



University of Saskatchewan College of Nursing Social Media Guidelines

Purpose

The University of Saskatchewan (USask) College of Nursing social media guidelines provide recommendations and guidance for College of Nursing students, faculty, and staff for professional, appropriate, responsible, and safe use of social media. The intent of these guidelines is not disciplinary in nature; however, there are College of Nursing policies referenced below that should be noted.

Definitions

‘Social media’ describes the online and mobile tools people use to share opinions, information, experiences, images and video or audio clips and includes websites and applications used for social networking.

Common sources of social media include, but are not limited to, social networking sites such as Facebook and LinkedIn, blogs (personal, professional and those published anonymously), and microblogs such as X, Threads, and BlueSky, content-sharing websites, such as YouTube and Instagram, and discussion forums and message boards.

Six P’s of Social Media Use

Social media use is continuously expanding in personal and professional lives. In order to balance engagement and fun, while at the same time adhering to professional standards of practice, keep the Six P’s of Social Media Use in mind when posting online.

- Professional: remain professional at all times;
- Positive: keep posts positive. Express contrary/ opposing opinions without being disrespectful.
- Patient/person-free: keep posts patient and/or person free;
- Protect yourself and others: protect the nursing profession, and the professional reputation of yourself and others;
- Privacy: keep your personal and professional life separate, respect your privacy and that of others, and
- Pause before you post: consider personal and professional implications; avoid posting in haste or anger; consult a communications professional if you have questions about the content of your posts.

Scope of These Guidelines

These guidelines apply to all undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, contract teachers, and staff within the University of Saskatchewan College of Nursing.



GENERAL SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

Confidentiality and Privacy

- Use good ethical judgement when posting about patients, students, staff, faculty, colleagues or educational experiences. All personal information must be protected. Do not post content about patients or discussing patients online.
- Nursing students, faculty, staff, and contract teachers should keep their privacy settings high to limit public access to personal information. The exception to high privacy settings is when an account is used for professional or educational purpose; in this event it is still advised to limit personal information as much as possible.

Professionalism

- Professionalism should be upheld in the same manner online as in person. All information posted online becomes public information.
- The tone and content of electronic conversations and presence should remain professional at all times.
- Keep your personal life and professional life separate on social media.
- Ensure content does not include or amplify biases and complies with human rights obligations.

Sharing Information about the University, Hospitals, or Other Institutions

- Sharing information concerning the University of Saskatchewan, hospitals or other institutions must be in compliance with the current USask, hospital or institutional policies with respect to the conditions of use of technology and of any proprietary information.
- Always refer to and consult with the appropriate resources of the College, University, Hospitals, or institution when sharing information.
- When you are outside of the classroom setting, you are a representative of the College of Nursing. Your words and actions reflect the integrity of the college.

Accountability

- Use of social media should not interfere with academic or professional obligations.
- Be prepared to take accountability for your content – make sure it is factual, legal, ethical and compliant with the terms of use where you are posting.
- When posting information that includes reference to another person, ensure the people in posts or graphics have provided their consent to be included in the posting.
- Everything posted on the internet is there forever. What you say is a reflection of who you are. You are accountable for your thoughts, words, photos, videos, etc. and how they impact you and your career.



Responsibilities

- You are responsible for the content and posts that you put on social media and should be mindful of the risks, as anything posted or communicated electronically is traceable, even if posted anonymously and should consider the permanency of the material published online.
- The same goes for content and posts on third party social media sites or sites you manage (i.e. professional association pages). You are responsible for the content and posts and should be mindful of the risks.

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN COLLEGE OF NURSING SPECIFIC GUIDELINES AND EXAMPLES

Photo Submissions

- When submitting clinical photos, students must be in proper uniform (white or green scrub top, green pants, proper footwear). Students must: be wearing minimal jewelry, have long hair tied back, and no stethoscopes draped around the neck. Posing must be professional and avoid the use of body language (i.e. no peace symbols).
- When submitting photos from community clinicals, conferences, or community events, clothing in the photo must be professional in appearance - avoid clothing with excessive rips, tears, wrinkles, short shorts/skirts, crop tops, or tight/revealing clothes.
- No confidential or patient information may be seen anywhere in a post (photo or video).
- Take photos and videos in appropriate locations, i.e. outside, in front of a building sign, in front of a wall that **DOES NOT** have patient information on it, etc.
- Must have verbal or written permission from everyone in the photo to share the photo.
- If an agency or institution requires permission for photos or videos to be taken at the facility, written permission from the agency or institution or a representative from the agency or institution (i.e. contract teacher) must be granted to share the photo.
- It is assumed photos shared with the College of Nursing for social media posting may also be used for other promotional material (i.e. banners, printed material). Please ensure all individuals in pictures or postings are aware before submitting a photo to the USask Nursing social accounts. Please indicate if the photo(s) is/are to be used only on a social media platform when submitting the photos.
- When submitting photos, a proper, professional caption must be included highlighting the location, clinical number (if applicable), contract teacher (if applicable), and students FIRST names only.
- Ensure you are following the College of Nursing student [Mobile Device Usage in Clinical Settings and the College of Nursing Professional Appearance policies](#) (PAWS login required).



Student Associations

College of Nursing student groups are an extension of the college within the University of Saskatchewan community. All events, clothing orders, etc., where student groups are involved, are representations of USask College of Nursing. Posting on social media promoting these things must adhere to the following:

- No inclusion of alcohol/substances on event promotions. If an event is hosted at a 19+ establishment the term “19+ event” may be used on promotions.
- No inclusion of inappropriate language or attire should be included on the promotion.
- Please give a minimum of one week’s notice if you want an event, clothing sale, etc., shared on College of Nursing Social Media accounts.
- When using the College of Nursing logo in graphics, adhere to the [University of Saskatchewan Logo and Secondary Logo Use Policy](#). If you have any questions please contact the [College of Nursing Digital Marketing and Communications Specialist](#).
- Be mindful of the content you share on a USask Nursing associated account. Your account is a representation of USask College of Nursing, and in turn you should only share content that is in accordance with the values of the University of Saskatchewan and College of Nursing – this includes sharing current events, political content, etc.
- When posting on a student association social media account, remember you are representing the College of Nursing and the University of Saskatchewan. Be prepared to take accountability for the content you post.

Posting About the College of Nursing on Personal Accounts

- When referring to the College of Nursing, especially in biographies, refer to the organization as USask College of Nursing or USask Nursing, never U of S.
- What is said online, even privately, can be captured, shared, and brought to the attention of the College of Nursing. Keep in mind criticisms and opinions can be passed on to academic leaders.
- Do not post content about patients, with patients, or discussing patients. The same goes for peers, professors, preceptors, colleagues, etc. Keep in mind the [College of Nursing student Confidentiality policy](#) (PAWS login required).
- Do not share academic related information on social media. For example, sharing test questions on social media is considered academic misconduct.
- When sharing content about clinical experiences on personal social media pages, remember you are representing the College of Nursing. Students should be in proper uniform (white or green scrub top, green pants, proper footwear) and posed in a professional manner.



College of Nursing Social Media Accounts

- When tagging the College of Nursing in posts, permission is assumed for the College to share the post and content on the College of Nursing social media accounts.
- Content that is approved for promotional pieces (i.e., news stories, advertisements, radio ad quotes) in full or abbreviated form will be considered approved for use on College of Nursing social media channels.
- Any photos taken at College of Nursing gatherings (classes, conferences, meetings, etc.) are considered approved for use for social media. When pictures are taken at events, participants will be notified either verbally, within the invite, or with event signage that photos will be taken. If you have concern about photos being taken of you during events, please notify the person taking photos at the event to make the photographer aware you are not willing to be in photographs.
- If you have any concerns about a photo of you being used on the College of Nursing social media channels, please direct message us on the social media account or email the [College of Nursing Digital Marketing and Communications Specialist](#).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Reporting Social Media Concerns

If you have questions about content you are considering posting or if you are concerned about something posted on social media, whether it be the College of Nursing social media accounts or a personal page, please contact the College of Nursing [Senior Marketing and Communications Specialist](#) to discuss the manner.

Links to Social Media Policies

- [International Council of Nurses \(ICN\)](#)
- [College of Registered Nurses of Saskatchewan \(CRNS\)](#)
- [Canadian Nurses Protective Society \(CNPS\) – InfoLAW: Social Media](#)
- [University of Saskatchewan Social Media Tips and Best Practice Guidelines](#) (PAWS login required)

College of Nursing Contact

For more information or for clarification on these guidelines, please contact the College of Nursing [Digital Marketing and Communications Specialist](#).