of your Page

Before creating and registering your page or profile, it is beneficial to think through the commitment and the purpose. If you’d like assistance, contact the social media producer at socialmedia@cune.edu.

When thinking about creating a page, it’s important to consider how much you have to say and how many people you think you can get to follow you. Unfortunately, you need to post often and engage people or your efforts on most social channels won’t even show up in followers’ feeds. Can you get 100+ people to follow you right away? Will you post at least once a day, every day? Or at minimum three times a week?

If you know you’re not going to be able to keep up a rigorous posting schedule, it may be better to work with Concordia’s existing social media pages when you have news or events to engage the larger Concordia audience.

When considering whether to start a new social media page, ask yourself:

* What is the goal of the page and how does it fit in with my team or department goals?
* Does a similar page already exist and, if so, can I achieve my goals using this existing page?
* Does the site or social channel I’m planning to use reach my target audience’s demographic?
* How much time can I spend updating the page and coming up with content for the page?
* How long am I planning to maintain the page?
* How do I plan to uphold Concordia’s overall brand?
* How will I measure success?

## Choosing the Best Platform

Once you have a plan for what you hope to accomplish with your social media page, you’ll want to consider which platform is best for you, based on how active your target audience is on that platform. For instance, many high school students have profiles on Facebook, but they are more active on Instagram.

Some demographics to consider for various social media platforms (Sprout Social, 2020):

* **Facebook***:*
	+ Most common age range of active users: 25-34
* **Instagram:**
	+ Most common age range of active users: 18-24
* **Twitter:**
	+ Most common age range of active users: 18-29
* **Snapchat:**
	+ Most common age range of active users: 13-24
* **YouTube:**
	+ Most common age range of active users: 18-24

It’s also important to note that even though Twitter is popular among young adults, they’re more likely to choose Instagram or Snapchat as their platform of choice.

## Setting up Your Page

Naming standards help ensure clear identity and searchability for Concordia pages and profiles. Because there are other Concordias for us to distinguish ourselves from, please use the full

Concordia University, Nebraska unless there is a character limit. For example, CUNE works great when used in Twitter or Instagram handles. Make sure you fill out the “bio” or “about” section and include a link to your page on our website or to the home page at [cune.edu](http://www.cune.edu/).

## Best Practices and Guidelines for Posts

Our goal is to maintain a professional and friendly tone across all communications. Everything you post is public. Post what you’d be comfortable saying in person to your audience, a prospective student, your supervisor or the Board of Regents.

Be conscious of the type of content that is appropriate for each social channel. As a page administrator, you are representing your entire department, team or club, as well as the entire university.

Having an active social media account is very important—even when classes are not in session or your club/activity/sport/etc. is not currently in season.

To ensure the greatest reach and effectiveness of your social media page, plan to post:

* Facebook - three times per week and a maximum of three times per day
* Instagram - at least three times a week
* Twitter - at least once a day

## Content

Photos and video content grab the most attention. Researchers found that colored visuals increase people’s desire to continue reading a post by 80%. You can find Concordia photos available for your use on our photo site: [photos.cune.edu](http://photos.cune.edu/)

## Concordia’s Voice

We most effectively demonstrate who Concordia is and what we believe in by using an easy-to-understand, cohesive voice across all communications. Concordia’s voice is sincere and genuine, yet not too formal or serious. Our voice portrays energy, connection and motivation. We avoid speaking in an institutional and authoritative way in order to avoid appearing cold.

Concordia’s voice is aspirational, personal, authentic, friendly, clear and respectful.

## Negative, Harmful, Offensive or Illegal Content

If someone posts negative content on your page or profile, you should allow it to remain, publishing a public response in defense of your position (unless the comment is slanderous or offensive). The goal in these instances is to show the online community that you are able to handle criticism positively. If all negative comments are removed all of the time, we will lose credibility because we lack authenticity.

However, if a comment is harmful, offensive or illegal (including spam), take measures to remove the content immediately. Refer first to the site’s method of reporting offensive behavior, and then remove the post if you are able. There may be some instances where networks do not allow you to remove the comments of other users. In these cases, simply follow the procedures outlined by the site for reporting abuse, and follow up until appropriate action has been taken by the site.

You can also report harmful, offensive or illegal posts to the marketing department by emailing socialmedia@cune.edu and we can help you determine the best course of action for that particular post.

## Exiting a Profile

Before you start a new page or profile, you should have a plan in place for how long the association between Concordia University and the page will last. In many cases, the association will be indefinite (as in departmental or team pages), but in other cases it may be only for a season, term or promotional period. If you plan to shut the page down or stop engaging with the community after a specific time, please make sure to have an exit strategy in place, either to delete the page or pass ownership of the page onto someone else who can maintain it. The goal is to avoid damage to the Concordia University, Nebraska brand due to neglect of a site. If you are unsure how to plan for an exit, contact the marketing department.

## Personal Disclaimers

If you maintain any kind of personal site, such as personal blog, Twitter or Tumblr page, etc. please make sure to include a disclaimer stating that all of the content on your site or page is a matter of your own personal thoughts, opinions or research, and should not be construed as the official position of Concordia University, Nebraska. This disclaimer is designed to help users understand that you are posting of your own volition, protecting you and the university should there be any questions of the source of any content included on your personal site. On sites that limit your biography to a certain number of characters (such as Twitter), something as simple as “My posts are my own” will suffice.

## Copyright, Intellectual Property and Other Legal Considerations

Every third-party site you join will have its own privacy policy and set of terms of service (TOS). Make sure you review these documents carefully. This is vitally important not only for your own protection, but also for the protection of your pages. For example, Facebook prevents business pages from administering contests through the Facebook platform (e.g. “upload a picture of yourself in a Concordia t- shirt and win a prize”) without a special application service. If you are found in violation of this term of service, they can shut your page down indefinitely and without warning.

If you are sharing your intellectual property on any third-party site (i.e. not a site that you host), make sure that you read their terms and conditions carefully to determine who owns the data you put on the site. Some sites are clear that users own their own data, while others state that the site may retain the rights to anything posted.