

# SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

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Social media and technology-driven applications for online storage and sharing are internet-based tools designed to create a highly accessible information highway. They are a powerful and far-reaching means of communication that may have a significant impact on a student's professional reputation and status. Examples include, but are not limited to LinkedIn, X, Meta or Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, Reddit, PA Forums, Google Cloud, iCloud, and Dropbox.

Students are liable for anything they post to social media and storage/sharing sites. The same laws, professional expectations, and guidelines are expected to be followed as are required in personal interactions. The following guidelines have been developed for student conduct on social media and in using the internet to protect the student's reputation and the reputation of the School and to comply with privacy and confidentiality laws.

- Students must take responsibility and use good judgment. Incomplete, inaccurate, threatening, provocative, or harassing posts or use of profanity on postings is strictly prohibited. It is inappropriate to use social media sites as a venue for venting.

*Example:* A student posts on their Facebook page frustration with a course instructor (or preceptor) after they have been given feedback. The instructor is not identified by name but is identified by title (my course instructor, or my preceptor) with negative or derogatory comments.

*Example:* A student posts on their Instagram page unflattering observations about an unnamed fellow classmate or group of students with veiled predictions of their failure in a course or on a rotation.

- Students should think before posting. A student's reputation may be permanently affected by the internet and email archives.
- Students are strictly prohibited from using social networking during class, school activities, and clinical time to respect work and school commitments.
- Students must apply all HIPAA laws to all social networking and internet storage/sharing sites. It is the utmost priority to protect patient privacy by not sharing information or photographs.

*Example of a privacy breach:* A student posts heartfelt concern on their Facebook page for a patient they are caring for. The patient is not identified by name, EMR number, or date of birth. However, the type of treatment, prognosis, and the time of treatment is provided, and the personal characteristics of the patient are described making the patient identifiable.

- Students must protect their own privacy so as to not let outsiders see their personal information.
- Students must identify themselves, and their role in the School and use a disclaimer stating that their views are that of their own and do not reflect the views of the School if they state a connection to the School of PA Studies at MBKU.
- Students must follow all laws governing copyright and fair use of copyrighted material.
- Students must consult their faculty advisor or the School Director if they have any questions regarding the appropriateness of social networking or internet storage site/sharing use.

- Technology is always advancing in the sharing and storing of data. The student is responsible for how and what they store or share. This applies to virtual and physical technology.

Failure to follow the above-stated guidelines may be considered a breach of appropriate professional behavior and be subject to discipline, up to, and including dismissal from the School.

Students may not communicate with a member of the media or an outside source attempting to gather information regarding the School of PA Studies at MBKU through social networks. Refer all questions regarding program information, policies, and procedures to the School Program Director. Questions regarding MBKU should be referred to the MBKU Office of University Advancement.