



## **About This Handbook**

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## INTRODUCTION

You don't have to be a communications professional to work effectively with the news media, whether to talk about the work you do, share stories about your campus, or express your views about a public policy issue that is important to you. As an expert practitioner, or someone who has experience with international education, and as a member of your community, you offer an important and valued point of view.

For the purposes of this publication, the term “news media” refers to any individual or organization that gathers information of possible public interest, applies editorial expertise to turn that material into a “distinctive work,” and distributes it to an audience<sup>1</sup>. In broad terms, this typically means reporters and editors, as well as a growing number of bloggers. It does not include news aggregators and sites that primarily serve public relations, advocacy, or advertising functions.

### WHY TALK TO THE NEWS MEDIA?

Advocacy groups and activists need to actively engage the news media in order to generate public dialogue and action. This is because:

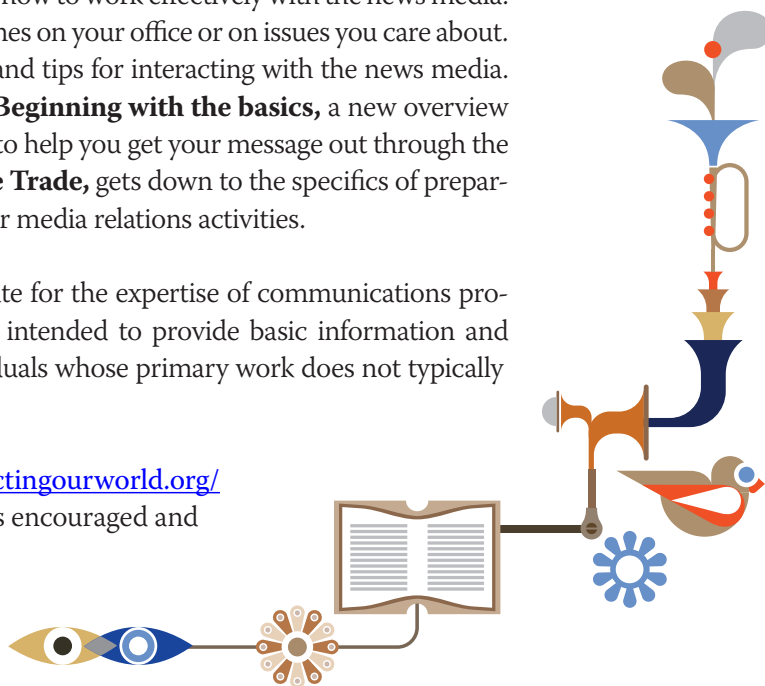
- ➔ The news media are important drivers of public opinion.
- ➔ Decision-makers pay attention to news media in choosing their priorities and deciding their votes. Local news matters. As a constituent, so does your voice.
- ➔ Others are speaking out. We need to contribute to the debate and ensure that an informed and balanced voice is included.

This handbook provides information and tips about how to work effectively with the news media. It can help you to prepare for when the spotlight shines on your office or on issues you care about. The first three sections provide general guidelines and tips for interacting with the news media. In Section Two, **Working with the news media: Beginning with the basics**, a new overview of engaging with journalists online has been added to help you get your message out through the use of the Internet. The fourth section, **Tools of the Trade**, gets down to the specifics of preparing a news release, writing an op-ed piece, and other media relations activities.

**Note:** This handbook is not meant to be a substitute for the expertise of communications professionals at your institution or organization. It is intended to provide basic information and tips about working with the news media for individuals whose primary work does not typically include media relations.

You can find this handbook online at [www.connectingourworld.org/mediahandbook](http://www.connectingourworld.org/mediahandbook). Feedback about this handbook is encouraged and should be directed to [govrel@nafsa.org](mailto:govrel@nafsa.org)

<sup>1</sup>Adapted from the FOIA Act, 2007 Revision.





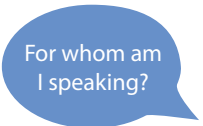
## Before You Get Started

A number of the sections in this handbook assume that you are in a position—or are expected, as part of your job—to speak with the news media, at least occasionally, on international education topics in your areas of expertise. Anyone can help advocate for and advance issues they care about through the news media, whether as a private member of the community or as a representative of an institution or other group, but it is important to work in cooperation with the formal structures that are in place at your institution and to clearly define your media relations role.

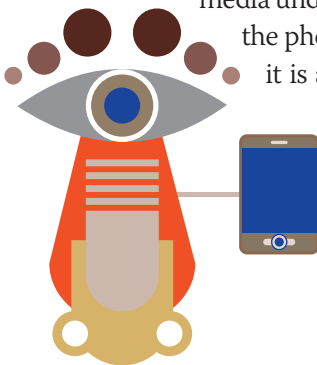
**Know the policies of your institution or organization regarding contact with the news media.** Institutions vary widely in their policies regarding employees' contact with the media. If you haven't already done so, you should speak with your supervisor and communications office to ensure that you understand the relevant policies and requirements before you reach out to a reporter or blogger.

Your institution may require that you work with your communications office instead of making direct contact. This is not a problem. Your communications staff is a good professional resource, maintaining local media contact lists and offering a media-savvy staff. Working with that office does not mean that you should rely on them to do all the leg work, however. Be proactive, and let them know that you are a willing and qualified source they can call on if they get a media inquiry that relates to your work. By cultivating this relationship, you can increase the visibility of programs and issues that are important to you. It will be important for you to stay in close contact with the communications office staff, to be certain that your releases and story ideas get out to the news media and that they get timely follow-up.

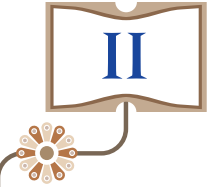
**Know the parameters of your role.** Defining your role clearly from the beginning will give you a greater degree of comfort in the media relations activities you undertake and will help news media understand the boundaries of your interactions with them. Before you pick up the phone or begin to communicate with a member of the news media, whether it is a reporter, editor, or blogger, ask yourself these questions: For whom am I speaking? Can I speak on behalf of my institution? Should I emphasize that I am speaking as a member of the community only and not as a representative of my institution? Which issues or topics am I comfortable speaking about? Am I prepared to handle unexpected questions?



For whom am I speaking?



# Working with the News Media: Beginning with the Basics



Before getting into the how-to details of media relations, it is a good idea to review a few fundamentals for relating to and working with the news media.

**Stay informed.** Knowing the latest—or at least knowing where to find information quickly when you need it—will help you to be a good resource for reporters and bloggers. Take the time to follow important national issues in the field, as well as the related issues and trends on your campus. ➔ Join Connecting Our World ([www.ConnectingOurWorld.org](http://www.ConnectingOurWorld.org)) to be in the loop on the latest public policy developments.

**Follow the news.** Try to keep up with the local and regional coverage from a variety of news outlets. This could mean following local and national newspapers, trade publications, influential blogs, and other online news sources that address your subject area. Be sure to read the letters, editorial, and opinion pages to learn which issues are capturing the attention of your community.

**Get to know key reporters and bloggers.** Keep an eye on which reporters and bloggers cover what, and follow local and national stories of relevance to see which issues get frequent coverage. Consider how your issue could piggy-back onto another hot topic. Maintain a simple list of reporters and bloggers who may be interested in international education stories (usually those covering education, immigration, foreign policy, or national policy news). Your list should include the person's name, news outlet or blog, Web site URL if applicable, contact information, topics they focus on, and if you know it, their preferred method of contact. Include contacts for local and regional newspapers, influential blogs, radio, and television, as well as campus, weekly, and community press.

**Social media note:** Many reporters and bloggers use Twitter, and following them on Twitter is a good way to keep up with their interests and coverage.

➔ Connecting Our World's Take Action Center ([www.ConnectingOurWorld.org/takeaction](http://www.ConnectingOurWorld.org/takeaction)) includes a "Guide to the Media" with listings of news outlets across the country and a tool you can use to communicate directly with editors and reporters.

**Be helpful to build relationships.** One of the best ways to build relationships with reporters and bloggers is to simply be helpful to them. Take advantage of appropriate opportunities to send helpful materials or information – or ask your communications office to do so – even when you don't have a story of your own to pitch. For example, if a new report is released with interesting data a reporter might be able to use, send them a copy or a link to the report online, and explain how it is relevant to local trends or issues. ➔ Keep a simple log of your outreach efforts, including the contact's name, outlet, contact information, beat, and the date and purpose of your communication.

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Be responsive

**Be there when they need you.** Reporters and bloggers need credible, reliable, and responsive sources. If you cannot be these three things, they will not come back again. Be sensitive to deadlines. Respond quickly and as helpfully as possible when a reporter calls.

**Don't be intimidated.** You should always ask yourself if the reason you are contacting reporters is newsworthy and likely to be of interest to them, but at the same time, don't be intimidated by the idea of contacting the media. Reporters and editors expect and need calls from the public in order to make sure they are covering the stories and issues that are important to the community. They will consider the information they get from you and then decide whether or not to pursue it further. That decision may be affected by factors that have nothing to do with how interesting your story is, such as other breaking news, deadlines, or availability of a reporter to cover the story. All you can do is plant the idea; the rest is up to them.

**Be patient.** Building relationships with reporters and bloggers takes time. It could be a while before your outreach generates any response. Although this may be frustrating, your efforts are still important. Each time you contact a reporter with good information or an interesting story idea, you are taking a step toward establishing yourself as a reliable and helpful source. Developing this type of long-term relationship, especially with local news sources and publications, is very valuable and will help you in working successfully with them in the future.



# Engaging the News Media: Essential Communication Strategies



👁️ Tell the truth. Talk about what you know. Timing is everything.

Three golden rules apply to any contact with the news media: **Tell the truth. Talk about what you know. Timing is everything.**

When you have a story to tell or an event to promote, the window of opportunity for capturing a reporter's interest can be very small, and good communication strategies are essential. Here are a few to keep in mind.

**Know the local angle.** At community and local news outlets, every potential story must pass this test: Is there a compelling local angle? Before you approach a reporter, ask yourself how your story or issue impacts your community. It's important to take off your "international educator" hat and consider why someone in your community would be interested in your story. The better job you do articulating how your issue is relevant, the better chance you have that a reporter or blogger will be interested.

**Identify the right target.** Whenever possible, aim your communications to a specific person. When calling, ask for the reporter who handles higher education, national or political news, or your institution's activities.

➡️ When sending a release or advisory, call the newsroom first to identify the proper recipient for your news if you are unsure. Sending your materials to the "news desk" or "inbox" is sometimes necessary but lessens the chance that someone will pay attention to them. Do not assume they will be forwarded to the right person. When in doubt, check online or in a published media directory, or contact your communications office.

**Get to the point quickly.** Like you, reporters and bloggers are very busy. Identify your main point before you make contact, and make your point (and explain the local angle) up front: the first couple of sentences of a written communication or phone call.

**Be sensitive to deadlines.** Respond to inquiries and requests for interviews promptly, even if only to offer reassurance that you received the message and that you are working on the request.

➡️ When calling with a story pitch, it is usually best to contact newsrooms between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. This avoids morning meetings and afternoon deadlines. Begin calls by saying: "Is this an okay time to talk for a minute or two?" If the reporter seems impatient, offer to call back at another time. Your chances of success will be much greater if you catch them when they can focus on your call. Many reporters prefer to receive e-mail messages first, so that they can address them when they have time.

**Focus your message, and stay on it.** Whether you are making proactive contact or responding to an inquiry, identify the message you want to convey about the topic at hand, and find ways to make your point. It is important to answer the questions if you can, but that does not mean

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waiting to be asked the “right” question. (👁️ **Better Interviews** in the next section for more details.)

**Don’t speak before you are ready.** Get resource materials in front of you, review your main messages, and be sure you have the latest information before doing any interview. Don’t let a hurried reporter or blogger push you into speaking before you are ready. Good reporters will respect your request for a little time.

**Use the momentum.** When you have a media success or your issue is in the news, use the momentum to keep the dialogue going. Consider a letter to the editor to comment on a story, or submit an op-ed (👁️ **Tools of the Trade** section for how-to advice). Give positive feedback on a good story, or offer further resources in case they are interested in covering the issue again in the future.

➡️ Send good articles to your institution’s leadership or your congressional delegation, as appropriate. Use Connecting Our World’s Take Action Center to contact your elected officials ([www.ConnectingOurWorld.org/TakeAction](http://www.ConnectingOurWorld.org/TakeAction)) and review NAFSA’s [Advocacy Handbook](#) for more tips on how to communicate effectively with members of Congress.

**Engage Online.** Social media tools – blogs, Twitter feeds, social networking sites like Facebook, video sharing sites, wikis and more – make it possible for anyone with an Internet connection to share information and have a conversation online about the issues they care about. Reporters from the traditional news media are quickly becoming a large part of these conversations, and an entirely new cadre of bloggers has also emerged. Connecting with them through these channels will increase the reach of your message. (Read more about these tools in [Social Media Engagement: Tips and Tools](#)).

➡️ A growing number of influential and high-quality blogs are making their mark on the understanding of important issues of public concern. In much the same way that you might communicate with print and broadcast journalists, connecting with bloggers is really about building relationships. What they want is reliable information, offered to them in a straightforward and engaging manner. Bloggers don’t like press releases – a simple, personal e-mail message is best. The good news is, because their media space is online, bloggers will often pick up stories that newspapers can’t find room for. For the most part, though, the rules of engagement with bloggers and mainstream reporters are the same: Be helpful. Be honest. Be responsive. To get started, begin regularly reading a handful of blogs on topics that are of interest to you.

**Correct mistakes.** Do this firmly but politely. Good reporters will want to know if they made an error. If you are misquoted, contact the reporter directly to discuss it. If the article is not balanced or contains serious inaccuracies that the reporter does not acknowledge, a letter to the editor may be appropriate. Contact bloggers directly to get corrections made before posting a complaint as a comment – a direct communication is always best.

(👁️ **Letters to the Editor** in the next section for more details).

## BASIC COMMUNICATION OPTIONS

**E-mail.** E-mail is usually the best way to communicate with reporters, and certainly the way most of them prefer to hear from sources. For bloggers, e-mail is king. E-mail gives reporters and bloggers more space to prioritize and organize pitches and information. Keep in mind, though, that many are overwhelmed by e-mail; they may disregard messages from people they do not know, and most of them do not feel an obligation to respond to e-mail messages unless they have a question or want to schedule an interview. Sometimes follow-up by phone is necessary when working with a reporter at a traditional news outlet. ➔ Avoid sending e-mail to generic mailboxes like [newsroom@cnn.com](mailto:newsroom@cnn.com). Look up the outlet online, or call the newsroom and get the name of a person. When you are sending additional materials, include them in the body of your message whenever possible. Many newsrooms have spam filters and firewalls that block certain types of messages, especially those with attachments.

**Telephone.** The most direct way to make contact with a reporter is by telephone. However, the telephone can also be the most challenging way to communicate with them. Calling requires you to think on your feet and get your message out quickly. There are rarely second chances when you pitch a story to a reporter by phone. ➔ In all cases, avoid calling close to deadlines and always ask if the reporter has a minute or two to talk. And try to resist calling just to ask: “Did you get my e-mail message?” Be ready with something else to add to the exchange.

**Social Media.** Many news outlets, reporters, and bloggers are on Facebook and Twitter. Don't rely on these tools to convey your pitch, but instead, use them to keep up-to-date on what issues or events a reporter or blogger is covering. Twitter can also be an informal way for you to make a connection with a reporter or blogger to quickly share tips, stories, or information about an upcoming event.

## WRITING A GOOD NEWS RELEASE

News releases can be used to announce a new program or publication, report new findings, or make a statement about an issue of public concern. News releases are for use in communicating with traditional news media (newspapers, radio, and television). Don't send a news release to a blogger (see below for tips on communicating with bloggers).

- ✓ In almost all cases, a news release should be no longer than one page
- ✓ All good news releases start with a headline that captures the news in an informative and interesting way.
- ✓ A news release should always include, at the top, a contact name, phone number, e-mail address, and the date.

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- ✓ The first sentence of a release should clearly state the most important point you want to convey. State the issue and the local connection.
  - ✓ The most important information and the “conclusion” (the main point) should be in the first paragraph, with the less essential information following.
  - ✓ The second paragraph should provide essential background for the most important point. The release should concisely answer the 5 “W’s”: who, what, when, where, and why.
  - ✓ A quote or anecdote can strengthen a release and gives the reporter a possible hook for a story, but these should add substantive content and interest. Avoid canned-sounding quotes like “We are thrilled to announce...”
  - ✓ Save general information about your program or office for the last paragraph, and don’t include unrelated information. Focus the release on the news you have to convey.
  - ✓ Timing: It is best to send news releases during the early part of the day. Avoid releasing news on a Friday, unless it is breaking news.
  - ✓ Most releases are distributed by e-mail; if you have a communications office, this may be handled by staff there. In an e-mailed release, consider whether there are Web links to relevant information, resources, or multimedia that could be embedded in the text. This is a great way to expand the value of the communication and connect the recipient with your Web site, blog, or other online properties.
  - ✓ If the purpose of your communication is to announce an event, send a *media advisory* instead, which only states the event details and how to get more information.

👁️ **Sample News Release** and **Sample Media Advisory** in the **Appendix**

## ALTERNATIVES TO NEWS RELEASES

Your communication with reporters doesn’t always have to be in the form of an official news release – you should reserve those for announcing major news or for formal statements of policy or opinion by your organization or institution. Sending a short e-mail note with links to relevant or interesting news articles or blog posts about your issues is a good way to continue a relationship with a reporter in the absence of major news. Plus, this less formal format and more personal approach increases the likelihood your message will be read.

### Communicating with Bloggers

Bloggers typically prefer short, personal e-mail messages rather than news releases. But first, take the time to get to know the blog and even comment on a few posts before trying to establish a relationship with the blogger. Here are more tips and things to consider:

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- ✓ Is your information relevant to what the blogger normally covers?
  - ✓ Make sure you are familiar with the blog format.
    - ✓ If you are looking to pitch a guest post, does the blog normally take guest submissions?
    - ✓ How often is new material posted? Are there regular features that would be appropriate for your information? (Examples: News round-ups posted at the beginning or end of the week, travel stories featured on certain days, etc.)
  - ✓ Can you make a connection to a recent post from the blog or to something in the news?
  - ✓ Much like when communicating with a reporter, be prepared for anything you send to a blogger to be posted online.

## BETTER INTERVIEWS

This section offers basic interview tips and guidelines. Each interview situation is unique and may require tailored preparation. Practicing basic answers to frequently asked questions and keeping a briefing file of common interview topics handy can help.

Don't let a hurried reporter or blogger pressure you into doing an interview before you are ready. If a reporter calls unexpectedly and launches right into interview questions and you feel unprepared or distracted, tell them you need to call them back later and suggest a time for an interview. It is always better to take the time to collect your thoughts and focus your attention on the interview topic. ➔ Check in with appropriate colleagues and gather resource materials and talking points so that you can refer to them during the interview. If you are frequently called upon to do media interviews, ask your communications office if they can provide some basic media training to help you hone your skills.

## WHEN YOU HAVE TIME TO PREPARE IN ADVANCE:

- ✓ **Reality check.** When you are asked to do an interview, consider: Am I the right person to do this? If not, who is?
- ✓ Do not feel obligated to speak with a reporter or blogger if you do not feel comfortable with your knowledge of or authority to comment on the issue they are inquiring about.
- ✓ Find out as much as you can about the news outlet or program, who you will be talking to, and what they are writing about. A little research up front will help to minimize surprises during the interview. Check out the writer's recent articles online, or see if they write a blog.
- ✓ Every interview is an opportunity to convey a message. To help you focus on that message, identify two or three major points you want to emphasize.

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- ✓ Determine likely questions, and be sure you know how you would answer them.
  - ✓ **Especially for radio and television.** Find out if the interview will be live or taped. Will there be call-in questions from the audience? Who is the correspondent? In most cases, most of your contact with the news outlet will be with a producer, but it is a good idea to request an opportunity to talk briefly with the reporter prior to the interview.
  - ✓ **Especially for the Internet.** Live online chats and video webcasts with issue experts are becoming quite common. These types of interviews require significant preparation because reader/viewer-submitted questions from a diverse Internet audience can be unpredictable.

## DURING THE INTERVIEW:

- ✓ Listen carefully to each question.
- ✓ Pause and think before answering. Try to speak in short, complete sentences.
- ✓ Focus on your message. Keep it simple, and avoid jargon. Don't assume the reporter or blogger understands the topic or the issues in the same way you do – be clear and specific. Use anecdotes or examples to illustrate your points.
- ✓ Be truthful, and talk only about what you know. Do not speculate or answer what-if questions.
- ✓ Don't wait for the reporter or blogger to ask the question you want to answer. Find ways to bridge back to a point you want to make. For example, "I'm not familiar with...but I can tell you that in my experience..." or "That's true. But you know, there's something else that I think is being overlooked on this issue..."
- ✓ Avoid saying "no comment" if possible. This phrase is loaded with negative connotations. Some alternatives may be: "I don't think it would be appropriate for me to talk about that before we know all the facts" or "I would prefer not to get into that while the investigation is ongoing."
- ✓ If you are speaking on behalf of your institution, state its name in full and refer to it several times, especially in a radio or television interview, when large portions of your comments may be edited out.
- ✓ Try not to repeat an opposing viewpoint or inaccurate information when answering a question. Rather than: "No, the situation is not dangerous," say instead "The situation is safe because..." Crafting answers carefully in an interview situation can be challenging – practicing in advance can help.
- ✓ Don't be shy about repeating your main points. *Especially if your interview is pre-taped,* it is likely that only a few sentences of your comments will be used, even though your interview may last half an hour or more.

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- ✓ As a general rule, all discussions with reporters and bloggers are *on the record* and may be used in a news story. Sometimes reporters will speak to sources *on background* or *not for attribution*, both of which mean that their comments will not be attributed to them directly. *Off the record*, strictly defined, means “not for publication.” If you feel it is necessary to exercise one of these options, it is important to clarify the reporter’s understanding of what these terms mean. Otherwise, it is best to assume that all of your comments will be used. Bloggers, grounded as they are in the transparency and openness of the online media world, strongly dislike these kinds of arrangements.
  - ✓ Don’t say more than you feel comfortable saying. It is okay to say “I don’t have an answer on that. Can I get back to you?” For national statistics you are unsure about, or for detailed public policy questions related to international education, feel free to refer the reporter or blogger to NAFSA.
  - ✓ Don’t feel compelled to fill the silence. After you are done speaking, the interviewer will often wait before asking another question to be sure you’ve said everything there is to say on the subject. Give the answer you want to give, and stop there. There is no need for you to fill the silence.
  - ✓ **Especially for television.** Relax, speak at a normal pace, and use natural gestures to accentuate your point. Look at the interviewer, if present, not at the camera. Smile while speaking, sit up straight and on the edge of your seat. Assume the microphone is on until it has been removed from your jacket or you have left the recording room.
  - ✓ **Especially for radio.** Practice speaking in sound bites. Air time is precious, and your comments are more likely to air if you answer in short sentences. Let the interviewer finish the question before beginning to respond. What seems like a natural overlap of voices in normal conversation can sound jarring over the air. If the interview is being taped rather than aired live, you can ask for an opportunity to repeat an answer if you stumble over your words.
  - ✓ **Especially for the Internet.** It is becoming more common to do interviews online, using tools like Skype. Remember to be succinct in this format – attention spans are much shorter online than over the radio or even on television. If you are sitting at your computer and using a webcam, test a few different angles before getting started to find the best shot. Avoid busy backdrops and very tight headshots. Use a headset or headphones to minimize background noise.

**After the interview.** Remember that the writer and editor are the ultimate decision-makers about what direction the story will take and which information will be used. The best thing you can do is to focus on your story and your message. Never ask to see the draft of a story before it runs.

Be sure to maintain the relationship you established with the reporter or blogger through your experience. Keep in touch with them about the topics they are interested in.





- Op-Eds should always:
- 1) State the situation
  - 2) Give background
  - 3) Offer a solution or change

## WRITING OP-EDS

“Op-eds” (named for their usual position opposite the editorial page) offer a viewpoint on a subject or take a stand on a current issue. Most daily newspapers publish opinion pieces. These are often written by syndicated columnists or members of the editorial page staff. Contributions from individuals in the community are also accepted by many papers. Make sure you read the newspaper you are targeting to get a sense of the types of opinion pieces being printed and make sure you are not duplicating material that has already appeared in the publication.

A good op-ed should state a strong opinion or unique point of view on a topic of public interest, and include a call to action.

**To pitch your op-ed,** it is good to make direct contact, by e-mail or phone, with the person in charge of opinion article submissions at your local newspaper to talk with them about your article idea. This is the *op-ed editor* or *opinion editor* at large papers or, at smaller papers, the *editorial page editor*. The editor may ask you to submit a short letter describing the topic, or may ask you to simply send in the entire article when it is ready. Do not expect an editor to guarantee publication of your piece before he or she has seen it. For planning purposes, keep in mind that newspapers usually ask that opinion pieces be exclusive to them and often take five to ten days to consider a submission. Don't hesitate to follow up if you do not receive a response.

Op-eds, like letters, should always 1) state the situation; 2) give background; and 3) offer a solution or a change.

### As a general rule, op-eds should be:

- ✓ Timely and locally relevant
- ✓ Brief (no more than 700 - 750 words. Some newspapers have shorter word limits)
- ✓ Focused—don't throw in everything you ever thought of on the subject
- ✓ Personal—try to include an anecdote or specific example
- ✓ Accessible, with a story-telling style; use the active voice
- ✓ Submitted in the proper format. This can vary, but the standard process is submission by e-mail (as text, not an attachment), with complete contact information including name, address, and telephone number.

**Alternatives to the traditional op-ed:** Increasingly, newspapers are offering other ways for individuals to weigh in with their opinions. Some newspapers' online editions offer more space for the publication of full opinion articles – if you submit a piece for the op-ed page and it is rejected, inquire about its possible placement in the online version of the paper. Many papers also have



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affiliated blogs, often broken down into various topics. This is another good place to share your views, either by directing a message to the head blogger, or by submitting a formal comment on articles written by them. One advantage of the online space over a printed newspaper is that you can include links to relevant resources or your own Web site as a way to further engage with the audience.

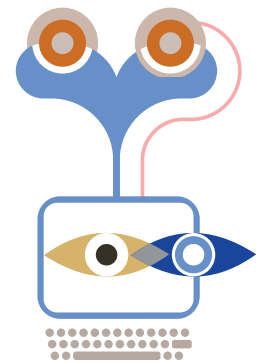
## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the editor should not be written every time a small mistake or misquote appears in the paper. Responding to negative news is also a debatable reason for a letter because it may serve only to draw more attention to the negative aspect of a story. If you have a quibble about something in a news article, try contacting the reporter directly. Friendly, tactful feedback is usually appreciated.

A more official letter can, however, be used to clarify a serious inaccuracy, offer an alternative perspective, or create interest in a subject that has not been adequately covered by the news media.

### Letters should:

- ✓ Be brief (no more than 200 – 250 words)
- ✓ Be timely—send your letter no more than one or two days after the article appears
- ✓ Focus on one issue—don't throw in everything you didn't like about the article
- ✓ Include your contact information
- ✓ Be signed
- ✓ Never attack a reporter



Letters should 1) state the situation; 2) give essential background; and 3) offer a solution or alternative.

Be sure to follow up to confirm that your letter was received and considered. Keep in mind that very little room is allotted for letters in most newspapers. Look for other opportunities to comment on articles, such as in the online edition or a blog affiliated with the newspaper.

## COMMENTING ON BLOGS OR ONLINE NEWS STORIES

Commenting on blogs and online news stories is a quick way to express your view and showcase your institution's work. For authenticity, you should always use your real name. Promptness is key when commenting on blogs, given the fleeting nature of online content. In your comment, you can also link to other new stories, blog posts, or resources from your institution's Web site to

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help make your point. After posting your comment, you can share the blog post or news story on other social media properties, like Facebook and Twitter, to help expand its reach. (See more in [Social Media Engagement: Tips and Tools](#)).

## MEETING WITH THE EDITORIAL BOARD

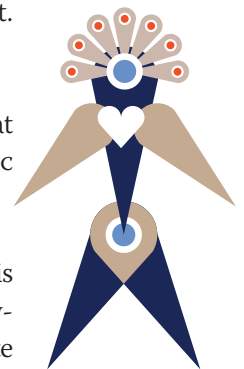
Members of newspaper editorial boards are busy people, and there is a lot of competition for their attention. This kind of meeting is not easy to secure. It should be viewed as a significant opportunity to present an argument about a timely topic of importance to the community.

### Asking for the meeting:

- ✓ Follow the editorial pages and get to know the paper's official positions on topics you care about. Writers are especially interested in hearing from sources about controversial or hot topics on which the editorial board is divided.
- ✓ Send a letter (usually by e-mail) requesting to meet. If possible, direct your letter to both the editorial page editor and the writer or writers on the editorial board who are most likely to be interested in the subject of your meeting. Explain why your topic is timely and what you can contribute to the discussion. Suggest a couple of dates, but be flexible, and be sure to indicate who will attend.
- ✓ Follow up with a phone call. This will be your chance to again make the case for why the board should meet with you and what you can contribute to the debate.

### At the meeting:

- ✓ Designate a spokesperson or spokespeople who can concisely and articulately represent the group.
- ✓ Emphasize why your topic is timely and why the paper should write about it. Explain the local connection, and bring examples and anecdotes.
- ✓ Anticipate likely questions, and be ready to answer them. Keep in mind that participating reporters will not necessarily limit their questions to the topic you wanted to talk about.
- ✓ Remember the separation between the paper's news and opinion pages. This meeting is not the time to complain about the paper's news coverage. However, be prepared for the possibility that news reporters may also participate in the meeting.
- ✓ Take some brief relevant materials to leave behind.



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- ✓ Send any requested follow-up materials promptly.
  - ✓ Keep in touch – this is a valuable contact. Be sure to maintain the relationship by sending occasional items of interest.

## SHOULD WE HOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE?

Press conferences should be used sparingly. Consider other ways to get your message out. Is a live event necessary? A press conference should be reserved for the announcement of important and compelling news and, if possible, should involve a speaker with celebrity status who will be a draw for reporters.

Good reasons to hold a live press conference may include: the unveiling of a major program, collaboration, or initiative; publication of a major report with high-profile backers; or significant breaking news. A press conference is a substantial investment in time and energy, so make sure your news warrants one.

### Alternatives to press conferences:

#### Panel discussion

Another way to expose reporters to an issue you are working on is to hold a panel discussion about a topic of current public concern and local relevance. Include local leaders, members of the community, colleagues, and students in your invitation list. Invite reporters too, and you have an event that serves multiple purposes, and could get some coverage, without the potential risks (such as a nearly empty room) that come with the traditional press conference.

#### Online or phone panel discussion or presentation

Similar to panel discussions, webinars, teleconferences, and informal conference calls are all more low-key ways to discuss your issue and spread a message. There are free software options online that you can use to hold an online chat, and you should check with your office or institution to see what other technology is available to you. By designating a hashtag for the event and doing some live tweeting, you can spread your message on Twitter too (see more in [Social Media Engagement: Tips and Tools](#)).


### A few tips for press conferences:

- ✓ Timing is key. Mornings are best, after 9 a.m.
- ✓ Put together a compelling, interesting lineup of speakers. Be sure each person involved understands the sequence of events and the role they need to play.
- ✓ Avoid scheduling your event during known news events that may steal your thunder.
- ✓ Keep it short—typically no more than an hour.

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- ✓ Provide written materials for attendees to take away with them.
  - ✓ Ask reporters to sign in, and keep their information for future reference.
  - ✓ Leave time for questions.
  - ✓ Serve coffee and refreshments if possible.

## MEDIA RELATIONS DURING A CRISIS

**Note.** Each crisis situation is unique. Each specific situation will require a tailored plan and response, and a close partnership with your communications office is essential. This is an important topic that merits fuller treatment than is possible in this handbook. What follows are general guidelines.

In a crisis situation, any advance work you have done to build relationships with reporters and establish yourself as a credible source will be very valuable. Good interview skills ( **Tools of the Trade**) and good proactive communication with the news media will be important in these situations. In addition, you will need a specific plan for how you will communicate with reporters during a crisis.

### Plan ahead:

- ✓ Know your institution's policies about contact with the news media.
- ✓ Be familiar with the communications plans of your office and your institution.
- ✓ Establish a relationship with your communications office. Be sure they know you can be a resource.
- ✓ Know your leadership's position on sensitive issues.
- ✓ Keep fact sheets, background materials, and important campus contact information updated and accessible.

### During a crisis:

- ✓ Convene a crisis management team.
- ✓ Gather information. Talk to key campus or organizational stakeholders. Connect with impacted constituencies. Monitor news reports from a variety of sources, including relevant print publications, blogs and online news sources. In some cases it is helpful to pay attention to conversations and updates being posted on social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter.
- ✓ Maintain strong lines of communication with other affected offices.

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- ✓ Take the time you need to develop a consistent, coordinated message.
  - ✓ Identify your spokesperson for the specific issue at hand, and provide regular briefings to keep the spokesperson up to date. Prepare an official statement, if appropriate.
  - ✓ Consider possible questions and scenarios, and determine how you would handle them.
  - ✓ Prepare and distribute appropriate news releases and fact sheets—reporters and bloggers like to have the basics on paper.
  - ✓ Be sure reporters and bloggers hear your message and get the facts. Don't wait for them to come to you.
  - ✓ Update plans and messages as the situation develops.
  - ✓ Use social media to issue quick updates and fresh information. Let reporters know if you are using a Twitter hashtag, so they can follow your news.
  - ✓ Return calls as promptly as possible. If possible, let callers know when updates will be available, and get back to them as promised.
  - ✓ Maintain a log of media inquiries, so you can easily get back to reporters and bloggers if you need to give them updated or corrected information later.

**After a crisis.** Take the time to assess how each component of your media relations plan unfolded. What went well? What could have been done better? This is an opportunity to learn what took place and to fine-tune plans and systems for the future.

## TRACKING YOUR MEDIA RELATIONS ACTIVITIES

Setting up good systems for tracking news, accessing information, and monitoring your activities is essential for effective media relations. A few simple systems will help you get started.

**Your media contacts.** Create a simple system to track your contact with the media so that over time you can get a sense of which reporters and bloggers are the most responsive, which types of stories seem most popular with the news media, and where your activities have resulted in coverage. Use a simple spreadsheet to capture information about individuals and news outlets that you would like to establish contact with, as well as those you already know. Create a column for notes about your communications with each contact. Add to the list each time you learn about a new contact or speak to a reporter or blogger for a story. For each entry, include the outlet name, contact name, e-mail address, mailing address, phone number, and the preferred method of contact, if you know it.

**News coverage.** Keep a file of relevant press clips, especially any that quote you or someone from your office or institution. These can be useful for sharing with your university leadership, or your

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congressional delegation, and will also help you to get a sense of how the coverage has progressed or changed on your issues of interest. This should include clips from print publications, television and radio broadcasts, as well as online news from blogs and Internet news sites.

**Important reference Web sites.** Bookmarking a few key Web sites on your Internet browser will help you to access information quickly. You can also add blogs to Google Reader, a great tool to use to help organize blog content and makes it possible to quickly review the latest headlines and topics ([www.google.com/reader](http://www.google.com/reader)). Twitter also makes it easy for you to categorize the accounts you follow by making lists. (See “[Social Media Engagement: Tips and Tools](#)” for more). Here are some ideas for sites you should bookmark:

### Your institution

- ✓ Institution’s press room and social media sites
- ✓ Institution’s news site or publication for faculty, alumni, or other audiences
- ✓ Campus press

### NAFSA sites

- ✓ [www.nafsa.org/press](http://www.nafsa.org/press) — the latest public policy news from NAFSA
- ✓ [www.ConnectingOurWorld.org](http://www.ConnectingOurWorld.org) — NAFSA’s online home for grassroots advocacy

### Higher Education News

- ✓ [www.chronicle.com](http://www.chronicle.com) — daily news from *The Chronicle of Higher Education*
- ✓ [www.insidehighered.com](http://www.insidehighered.com) — an online source for news and opinion about higher education

Your preferred national news source

Your Congressional delegation ([www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov); [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov))



## INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION STORY IDEAS

These are just a handful of the possible story angles and story ideas that international educators can use in their interactions with the news media. Local and smaller regional media outlets in particular are often more open to story ideas, unusual or interesting local angles on national stories, or locally contributed commentary articles. Their news agendas are typically less complicated, and their “news hole” tends to be bigger than in the national media. More thoughtful and detailed coverage can be an additional benefit.

- ➔ If you see national coverage of an issue that might generate interest in the local news media, consider a possible sidebar on the local angle that you could share with a local reporter.
- ➔ Respond to what is already in the local news. If a story or editorial touches on an international education issue, consider submitting a letter to the editor or op-ed to continue the dialogue on the topic.
- ➔ If you see an interesting report, survey, or statistic on international education, share it with your local media. Suggest ways to tie the information to local trends or stories. If you or your institution use social networks and blogs, consider putting this information there.
- ➔ Pay special attention to members of Congress who are active in policymaking related to international education. If they are from your state or district, that is all the more reason to consider a local angle to promote a story in the media. To find out more about your congressional delegation, consult [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) or [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov).
- ➔ Whenever possible, invite reporters to cover campus events that focus on international education topics.
- ➔ If someone at your institution or in your state has received a prestigious grant, award, or special recognition for their international education efforts, encourage them to publicize their project and invite the media to cover some part of it if possible.

Study abroad participants, international students and scholars, and faculty returning from trips abroad often have interesting and inspiring stories to tell. Encourage them to share those with the local or campus press. If possible, help to facilitate this through your communications office or your own contacts in the local press. Stories like these are also good to share on a blog affiliated with your institution. You can then share these posts with external bloggers and reporters to grab their interest or just to keep communication open with bloggers or reporters you have already established connections with.



## APPENDIX

### - SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE -

Find more examples of press releases, media advisories, and letters to the editor in NAFSA's online press room at [www.nafsa.org/press](http://www.nafsa.org/press).

#### NAFSA NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Ursula Oaks, 202.495.2553

#### **The State of the Union, and Moving Forward on Immigration Reform**

WASHINGTON, January 27, 2012 - President Obama singled out the need for immigration reform as an economic imperative in his State of the Union address this week and urged Congress to move forward with him on tackling the issue, saying that “an economy built to last is one where we encourage the talent and ingenuity of every person in this country.”

The president echoed the long-standing view of many in policy and advocacy circles when he cited “comprehensive immigration reform” as the task “we need to be working on right now” – the outcome that will ultimately be necessary for the nation to right itself on the immigration issue, whether with respect to concerns about illegal immigration or the outdated legal policies and processes by which people from other countries access the United States for education, career, and other purposes.

#### **The Border is Secure**

Border enforcement has been a major sticking point in moving the discussion of comprehensive reform forward – in his speech, the president made it clear that this was no longer a reason for delay. According to a July 2011 report by the Pew Hispanic Center, [the number of Mexicans entering the United States has plummeted](#), from more than one million in 2006 to 404,000 in 2010—a 60% reduction. Today, the Border Patrol has [20,000](#) agents, more than twice the number it had in 2004, and nearly 90% of them are positioned at the southwest border with Mexico. According to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) bureau of the Department of Homeland Security, the United States has deported more people who were in the country illegally in fiscal-year 2011 than ever before — [nearly 400,000](#).

The president acknowledged that action on a comprehensive plan for immigration reform might not be feasible this year. He singled out two areas for initial steps that he believes are important for America's economic recovery and competitiveness.



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## The DREAM Act

The president called on Congress to pass legislation that provides a path to legal status for undocumented young people who were brought to the United States as children. In many cases, these individuals are unaware of their undocumented status until they graduate from high school and attempt to apply for college. Though the United States is the only home they have ever known, they live in fear of deportation.

The [DREAM Act](#) has enjoyed widespread bipartisan support and prompted a nationwide groundswell of activism. This legislation is not an amnesty. No one will automatically receive a green card. To apply for legal status, individuals have to meet stringent eligibility criteria: they must have entered the United States before age 15 or 16 (different versions of the bill vary on the age requirement); must have lived in the United States for five years; must not have committed any major crimes; must graduate from high school or the equivalent; and must complete at least two years of college or military service. Eligible students must first obtain conditional residency and complete the requirements before they can obtain a green card—a process that will take years. Not all immigrants who came as young children will be eligible to legalize because they will not meet some of the extensive requirements. The Migration Policy Institute estimates that “of the 360,000 young people aged 18 to 24 immediately eligible for the conditional status under the DREAM Act, about [50,000](#)” are likely to be eligible for a permanent adjustment of their status.

## Attracting Global Talent

The president also called on Congress to work with him to reform immigration policies and regulations that make it difficult for foreign students who earn degrees in the United States to put their education and skills to work at American companies, saying: “As soon as they get their degree, we send them home to invent new products and create new jobs somewhere else. That doesn't make sense.”

Numerous reports and surveys have made the case that foreign high-skilled workers and entrepreneurs are net job-creators, by their propensity to drive innovation, the development of new product lines, and the creation of new businesses. According to the [National Foundation for American Policy](#) (NFAP), immigrants have started nearly half of America's 50 top venture-funded companies and have added an average of approximately 150 jobs per company to the U.S. economy. A separate [study by Madeline Zavodny, a professor of economics at Agnes Scott College](#), found that 100 immigrants with science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) degrees on average generate 262 jobs for American workers.

## Immigration Reform is Essential to U.S. Economic Recovery

With the U.S. border secure, there is no excuse to ignore the need for comprehensive immigration reform. Immigrants are good for communities, create jobs, and connect us to the world.

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## Resources from NAFSA

- ✓ [President Obama Must Lead a National Conversation on Immigration Reform](#)
- ✓ [On the Blog: State of the Union Addressa Step in the Right Direction for Immigration Reform](#)
- ✓ [A Visa & Immigration Policy for the Brain-Circulation Era](#)
- ✓ [The DREAM Act: Myths and Facts](#)

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NAFSA: Association of International Educators is the world's largest nonprofit professional association dedicated to international education. Learn more about our work at [www.nafsa.org](http://www.nafsa.org) and [www.connectingourworld.org](http://www.connectingourworld.org).

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## - SAMPLE MEDIA ADVISORY -

Find more examples of press releases, media advisories, and letters to the editor in NAFSA's online press room at [www.nafsa.org/press](http://www.nafsa.org/press).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Katie O'Connell, 202.495.2559

### **Media Advisory: Capitol Hill Event on Policy Solutions to Broaden Access to Study Abroad**

WASHINGTON, November 9, 2011 – On Wednesday, November 16, Goucher College, NAFSA: Association of International Educators, and honorary co-host U.S. Senator Barbara Mikulski will hold an event on Capitol Hill to discuss the importance of integrating study abroad and global learning into the academic preparation of American college students. The event will feature remarks by U.S. Senators Richard Durbin and Barbara Mikulski, followed by a panel discussion among university presidents about the value of study abroad, successful models for increasing study abroad participation, and what more needs to happen on a national level to ensure that significantly more students have access to quality global educational experiences.

### **Event: A Global Education: No Longer Optional Why a Study Abroad Experience Should be Part of Every Student's Future**

**When:** Wednesday, November 16, 2011  
10:00 AM to 12:00 PM  
(Check-in begins 9:30)

**Where:** U.S. Capitol Visitors Center  
Room SVC 209-08 (Senate side)  
Washington, DC

**Speakers Include:**

U.S. Senator Richard Durbin  
U.S. Senator Barbara Mikulski  
Goucher College President Sanford J. Ungar  
NAFSA: Association of International Educators Executive Director & CEO Marlene M. Johnson

Space is limited - advance registration is advised. Register by reply e-mail or by calling 202.737.3699 x2559.

### **Background**

More than 260,000<sup>1</sup> American students studied abroad for credit during the 2008 – 2009 academic

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year. By all accounts, demand for study abroad opportunities is high among today's young people, who recognize that they will graduate into a globalized job market. In a recent survey of American voters, nearly 75 percent of respondents said that we need to do a better job of preparing students to compete in the global economy. And yet currently only about one percent of American college students study abroad each year<sup>2</sup>, and participation remains predominantly white, female, and focused on the liberal arts. This event will examine the case for study abroad as critical to the college education of all students; consider the "global divide" that leaders across many sectors fear will hamper American students who do not receive a global education; and review what government and higher education can do, in partnership, to widen access to study abroad.

1. Institute of International Education, *Open Doors Report*, 2010.

2. Institute of International Education, *Open Doors Report*, 2010 and National Center for Education Statistics, 2008 *Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)*, Spring 2009

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With nearly 10,000 members, NAFSA: Association of International Educators is the world's largest nonprofit association dedicated to international education. Visit us at [www.nafsa.org](http://www.nafsa.org). To learn more about our advocacy efforts on behalf of international education, visit [www.ConnectingOurWorld.org](http://www.ConnectingOurWorld.org).

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## - SAMPLE LETTER TO EDITOR -

Find more examples of press releases, media advisories, and letters to the editor in NAFSA's online press room at [www.nafsa.org/press](http://www.nafsa.org/press).

January 24, 2012

Letters Editor  
*The New York Times*  
letters[at]nytimes.com

To the Editor:

In his provocative piece about what needs to change about undergraduate education in today's world ("[What You \(Really\) Need to Know](#)," Jan. 22), Lawrence Summers notes that the advent of sophisticated translation technologies makes it "less clear that the substantial investment necessary to speak a foreign tongue is universally worthwhile." It is true that technology can help chip away at the language barriers that so many Americans confront as they work in cross-border and cross-cultural contexts. But technology will never unlock the cultural inferences and linguistic nuances on which negotiations about conflict resolution and business partnerships often hinge.

In these areas, English-only adherents will always find themselves at a considerable disadvantage – and in terms of first impressions, fumbling with your iPhone translator app isn't likely to be nearly as powerful as addressing your international colleague in his or her own language. What's more, recent research on language acquisition offers considerable evidence that learning a foreign language has a direct and significant effect on cognitive ability, actually altering the brain toward greater flexibility and nimbleness. From kindergarten through college, our education system must provide robust opportunities for foreign language learning.

Marlene M. Johnson  
Executive Director & CEO  
NAFSA: Association of International Educators



## SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT: TIPS AND TOOLS

### Why Use Social Media?

Social media tools have changed the way we connect, discover information, and share news. Hundreds of millions of people log in to social sites each day. For many, they has become part of daily life.

As advocates for international education, it is important for us to contribute to the online conversation and debate about the issues we care about. We can add our opinions to comments on blog posts; share articles, stories, and statistics about the impact of international education on Facebook; and directly connect with elected officials on Twitter.

The same resources, ideas, and stories we would share with an elected official in person about policies that affect international education can now be shared widely across the Internet and have an exponentially greater reach. Social media have become valuable tools in grassroots advocacy.



### NAFSA: ASSOCIATION OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATORS

Connecting Our World is powered by NAFSA and its 10,000 members worldwide, who believe that international education - connecting students, scholars, educators, and citizens across borders - is fundamental to advancing peace, security, and well-being. Learn more about NAFSA at [www.nafsa.org](http://www.nafsa.org).



[www.connectingourworld.org](http://www.connectingourworld.org)

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## Before You Start

It is becoming more common for professional and personal lives to overlap on social media properties. Find out if your workplace has a social media or blogging policy (just like you would when engaging with the traditional news media - see our [media handbook](#) for more on that subject) and be sure to follow those guidelines to protect your employer and yourself.

A great way to become accustomed to social media is to get online and just read, watch, and listen. Take a look at NAFSA's social media properties to see what kind of information is being shared and take note of how others are engaging.

## NAFSA's Social Media Properties



Blog: [www.nafsa.org/blog](http://www.nafsa.org/blog)



Twitter: [www.nafsa.org/twitter](http://www.nafsa.org/twitter)



YouTube: [www.nafsa.org/youtube](http://www.nafsa.org/youtube)



Facebook: [www.nafsa.org/facebook](http://www.nafsa.org/facebook)



LinkedIn: [www.nafsa.org/linkedin](http://www.nafsa.org/linkedin)

You can find our online home for students involved in advocacy at [www.facebook.com/StudentsCoWorld](http://www.facebook.com/StudentsCoWorld). Not a student? Not a problem! Find out how [you can spread the word](#) about Students Connecting Our World at [www.ConnectingOurWorld.org/students](http://www.ConnectingOurWorld.org/students).

## How to Engage With Social Media Tools

### *Blogs*

Compile a list of blogs that you want to follow (check out [NAFSA's blog](#) roll for ideas). Instead of visiting each blog every day, you can use an aggregator like [Google Reader](#) to organize RSS feeds from every blog you want to follow - this way, you only need to check one site to find new posts.

Commenting on blogs is a great venue for advocacy. When you see a post that highlights an issue that affects international education, add a comment to express your view. For authenticity, you should use your real name. In your comment, you can also link to [action alerts](#) or [campaign pages](#) on Connecting Our World. From there, you can share the blog post on other properties, like Facebook and Twitter.

### *Facebook*

Follow your members of Congress, elected officials, international education organizations, and other international education-related pages to keep up on news and see what others are sharing.

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You can share action alerts, campaign pages, blog posts, news articles, facts and figures, reports, and more. When sharing something, use the space you have to comment on why the resource is important, and tie your message to advocacy. Your Facebook wall isn't your only tool to share – you can also comment on the walls of your elected officials to keep them up-to-date on the issues and share stories about the real-life impact of international education.

### **Twitter**

Twitter is a more open community than Facebook. Unless you make your account private, anyone can follow your tweets. Therefore, it's easy to tap into advocacy communities and to follow members of Congress, government officials, reporters, bloggers, and international education organizations. Don't be afraid to direct your tweet at a member of Congress – on Twitter, it's very common to start conversations with people you don't know.

As with Facebook, you can share share action alerts, campaign pages, blog posts, news articles, facts and figures, reports, and more on Twitter, but you must so in only 140 characters. That's why URL shortening is needed (example: [bit.ly.com](http://bit.ly.com)), abbreviations are common, and grammar rules are often ignored. You'll also want to partake in "Twitter Karma" – be nice, be thankful, retweet, and list your followers.

Hashtags are very helpful in categorizing and following conversations. You can use applications like [Tweetdeck](#) or [Hootsuite](#) on your computer or phone to monitor multiple conversations. Here are a few hashtags to follow:

#IntlEd (international education)

#GlobalEd (global education)

#NafsaAD (NAFSA Advocacy Day)

#nafsaGLP (Connecting Our World's Grassroots Leadership Program)

#immigration

#DREAMact

#StudyAbroad

Live tweeting is a great way to share information with others in real time and energize followers about international education. Be on the lookout for hashtags designated for specific events so that you can connect with the conversation that is going on, and so that people who couldn't attend can follow the action.

Tweeting statistics will grab people's attention and are highly likely to go viral. Check out NAFSA's data and statistics page for ideas at [www.nafsa.org/economicdata](http://www.nafsa.org/economicdata).

### **YouTube**

YouTube is a very popular and powerful medium in social media. Videos can sometimes tell a story better than an article, report, or photo. They can be very valuable in telling the story of the real-life impact of international education, and can be shared across all social networks to reach elected officials and spread an advocacy message. And if you're lucky, your video will go "viral" for thousands, or even millions, to see.



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You can peruse YouTube and social networks to find videos related to international education, or you can make your own and upload it to your YouTube account. Most smart phones and cameras can capture video, and it's hard to purchase a computer these days without a built-in webcam. Some computers also come with simple and user-friendly software to edit your videos. But don't let the editing process overwhelm you – simple and organic videos can be just as powerful as a flashy and professional piece.

### *LinkedIn*

LinkedIn is the professional's social network. Most conversations revolving around international education tend to get into the nuts and bolts of your everyday work, but it's also an opportunity to connect with other advocates by joining groups and to share information as you would on any other social network. Join the NAFSA LinkedIn group and arrange your settings so that you receive digests of ongoing conversations.

## **Golden Rules for Social Media Engagement**

**Be transparent** – when sharing or commenting, always identify yourself and your sources of information as appropriate.

**Be yourself** – a personal approach (writing in the first person, story-telling, anecdotes, analogies) is valued and can help get your point across.

**Be smart** – don't reveal proprietary or confidential information. Follow the policies established by your employer; your words online reflect you and are difficult to permanently delete once posted.

**Be accurate** – know the facts; be clear in stating them; avoid jargon and vague language.

**Be action-oriented** – provide links to interesting stuff (articles, resources, photos, videos, action alerts, campaigns) that helps move the conversation forward.

## **Resources**

The following are just a small handful blogs and twitter accounts to get you started.

### *Education*

The Chronicle of Higher Education

<http://chronicle.com/blogs/worldwise/@GlobalChronicle>

Inside Higher Ed

<http://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/InsideHigherEd>

Education Experts, National Journal Blog

<http://education.nationaljournal.com/@ExpertEducation>

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CNN Schools of Thought  
[http://schoolsofthought.blogs.cnn.com/  
@CNNSchools](http://schoolsofthought.blogs.cnn.com/@CNNSchools)

Global Higher Ed  
[http://globalhighered.wordpress.com/  
@GlobalHigherEd](http://globalhighered.wordpress.com/@GlobalHigherEd)

### **Government**

U.S. Department of Education  
[http://www.ed.gov/blog/  
@usedgov](http://www.ed.gov/blog/@usedgov)

U.S. Department of State  
[http://blogs.state.gov/  
@StateDept](http://blogs.state.gov/@StateDept)  
[@ConnectStateGov](http://blogs.state.gov/@ConnectStateGov)

U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
[http://blog.dhs.gov/  
@DSHgov](http://blog.dhs.gov/@DSHgov)

Find your members of Congress:  
<http://tweetcongress.org/members/>

### **Immigration**

Immigration Impact  
[http://immigrationimpact.com/  
@ImmPolicyCenter](http://immigrationimpact.com/@ImmPolicyCenter)

Greg Siskind on Immigration Law and Policy  
<http://blogs.ilw.com/gregsiskind/>

ImmigrationProf Blog  
<http://lawprofessors.typepad.com/immigration/>

### **Cuba Travel**

Foreign Policy Association Blogs  
<http://foreignpolicyblogs.com/category/cuba/>

The Havana Note  
<http://thehavananote.com/>

The Cuba Triangle  
<http://cubantriangle.blogspot.com/>

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### ***Study Abroad and Travel***

World Hum

<http://www.worldhum.com/>

The Study Abroad Blog

<http://thestudyabroadblog.com/>

Matador Network

<http://matadornetwork.com/abroad/>

### ***Public Diplomacy and Global Engagement***

Mountain Runner by Matt Armstrong

[www.MountainRunner.us](http://www.MountainRunner.us)

[@mountainrunner](#)

The CPD Blog

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