

## Social Media Guidelines

In the age of technology and information, social media (Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, YouTube, blogs, texting, etc.) can be helpful in building connections with colleagues and maintaining relationships with friends and family. However, the boundary between personal and professional matters is significant. Based on professional standards and the NASW Code of Ethics, social workers need to continually assess the implications/complications of using social media. Students enrolled in the Social Work Program are expected to behave in an ethical manner, in accordance with the NASW Code of Ethics and the UMBC Academic Integrity Policy.

If the field placement agency already has a policy on social media use, this policy must be shared with social work students as part of the orientation to the site. Even without a formal policy, the agency should have clear guidelines and expectations for students regarding social media use at the agency and at home.

The following are suggested guidelines for the use of social media by social work students:

- “Google” yourself to see what information is available on you
- Review and delete inappropriate posts, tweets, blogs, pictures, videos, etc.
- Be cautious in using online dating services
- Be very select about whom you friend, follow, etc.
- Be very select about what you “like,” as this may be viewed as a reflection of you
- Use the highest privacy settings when available for all social media sites
- Do not “look up”, friend, or follow past or present clients on social media
- Be cautious in revealing personal information such as: DOB, phone number, address, family members, place of employment, etc.
- Consider developing a professional media site such as LinkedIn
- Do not share client information via email or text
- Recognize that even “private” social media sites may be compromised and that information that has “gone viral” is not retrievable
- Be very cautious about what you share (in any format) about faculty, field agencies/instructors, peers, co-workers, employers, etc.

In the event that a student’s social media profile, linkage, or behavior is considered in poor professional practice or an ethical violation, the student will be subject to a review by the Associate Dean and the Assistant Dean of Field Education.