Social Networking Protocol and Talking Points for Nursing Students Boise State University School of Nursing

What is On-line Social Networking

On-line social networking refers to a community of individuals where people connect and communicate with others via the Internet. Social networking allows people to meet and correspond with others, stay in touch, and share experiences and topics of interest. Examples of on-line social networking sites include MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, and Classmates.

Benefits of On-line Social Networking for College Students

On-line social networking sites can be helpful to students by assisting them in making connections with classmates with similar interests and goals, formulating study groups, and provides a way to meet other students, staff, and faculty. These sites also offer students the opportunity to create an image or a profile. Profiles often contain information about the user as well as photos, blog entries, and a section dedicated to communication exchanges with friends and other users. To a certain extent, profiles reveal what students care about and provide a window into a student’s interests and lifestyle.

Purpose and Issues to Consider

The purpose of this protocol is to inform students about the appropriate use of on-line social networking sites as it relates to professional conduct expected of nursing students at Boise State University (BSU). On-line social networking postings in relation to students, faculty, administrators, and future employers must be evaluated in accordance with codes of conduct and standards of professional behavior expected of nursing students.

Bear in mind that people have been denied employment because of information posted on social networking sites. In some cases, legal charges have been filed against a student for defamation of character and/or invasion of privacy.

While the School of Nursing (SON) cannot prevent reference to students, faculty, administrators, and other persons associated with the BSU nursing program on social networking sites; the SON may however, provide guidance regarding postings associated in any way with the SON and its constituents.
Students are asked to refrain from posting insulting, disrespectful, or disparaging comments about any member of the Boise State University campus community. Nursing students must adhere to the BSU Statement of Shared Values [http://osrr.boisestate.edu/sharedvalues/](http://osrr.boisestate.edu/sharedvalues/), the BSU Student Code of Conduct [http://osrr.boisestate.edu/scp-codeofconduct/](http://osrr.boisestate.edu/scp-codeofconduct/), the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics [http://www.nursingworld.org/](http://www.nursingworld.org/), and other similar codes which include policies governing veracity (truth telling) and non-malfeasance (do no harm). These codes and standards can be applied to classroom and hallway discussions, virtual learning environments, text messaging, and on-line social networking sites.

In addition, patient confidentiality laws (e.g. HIPAA Privacy Rule) forbid any release of information related to patients (even if names are not used). Confidentiality also extends to families, health care workers, and organizations. In some cases, legal charges may be filed against a student for defamation of character and/or invasion of privacy.


Because on-line social networking involves many factors, the BSU SON recommends the following guidelines if you are experiencing a conflict and/or have questions about the use of social media:

**Guidelines for On-line Social Networking in the SON at Boise State University**

1. If you are having a conflict with a faculty member, student, or administrator, and are unable to work it out with your course or clinical faculty member, you could:
   
   a. Talk with an advisor/mentor
   
   b. Talk with the a member of the SON administrative team
   
   c. Talk with counseling services: [http://healthservices.boisestate.edu/counseling/index.cfm](http://healthservices.boisestate.edu/counseling/index.cfm)
   
   d. Talk with specially trained BSU students who can help by listening, problem solving, and providing skill training: [http://sspa.boisestate.edu/conflictcoaching/](http://sspa.boisestate.edu/conflictcoaching/)

2. Remember we are all representing our profession, integrity, and Boise State University.