

January 6, 1987
(Updated September 30, 1999)

NORTHERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

News Media Relations and Public Information Policy

Northern Michigan University is a public trust and is committed to fulfilling all of its obligations faithfully. The university deserves continuing public support. Its reality is rooted in excellence – dynamic programs, vital public services, sound policies, motivated students, high caliber faculty, competent administrators and professional support staff. Northern will actively seek public recognition for its excellence and achievements, and it will stand accountable for its actions and those of officials acting on its behalf.

Consistent with this point of view, Northern will abide by the following policies:

1. Northern will disclose information consistent with its mission, public laws and the public's right to know with due consideration of each individual's legal rights to privacy.
2. Northern will honor its commitment to academic freedom, intellectual inquiry and free speech.
1. The Director of Communications and Marketing functions as a chief spokesperson on official university business and exercises final authority for the release of information to news media except as is otherwise provided for in this policy statement. Where warranted, other spokespersons will be designated to respond to media interest in specified topics.
2. Authority to issue official university news releases rests solely with Communications and Marketing.
3. University faculty and staff members are expected to assist the staff of Communications and Marketing in developing information pertaining to the plans, policies, decisions and actions of the university and in support of the university's communications, public relations and marketing goals. Whether the news is good or bad, information will be provided promptly and accurately to these responsible university officials.
4. New university policies and programs will be announced by the President, the Director of Communications and Marketing or other designated spokesperson.
5. Faculty and staff members are encouraged to honor news media requests for information and views that fall within the range of their particular academic or administrative specialization.

6. News media inquiries will be handled with courtesy and dispatch. Requests that cannot be honored will be forwarded immediately to an office that can provide the desired assistance or, in case of doubt, to the Office of Communications and Marketing.
7. To enable the university to make the most of news media contacts, employees are encouraged to promptly inform Communications and Marketing of media inquiries that relate to university business. Contacts with faculty for commentary on topics unrelated to university business are excluded from this request.
8. When providing personal opinions to news media personnel, university employees will exercise care to identify their opinions as such and to make clear that they do not speak for Northern Michigan University.
9. Written (including e-mail) requests for the release of information under provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, whether originated by news media or non-media personnel, will be forwarded promptly to, and processed by, the Office of the Vice President for Finance and Administration.