

 University College of the North Policies & Procedures Manual	# Pages: 2	Policy Number: AC-03-13
	Approved by: Learning Council	
Section: Academic - Program Title: Faculty of Health Use of Social Media	Effective Date: June 11, 2024	
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POLICY STATEMENT

All students, staff, and instructors of any Faculty of Health program are expected to maintain an acceptable standard of practice with regard to professional boundaries.

PURPOSE OF POLICY

To ensure Faculty of Health students are acting professionally and delivering care within acceptable guidelines as determined by the Personal Health Information Act (PHIA) and the applicable program code of ethics and standards of practice and conduct.

For example, Diploma in Practical Nursing (DPN) students are guided by the College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Manitoba (CLPNM) Code of Ethics, the DPN Code of Conduct, and the CLPNM Standards of Practice and Conduct; and the Primary Care Paramedic (PCP) students are guided by the College of Paramedics of Manitoba (CPMB) Code of Ethics, the PCP Code of Conduct, and the CPMB Scope and Standards of Practice.

All healthcare professionals, are held to a high standard of confidentiality with respect to all patient information. Professional practice standards regarding confidentiality, therapeutic boundaries, and professional image are required when health professionals use social media in connection with their professional activities.

All health professionals are required to conduct themselves in a professional manner when engaging in social media. Online videos, pictures, comments, and text messages can be taken out of context or misconstrued in a manner that would reflect negatively on the Faculty of Health student, the program, and the profession.

Unprofessional images, breaches of boundaries, and defamatory comments are extremely difficult to remove from the public domain once posted or disseminated electronically.

PROCEDURES

Use of Social Media

1. Before sharing personal views, information, and images through social media or electronic communication, Faculty of Health students, staff and instructors must consider the potential impact.
2. Before posting, replying, or sending any information, Faculty of Health students, staff and instructors will ask:
 - Can this be taken out of context?
 - Can these images or words reflect negatively on me personally and professionally?
 - Can these images or words cause someone to lose confidence in my profession?
 - Could these images or words be considered a violation of my professional standards in any other way (e.g., could they be interpreted as discriminatory)?
 - If the student replies 'yes' to any one of these questions, the content is not appropriate and should not be posted.
3. Faculty of Health instructors, staff, and students will refrain from using social media platforms for coursework. Students who include particulars of coursework or clinical information on any social media platform may be debarred.
4. Faculty of Health instructors and staff will not interact with students via any social media platforms.
5. When engaging with social media and other forms of electronic communication, instructor and students are required, at all times, to comply with the CLPNM's Social Media Practice Direction or the CPMB's Social Media and Social Networking Practice Expectation.
6. Faculty of Health instructors and students are accountable for conducting themselves in a professional manner that respects the health professional-client relationship, fosters trust, promotes respect for the profession, and protects clients' rights to privacy and confidentiality.
7. Faculty of Health instructors and students must safeguard the boundaries between a professional therapeutic relationship and a non-professional personal relationship. Ways to prevent boundary violation include:
 - Not posting pictures of yourself in a clinical environment.
 - Not revealing personal contact details to your clients (cell or home phone number, email address, etc.).
 - Not accepting or requesting friend requests from clients on any social media sites.
8. Faculty of Health instructors and students will not involve themselves in harassing, bullying, or making negative comments to or about peers, staff, colleagues and employers.

Related Policies

AC-01-06 Academic and Disciplinary Appeals

AC-01-32 Unsafe Clinical Practice

AC-01-39 Faculty of Health Debarment Policy