

## Social Media Guidelines

Rationale: The goal of this policy is to protect patients, students, as well as, the nursing program and College. This policy represents a set of standards of conduct when students identify themselves with the East Tennessee State University.

Students are personally responsible for the content they publish on blogs, wikis, social networks, forum boards, or any other form of user-generated media. Remember that all content contributed on all platforms becomes ***immediately searchable and can be immediately shared***. This content instantly leaves the contributing individual's control ***forever*** and may be traced back to the individual after long periods of time.

Social Media Platforms include technology tools and online spaces for integrating and sharing user generated content in order to engage constituencies in conversations and allow them to participate in content and community creation.

Guidelines for Online Professional or Personal Activity:

These guidelines apply to ETSU nursing students who identify themselves with ETSU and/or use their ETSU email address in social media venues for deliberate professional engagement or casual conversation.

1. Follow the same practices as outlined in the **Nursing Student Ethical and Professional Behavior** policy with respect to copyrights and disclosures, and not revealing proprietary financial, intellectual property, patient care or similar sensitive or private content inclusive of the posting of client pictures or information.
2. Protect confidential information. While a student is posting to friends, many of the sites are open to anyone browsing or searching. Be thoughtful about what is published. Do not disclose or use confidential information or that of any other person or agency. Respect HIPAA regulations. ***Do not post any information about your clinical rotations or clients in any online forum or webpage.***
3. If individual identifies themselves as a ETSU nursing student in any online forum and/or use their ETSU email address, students need to ensure that it is clear that they are not speaking for ETSU, and what they say is representative of their individual personal views and opinions and not necessarily the views and opinions of ETSU. By virtue of self-identifying as part of ETSU in such a network, students connect themselves to, and reflect upon, ETSU faculty, staff and even patients and donors.
4. Be thoughtful about how you present yourself. ETSU nursing students are preparing for a career providing services to the public. ETSU and future employers hold you to a high standard of behavior. By identifying yourself as a ETSU student through postings and personal web pages, you are connected to your colleagues, clinical agencies, and even clients/patients. Ensure that content associated with you is consistent with your professional goals. If you identify yourself as a ETSU nursing student, ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself to colleagues, clients, and potential employers. Remember that all content contributed on all platforms becomes immediately searchable and can be immediately shared with everyone. This content instantly leaves the contributing individual students control forever.
5. Respect your audience and your coworkers. ETSU's students, faculty, and clients have a diverse set of customs, values, and points of view. Respect others and self. This includes not only the obvious (no ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity, pornographic images etc.) but also proper

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consideration of privacy and of topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory—such as politics and religion. Remember, what may be humorous to some, may be offensive to others. Civility is an important component of on-line communication as well.

6. If someone or some group offers to pay a student for participating in an online forum in their ETSU nursing student role or offers advertising for pay and/or for endorsement, this could constitute a conflict of interest and ETSU policies and guidelines apply.
7. If someone from the media or press contacts students about posts made in online forums that relates to ETSU nursing in any way, students should alert the dean of Nursing to seek assistance prior to responding.

National Council of State Boards of Nursing (2012) guidelines regarding Social Media also apply to ETSU nursing students. Nursing students shall follow all guidelines below in preparation for entering the professional workforce.

1. Nurses must recognize that they have an ethical and legal obligation to maintain patient privacy and confidentiality at all times.
2. Nurses must not transmit by way of any electronic media **any patient-related information or image**.
3. Nurses must not share, post, or otherwise disseminate any information about a patient or information gained in the nurse-patient relationship with anyone.
4. Nurses must not identify patient by name or post or publish information that may lead to the identification of a patient. Information that leads to inference of patient identify is prohibited.
5. Limiting access to postings through privacy settings is not sufficient to ensure privacy.
6. Nurses must not refer to patients in a disparaging manner, even if they are not identified.
7. Nurses must not take photos or videos of patients on personal devices, including mobile phones.
8. Nurses must maintain professional boundaries in the use of electronic media.
9. Nurses must consult employer policies or an appropriate leader within the organization for guidance regarding work-related (or school related) postings.
10. Nurses must promptly report any identified breach of confidentiality or privacy.
11. Nurses must be aware of and comply with employer policies regarding the use of employer-owned computers, cameras, and other electronic devices and the use of personal devices in the workplace.
12. Nurses must not make disparaging remarks about employers, co-workers, (peers, or faculty members). (A0711; rvsd120312AM, 051215; RVWD012714CM)

### **Social Media Guidelines Specific to ETSU Nursing Students**

All ETSU Nursing students shall refrain from posting any school, clinical or patient information. Any student violating this policy will receive an “F” for the clinical course.