

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I AT HILO

SCHOOL OF NURSING POLICY

Title: UH Hilo School of Nursing Social Media Policy

Department Policy Number:

Effective Date:

Review Date:

Revised Date:

Approved By (Approving body(ies)/Date/Motion #)

Responsible Position/Department:

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Policies: UH Hilo School of Nursing Social Media Policy

Purpose: To provide guidelines for UH Hilo School of Nursing (SON) employees, including faculty, instructors, staff, and students on the use of social media. The UH Hilo SON supports the use of social media to reach audiences important to the University such as students, prospective students, faculty and staff. The University presence or participation on social media sites is guided by university policy.¹ This policy applies to SON students who engage in Internet conversations for school-related purposes or school-related activities such as interactions in or about clinical and didactic course activities. Distribution of sensitive and confidential information is protected under HIPAA and FERPA whether discussed through traditional communication channels or through social media.

While this policy may need to be modified as new technologies and social networking tools emerge, the spirit of the policy will remain the protection of sensitive and confidential information. Social media often spans traditional boundaries between professional and personal relationships and thus takes additional vigilance to make sure that one is protecting personal, professional, and university reputations.

Students and employees will want to represent the University and the School in a fair, accurate and legal manner while protecting the brand and reputation of the institution.

¹ <https://hilo.hawaii.edu/social/standards.php>

When publishing information on social media sites, remain cognizant that information may be public for anyone to see and can be traced back to you as an individual. Since social media typically enables two-way communications with an audience, individuals have less control about how materials posted will be used by others.

Definitions:

Social media are defined as mechanisms for communication designed to be disseminated through social interaction, created using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques. Social media is commonly thought of as a group of Internet-based applications that are built on the ideological and technological foundations of the web that allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content. The term “social media” includes, but is not limited to: web and mobile phone applications, blogs, photo and video sharing sites, micro-blogging and social networking sites, and wikis². Examples include but are not limited to LinkedIn, Wikipedia, Second Life, Flickr, podcasts, RSS feeds, Allnurses.com, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Snapchat and Instagram..

The term “patient” encompasses clients, residents, healthcare consumers or any individual or group for whom employees or students have interactions, to include but not limited to a nurse-patient relationship or provision of nursing care in any setting, clinical or otherwise.

Description:

Whereas Provision 3.1 of the American Nurses Association (ANA) Code of Ethics requires protection of patient privacy and confidentiality³ UH Hilo SON employees and students shall not discuss ANY patient information, patient interaction or patient care experiences on ANY social media platforms.

HIPPA guidelines must be followed at all times. Information concerning clients/clinical rotations must not be posted in any online forum or webpage. In short, clinical experiences and/or information SHOULD NOT be discussed on social media.

Provision 3.1 of the ANA Code of Ethics states: “The nurse has a duty to maintain confidentiality of all patient information, both personal and clinical in the work setting and off duty in all venues, including social media or any other means of communication” (p. 9).

*UH Hilo SON employees and students are also expected to abide by any privacy and confidentiality policies and procedures of any clinical practicum and/or partner agency.

UH Hilo SON employees and students should abide by the following⁴:

² <https://www.cdc.gov/maso/policy/SocialMediaPolicy508.pdf>

³

<https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/nursing-excellence/ethics/code-of-ethics-for-nurses/coe-view-only/>

⁴ <https://www.nursingworld.org/social/>

- Remember that standards of professionalism are the same online as in any other circumstance. Thus, the same principles, guidelines, and standards of conduct that apply to employees and students apply to social media activities.
- Do not share or post information or photos gained through nurse-patient interactions and/or relationships.
- Maintain professional boundaries in the use of electronic media. Online contact with patients blurs this boundary.
- Do not make disparaging remarks about patients, employers, co-workers, clinical and/or partner agencies, or other students, even if they are not identified.
- Do not take photos or videos of patients or the patient care environment in which patient images or information might be captured.
- At NO time shall patients be videotaped or photographed without written permission of the patient AND of the facility.
- It is expected that during clinicals, use of electronic devices will be used only as authorized by faculty and the clinical agency policy.
- No personal phone conversations or texting are allowed at any time while in patient areas or in the classroom. If the student needs to respond to an emergency text or phone call during class, the student should inform the instructor and leave the to respond.
- Promptly report a breach of confidentiality or privacy.

UH Hilo SON employees and students should also abide by the following⁵:

- Be cognizant of the potential impact of each social media post made, with the understanding that patients, classmates, instructors, employers, and other personal or professional contacts may view an individual's online activity as a reflection of the individual's career as well as the nursing profession in general.
- Never refer to anyone in a disparaging manner, even if the person cannot be identified with the information stated.
- Do not make disparaging remarks about any college, university, or school of nursing, including the students, faculty, instructors and staff.
- Protect confidential, sensitive, and proprietary information: Do not post confidential or proprietary information about the university, staff, students, clinical facilities, patients, or others with whom one has contact in the role of a UH Hilo SON student.
- Respect copyright and fair use. When posting, be mindful of the copyright and intellectual property rights of others and of the university. For guidance, visit the University's Libraries site or seek consultation through the Copyright Office, Libraries.
- Personal social media profiles should be set up using personal email addresses and should not include representations or depictions of the UH Hilo SON.
- Do not use University of Hawai'i or UH Hilo SON marks, such as logos and graphics, on personal social media sites. Do not use UH Hilo's name to promote a product, cause, or political party or candidate.

⁵ https://www.ncsbn.org/NSNA_Social_Media_Recommendations.pdf

- Use of the SON marks (logos and graphics) for School sanctioned events must be approved (posters, fliers, postings) by administration.
- Use of electronic devices during class shall be restricted to note taking and classroom activities. Use otherwise is distracting for not only the student involved in the activity but those in the immediate area/vicinity.
- No student shall videotape professors or fellow students for personal or social media use without the express written permission of the faculty or fellow student.
- Generally, UH Hilo SON employees and students should not post in social media while identified as employees or students of the UH Hilo SON. If you do identify yourself as a student or employee, ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself to colleagues, clients, and potential employers. Identify your views as your own. When posting your point of view, you should neither claim nor imply you are speaking on UH Hilo's behalf, unless you are authorized to do so in writing.
- Ultimately, you have sole responsibility for what you post.
- UH Hilo SON employees and students shall also abide by the UH Hilo Social Media Policy.⁶

Additional Considerations

- There is no such thing as a "private" social media site. Search engines can turn up posts years after the publication date. Comments can be forwarded or copied. Archival systems save information, including deleted postings. If you feel angry or passionate about a subject, it's wise to delay posting until you are calm and clear-headed. Think twice before posting. If you are unsure about posting something or responding to a comment, ask your faculty. If you are about to publish something that makes you even the slightest bit uncertain, review the suggestions in this policy and seek guidance.
- Future employers hold you to a high standard of behavior. By identifying yourself as a UH Hilo nursing student through postings and personal web pages, you are connected to your colleagues, clinical agencies, and even patients. Ensure that content associated with you is consistent with your professional goals.
- Nursing students are preparing for a profession, which provides services to a public that also expects high standards of behavior. Respect your audience.
- You are legally liable for what you post on your own site and on the sites of others. Individual bloggers have been held liable for commentary deemed to be proprietary, copyrighted, defamatory, libelous or obscene (as defined by the courts).
- Employers are increasingly conducting Web searches on job candidates before extending offers. Be sure that what you post today will not come back to haunt you.
- Monitor comments. You can set your site so that you can review and approve comments before they appear. This allows you to respond in a timely way to comments. It also allows you to delete spam comments and to block any individuals who repeatedly post offensive or frivolous comments.
- Do not use ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity, pornographic images, or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable in the professional workplace.
- You are responsible for regularly reviewing the terms of this policy.

⁶ <https://hilo.hawaii.edu/social/standards.php>

Consequences

- Violations of patient privacy with an electronic device will be subject to HIPAA procedures/guidelines and consequences.
- In the event that a student is found to have violated the SON Social Media Policy, the student will be subject to disciplinary action, following the process listed in the SON Policy 1050, Dismissal Procedure.

Each student is legally responsible for individual postings and may be subject to liability if individual postings are found defamatory, harassing, or in violation of any other applicable law. Students may also be liable if individual postings include confidential or copyrighted information (music, videos, text, etc.).

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