

**Bradley University**  
**College of Education and Health Science**  
**Department of Nursing (DON)**

**Policy:** Use of Social Media Policy

**Purpose:** Nursing students need to recognize that they are contributing to the global image of nursing when they post to social networking sites. Even when nursing students intend for social media postings to be “private” the concept of privacy does not exist in social networking. Anything posted to a social media site is potentially open to public viewing creating potential unintended outcomes. Deleting content never removes the material from potential internet access. Nursing students must maintain strict adherence to standards of professionalism when posting to social media sites.

Social media as a form of communication can be an effective way to promote nursing and have a positive effect on the lives of patients and their families. However, appropriate use of social media is essential to protect the student nurse and/or patients.

Social media is defined as internet web-based platforms where individuals can generate content that creates a dialogue which is easily accessible to other users or often times open to public view. Social media platforms may include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Blogging – Blogger, LiveJournal, Xanga
- Instagram
- Microblogging – Dailybooth, Foursquare, Google Buzz, Posterous, Tumblr, Twitter
- Postcasting – Blubrry
- Snapchat
- Social Networking – Bebo, Facebook, Google+, LinkedIn, MySpace, Orkut
- Social News Sharing – Digg, Reddit
- Social Bookmarking/social tagging – Delicious, Diigo, Google Reader, StumbleUpon
- Video Hosting – Vimeo, YouTube

**Procedure:**

**Privacy and Confidentiality**

Nursing students must maintain strict adherence to privacy and confidentiality standards and should be familiar with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), including, but not limited to, the 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. Student nurses have a duty to report any breach of confidentiality or privacy, either of their own volition or by others, to the appropriate department of nursing faculty member.

Inadvertent or intentional breaches of confidentiality can occur through comments about patients and/or patient family members, posting stories about what happened in clinical or classroom experiences. Posting a comment to another person’s post that may identify a patient or family

member is also a potential breach, so while someone else may be originator of the post, your comment links you to the violation as well.

Photography of any kind using any device in or around a patient care area is strictly prohibited. Students who are found to have violated HIPAA privacy rules are subject to immediate dismissal from the Nursing program, subject to the guidelines of the Bradley University Student Handbook, and are subject to fines from governmental regulatory authorities.

### **Resources**

Students are strongly encouraged to go to the following resources and familiarize themselves with the content:

ANA Social Networking Principles

NCSBN Social Media Guidelines

NCSBN Social Media Brochure