



Social Networking Policy

Policy Number: S - 10

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History

Effective: 4/26/2013
Last Updated: 2/23/2022

Responsible University Office:
Division of Health Sciences at IUPUC

Responsible University Administrator
Division Head

Policy Contact:
Administrative Assistant, 812-348-7250

Scope

Indiana University Purdue University Columbus (IUPUC) Division of Health Sciences students.

Policy Statement

Use of electronic social media, i.e. internet sites, blogs, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Snapchat, Vimeo, YouTube, etc. offer an opportunity for students to engage in professional and personal conversations and form networks. However, students must maintain strict adherence to privacy and confidentiality standards set forth by Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) including but not limited to HIPAA Privacy Rule (45 CFR Part 160 and subparts A and E of Part 164). These rules protect patient privacy by establishing how individually identifiable information may be used. Inadvertent or intentional breaches of confidentiality can occur through comments about patients, patient family members, and/or posting stories about what happened in clinical or classroom experiences. The student should be aware that a patient's name does not need to be mentioned for a HIPAA violation to occur.

Consequently, Division of Health Sciences students must adhere to the IU Code of Student Ethics and Responsibilities, Division of Health Sciences policies and procedures, and HIPAA obligations related to patient privacy and confidentiality, and code of conduct at all times when using the Internet and social networking sites. Students have

a duty to report any breach of confidentiality or privacy, either of their own volition or by others, to the appropriate Division of Health Sciences faculty member. Students who are found to have violated HIPAA privacy rules or have not disclosed knowledge of a HIPAA violation are subject to disciplinary actions up to and including immediate dismissal from the Division of Health Sciences program and are subject to fines from governmental regulatory authorities. Violations can be used in court or other disciplinary proceedings (i.e. licensing boards).

It is the individual student's responsibility to:

1. Closely monitor the privacy settings of their social network accounts to optimize their privacy and security.
2. Ensure posts or photos are appropriate and are not at a clinical site or professionally compromising.
3. Avoid sharing identification numbers on your personal profile. This would include address, telephone numbers, social security, passport numbers, driver's license numbers, birth date, place of employment, or any other data that could be used to obtain your personal records.

In reference to the National Council of State Boards of Nursing's "A Nurse's Guide to the Use of Social Media" the following guidelines are set forth to address instances of inappropriate use of the Internet and social media networking sites, and can be located at: <https://www.ncsbn.org/3739.htm>. This applies to all health sciences students.

Reason for Policy

The purpose of this policy is to outline the Division of Health Sciences guidelines for appropriate use of Internet social networking sites by students engaging in online discourse and identifying themselves with Division of Health Sciences.

Guidelines

Division of Health Sciences Guidelines for Online Social Networking:

- Students have an ethical and legal obligation to maintain patient privacy and confidentiality at all times. Postings within social network sites are subject to the same professionalism standards as any other personal interactions. Statements made within online networks will be treated as if the statement was made verbally in a public place.
- Sharing of any patient related data or images by electronic media is strictly prohibited. Students must not identify patients by name or post information

which may lead to the identification of a patient. Limiting access to postings through privacy settings is not sufficient to ensure privacy.

- When using electronic media, professional boundaries must be maintained at all times. Faculty, staff, and students have an obligation to establish, communicate, and enforce professional boundaries with patients in the online environment. Online contact with patients or former patients is strictly prohibited. A patient may initiate contact, but the student is still not permitted to engage.
- Do not violate copyrighted or trademarked materials. If you post content, photos, or other media, you are acknowledging you own or have the right to use these items. Division of Health Sciences logos may not be used on any social media site without the approval of the Division of Health Sciences Division Head.
- Disclosure of information regarding course assignments or exams on social networks is a form of academic misconduct and students will be disciplined according to the procedures outlined in the Indiana University Code of Student Ethics.
- Students are encouraged to immediately contact an appropriate Division of Health Sciences administrator or staff about unprofessional or potentially offensive comments or images on social networking sites. Students have a responsibility to promptly report any identified breach of confidentiality or privacy and may be dismissed from the program if not reported.
- Students must be aware of and comply with IUPUC and clinical sites policies regarding the use of computers, cameras and other electronic devices in the clinical setting.
- In the event a violation of the social networking policy has occurred, the student's case will be handled according to Division of Health Sciences process for dealing with academic misconduct as outlined in the IUPUC Bulletin and IU Code of Student, Ethics Rights and Responsibilities. Students who violate the policy may be dismissed from the program.
- A student failing to report a social media infraction is held equally culpable.

History

Reviewed by Policy and Procedure Committee 3/1/2017

Approved at Synergy 3/8/2017

Approved by Faculty & Staff Council 4/26/2017

Reviewed by Policy and Procedure Committee 1/5/2022

Approved by Faculty & Staff Council 2/23/2022

Adapted from Division of Health Sciences Core policy number: F_09.