



COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

INDIANA UNIVERSITY NORTHWEST

The CHHS recognizes and respects students' first amendment rights to speak out about issues they deem important. This is an especially important right at a university, where diversity of thought and constructive criticism and feedback are valuable in maintaining quality and relevance. However, because of the nature of the health and human services professions and the intimate nature of their practitioners' relationships with the public, certain conduct is the antithesis of behavior required to practice in those professions. While constructive feedback regarding policies or practices in the CHHS and the university are allowable and even encouraged, public comments, pictures, or depictions that are meant to degrade or humiliate another, or undermine the public trust in a profession for no legitimate purpose are considered unprofessional and unacceptable. Likewise, comments, pictures, or depictions that invade the privacy of patients or colleagues, or that undermine their dignity are unprofessional, unacceptable and in some cases, illegal. It is within this context that the following social media policy has been created.

Professionalism and the Use of Social Media Postings within social network sites are subject to the same professional standards as any other personal interactions. The permanence and written nature of these postings make them more subject to scrutiny than most other forms of communication. The description of professional behavior can be found in the CHHS Code of Professional Ethics and Conduct

(http://www.iun.edu/~nwacadem/chhs/pdfs/chhs_code_conduct.pdf), which is signed by all students. Student conduct is also governed by the Indiana University Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct

(<http://www.iu.edu/~code/code/index.shtml>). Students are subject to disciplinary actions within the College for comments and pictures that are either unprofessional or violate patient privacy. Excerpting from the CHHS *Code of Professional Ethics and Conduct*, "The IU Northwest CHHS reserves the right to initiate action and impose sanctions for any conduct that...is determined to be a violation of the Code, regardless of whether the violation occurs on or off the premises of the school, or at field placement sites."

Definitions

- **Social networking site**: spaces in the internet where users can create a profile and connect that profile to others (individuals or entities) to create a personal network including, but not limited to Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.
- **Weblog**: a website, usually in the form of an online journal, maintained by an individual with regular commentary on any number of subjects. Can incorporate text, audio, video clips, and any other types of media.

Effective April 4, 2012