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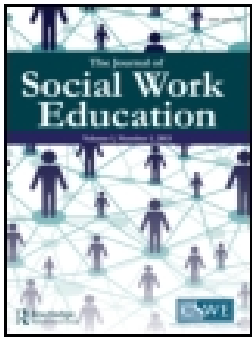
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Social Media Policy in Social Work Education: A Review and Recommendations

Hannah E. Karpman and James Drisko

ABSTRACT

Although social media use has grown dramatically, program policies have not kept pace. Some programs now state that student social media activities have led to professional conduct reviews and may violate ethical standards. This article reviews current social media policies and conceptualizes their key elements. A review of current social media policies is reported, pointing to the need for further policy development. Six domains of a social media policy are identified: understanding social media, ethical and legal obligations, implications of one's personal and professional online presence, institutional obligations to the program and agency, productivity implications, and possible consequences for violations of the policy. A model social media policy is detailed, and unresolved issues are identified.

ARTICLE HISTORY

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In an increasingly connected world, students interact with each other, with faculty, and with their communities online through social media sites. Social media (2015) include “websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking.” Social media formats include social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter), blogs and content communities (e.g., Flickr, Tumblr), virtual game worlds (e.g., MMORPG), and virtual social worlds (e.g., Second Life). These sites combine text, images, audio, and video. Two key social processes characterize social media use across formats: self-presentation and self-disclosure (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Although potentially very useful in social work education (Robbins & Singer, 2014), these public social processes can pose a challenge for new social workers developing their professional identities. The Council on Social Work Education's (CSWE, 2015) *Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards*, Competency 1, states that “social workers understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice” and that they “use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes” (p. 7). Therefore, social work programs need to educate students on the appropriate professional use of social media.

Adults ages 18–25 use social media at the highest rates, and women use at higher rates than men. Social media use drops as income rises. Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn are the primary sites visited. Those who use social networking sites often use more than one and usually check them at least daily (Duggan & Smith, 2013). Based on age and gender, social work students are highly likely to be users of social media (CSWE, 2013). Giordano and Giordano (2011) and Jain (2009) state that graduate students, health professionals, and practitioners are highly engaged in social media use.

Many scholars emphasize the educational benefits of social media use (Casey, 2013; Kivunja, 2015; Langmia, Tyree, O'Brien, & Sturgis, 2014). Other scholars point to its professional benefits (Belangee, Bluvshstein, & Haugen, 2015; Jiahang & Greenhow, 2015; Maloney, Moss, & Ilic, 2014).

On the other hand, social media may generate ethical and legal dilemmas for practicing social workers, social work students, and social work programs (Duncan-Daston, Hunter-Sloan, & Fullmer, 2013; Fang, Mishna, Zhang, Van Wert, & Bogo, 2014; Halabuza, 2014; Judd & Johnston, 2012). For

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example, students sharing anecdotes about their field placements may breach client confidentiality (Robb, 2011). This concern has ethical and legal dimensions under current health care laws. It also has ethical and practical dimensions as such postings may undermine client confidence in the student and in the placement agency.

Some programs informally report that students post critical and potentially damaging statements about peers, classroom instructors, and field instructors on publicly accessible social media accounts (Halabuza, 2014; Robb, 2011). This behavior may violate professional ethics in regard to fair and respectful treatment of colleagues. It also raises important and as yet unresolved legal questions about the limitations on free speech. Students have been sued by instructors who believe the student's online postings were false and defamatory (Sater, 2014). Instructors and institutions have also been sued by students when disciplined for their social media postings (Associated Press, 2007). The students claimed they were exercising their right to freedom of speech. Professional ethics, supporting the dignity and worth of all people, may conflict with unrestrained freedom of speech. However, current case law does not appear to limit professional ethics as standards of conduct for professionals.

Further, it is unclear whether there are meaningful legal differences between postings made by an individual using a personal account but describing professional activities versus postings using institutional (program or field placement) accounts. However, programs may establish policies to limit social media use by students, including guidelines for using the institution's name, logo, or other identifying features and its electronic resources. Appropriate use policies for electronic resources are common in higher education. Researchers have emphasized social work educators' role in teaching and regulating social media conduct (Fang et al., 2014; Judd & Johnston, 2012; Voshel & Wesala, 2015). Yet policy development and case law lag far behind current reports of student social media activities and program concerns.

Gagnon and Sabus (2015) identify four levels of social media regulation: platform terms of service, professional standards, organizational policy, and individual best practices. Although social media platforms must comply with government legislation (e.g., distribution of child pornography can be prosecuted regardless of platform terms), their owners have some freedom to create unique terms of service, and their regulations vary. Some ban only illegal content, whereas others (such as Facebook) ban content they deem inappropriate, such as unauthorized advertising. Professional standards vary by field; for example, the American Medical Association's (2012) opinion on social media emphasizes professionalism and appropriate boundaries but does not provide site-specific guidelines. Voshel and Wesala (2015) state that the National Association of Social Workers' (NASW) Code of Ethics was last revised in 2008 and does not provide usage guidelines for many of today's popular websites. The document on standards for technology and social work practice of the NASW and Association of Social Work Boards (2005) is not widely known and addresses direct practice rather than use of social media. The NASW and the CSWE are working to update their standards (Hobdy & Barsky, 2014). Finally, individual professionals, agencies, or educational institutions may develop their own policies and standards for social workers and social media behavior (Gagnon & Sabus, 2015).

In education, policies to govern social media use have not kept up with the proliferation of use. Few schools or municipalities have technology policies that address social media for students in grades K to 12 (Ahn, Bivona, & DiScala, 2011). Although most colleges and universities actively use social media to recruit and research students, only 44% had policies to govern use among students and faculty or staff (Barnes & Lescault, 2011). Medical education and pharmacy scholars have clearly identified a need for "e-professionalism" (Cain, 2011; Casey, 2013; Jain, 2009; Ness et al., 2013). Kaczmarczyk et al. (2013) define e-professionalism as "attitudes and behaviors that reflect traditional professionalism paradigms but are manifested through digital media" (p. 164). This could make a program liable for failure to educate students about social media use and to regulate it.

Although many employers have social media policies, these typically offer guidance for people who are specifically empowered to speak for the institution rather than to a wider range of employees and interns. Risk management is a key focus. Further, there are social media guidelines

for faculty, staff, and students at some institutions that typically encourage respect and general ethical behavior (honesty, fairness, and accuracy). Such guidelines may also address legal issues such as copyright concerns. However, such institutional-level guidelines do not specifically address issues of social work values and ethics or social work practice.

The nature of clinician-client relationships makes e-professionalism essential for social work students (Fang et al., 2014; Halabuza, 2014; Voshel & Wesala, 2015). This article examines how social work programs' social media policies can model this professionalism. We seek to identify and conceptualize current social media policies, evaluate the strengths and limitations of current policies, and better conceptualize and identify core content to guide the creation or modification of social media policies for schools of social work.

Literature review

There is some literature on the ethical use of social media in social work (Halabuza, 2014; Judd & Johnston, 2012; Reamer, 2011, 2013; Voshel & Wesala, 2015). Mukherjee and Clark (2012) explored social work student's perceptions of their activities in social media and concluded they are not connecting these activities to the standards and practices of the profession. Sixty-nine percent of their sample posted inappropriate pictures or comments, 72% were not using security settings, and 83% said they would accept a friend request from a client. Mukherjee and Clark's study suggests social media policies are needed in social work education, a finding Fang et al. (2014), Judd and Johnston (2012), and Voshel and Wesala (2015) all affirm.

Duncan-Daston et al. (2013) identified the aspects of social work education that may be affected by social media. They concluded that social media has an impact on pedagogy, student-faculty interactions, and ethical reasoning. One might add that it can influence student-to-student interactions, student-client interactions, and relationships between field sites and educational institutions. Duncan-Daston et al. also note, "Social work education needs to prepare students more proactively for professional life in the current context" (p. 42). Along these lines, Kimball and Kim (2013) argue that social media users need to create "virtual boundaries" (p. 1) and intentional online personas, and recommend professional guidelines toward this end. Kimball and Kim suggest five questions for professionals to consider: What information do you want to share? Why do you want to share it? Who needs to see it? Where do you want to share it? and How does the NASW Code of Ethics or other organizational policy guide sharing this information? Note that these useful recommendations omit explicit attention to legal obligations and assume that social workers fully understand ethical social media use. Further, they make no specific mention of agency or institutional policies. A more thorough conceptualization of the elements and content of guidelines is needed for social work education and practice in online environments.

Fang et al. (2014) emphasize integrating social media training into social work curricula. At their institution, they developed a presentation on social media ethics for incoming students. Their presentation covered the benefits and challenges of social media use and concluded with the following concrete recommendations: maximizing one's online privacy settings, thinking carefully about how and when to allow others access to one's personal profiles, carefully considering the costs and benefits of sharing any given information, distinguishing between personal and professional activities on social media, and maintaining appropriate boundaries when interacting with clients online. Other researchers (Judd & Johnston, 2012; Voshel & Wesala, 2015) recommend for schools to follow the NASW Code of Ethics closely in developing their own social media policies. Yet Voshel and Wesala (2015) recognize that the NASW's policies are dated and that organizations must consider emerging technologies. They recommend that guidelines address the use of social media during work hours, constructing a professional identity online, boundaries between personal and professional activities (and their inevitable blurring), client confidentiality, and interactions with clients on social media.

In the medical education literature, Cain (2011) suggests four core elements of social media policies. First, to protect the reputation of the institution, policies must detail who may speak for the

institution and how to distinguish solely personal communications. Second, the privacy of clients and confidential business practices must be protected. Third, social media use is permissible only during nonwork hours and should not interfere with work activities. Fourth, several general concerns extend to social media use: Institutional policies apply to social media communications, individuals are responsible for all social media posts and should not expect privacy, and there may be consequences for violating policies.

Current online social media policies

We wondered how well existing social media policies from social work programs address these policy recommendations and if additional specific elements might be useful to address. To learn about current social work program policies, we completed a review of online, publicly available, social media policies from social work programs. Specifically, a Google search for “social work” + “social media policy” together generated about 168,000 results. We analyzed the first 15 pages and found only six social media policies specifically from social work programs (Indiana, Michigan, North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Smith, Wayne State, and Wisconsin–Madison). Another 11 were university-level policies but not specific to a social work program (Alaska, Capella, Colorado State, Houston, Huntington, Kentucky, Texas at Austin, Tennessee-Knoxville, Manchester [United Kingdom], Manitoba [Canada], and Eastern Washington).

A second Google search for “social work” + “social media guidelines” generated about 424,000 results. Nine more were social work-specific social media guidelines from Boise State, Carleton (Canada), Daemen, Grand Valley State, Maryland–Baltimore, Nyack, Simmons, Toronto (Canada), and York (Canada)], totaling 15 online social media policies or use guidelines. (Five of the six social media policies from social work programs were located again in the guidelines search). Twenty additional university-level policies totaled 35 policies or guidelines, although most did not mention a social work program specifically. In addition, the British Association of Social Workers (2012) and the Canadian Association of Social Workers (2014) posted national social media policies; many social service agencies have their own policies. With more than 750 accredited social work programs in the United States alone, it appears that many still need to develop social media policies.

Our review revealed many more guidelines and suggestions than formal, regulatory policies. The located sites typically offered guiding principles or usage tips. Most referred to the NASW *Code of Ethics* (2008) but not to its specific standards. Several sites directed students to refer to agency policies on social media, and some addressed use of social media during work hours. Overall, these guidelines promoted social media use yet were not regulatory in that there were no clear consequences for violation of the policy.

A few social work policies offered very clear guidelines or suggested steps to manage social media presence such as “Google yourself” or “clear up online dirt.” Some sites provided preliminary direction regarding how to review one’s privacy settings.

The literature identifies a need for clear education about professional presence in an online environment and clear guiding policies for social work education. The content analysis indicates that most social work program policies are partial and do not effectively educate and guide student social media use. Programs should have a clear policy that educates and regulates use of social media in professional contexts. In addition to social media policies, this content should be addressed in program curriculum regarding e-professionalism. What are the core elements of a social media policy for social work?

Recommended elements of a social media policy

We recommend that all social media policies should educate students and practitioners on professional presence in the online environment. Several domains are important to address. Reference to applicable laws and ethical guidelines are imperative. Further, policies should provide clear guidance

related to social work education and practice. Program social work policies should include a regulatory component with consequences for violations.

Expanding from Cain's (2011) focus on having authority to speak for the institution, respect for privacy and confidentiality, not interfering with work hours and duties, and the applicability of other institutional policies, we conceptualized six domains to address in a social work social media policy. Our proposed domains include Cain's four elements, add other educational elements and also address additional professional obligations. The additional domains in our model were identified in the wider social media literature (discussed previously) and integrated into a social work perspective. The six proposed domains include understanding social media, understanding one's ethical and legal obligations, the implications of one's personal and professional online presence, institutional obligations to the program and agency, productivity implications, and possible consequences for violations of the policy (see Table 1.)

The six domains cover a wide range of issues at the intersection of social work education, practice, and social media usage. Table 1 defines each domain and provides suggestions for elements to include within each domain while maintaining enough flexibility for each program to write a specific policy. Although the table provides a framework for developing a coherent and comprehensive social media policy, schools may choose to tailor the domains or their suggested elements based on their

Table 1. Domains and major elements of a social work social media policy.

Domain	Major Policy Elements
Understanding social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define social media. Offer examples of social media formats. Provide, or direct students to, guidance on setting and reviewing privacy settings for key social media formats.
Ethical and legal obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify the ethical obligations of the NASW (2008) <i>Code of Ethics</i>. Include or link to applicable elements of the NASW (2008) <i>Code of Ethics</i> (2008) and the NASW and Association of Social Work Boards (2005) <i>Standards for Technology and Social Work Practice</i> or similar professional policies in other countries. Clarify the legal obligations of client confidentiality under the Health Insurance Portability and Protection Act of 1996. Underscore the obligation of maintaining client confidentiality. Remind students they should not offer advice outside their areas of competence.
Personal and professional online presence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform students that posts are subject to copyright, slander, and libel laws. Remind students that posts are permanently available publicly and indexed by Google; deleting posts may not be possible. Direct students to review the privacy settings on their social media accounts. Encourage students to review their online presence by searching Google as if they were a client, colleague, or employer.
Institutional obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remind students that employers and clients may review their online presence. Schools should identify who is authorized to speak officially on behalf of the social work program and identify to whom students must apply to use the school's name in an online setting. Schools and agencies should identify who is authorized to speak officially on behalf of placement agencies. Schools should state that social media is not an appropriate forum for critique of social work programs, their faculty or field instructors, or field agencies. Schools should state that if a student's posts can be linked in any way to the field agency, students should not post anything potentially damaging to the organization or that violates agency policies. Schools should state that students are subject to whatever rules and regulations govern social media at their field placement agency. Schools should state that the social work program or field agency has the right to request or require removal of potentially damaging information.
Productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer students to the appropriate problem-solving process. Schools should clarify that any student social media use during classroom time should be class related or sanctioned. Schools should have policies that remind students that social media use during placement hours should be work related or sanctioned.
Consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specify the potential consequences for policy violations.

student population, specific field programs, program concentrations, or geographic locations. For instance, schools that focus on work with children and families may address specifically laws that govern privacy related to minors and children in child welfare custody. The table is not designed to be exhaustive but to function as a starting point to help program administrators develop a comprehensive social media policy to govern and guide their social work students.

First, social media polices should define social media and begin to educate students about social media use. They should offer examples of social media formats and point to resources for understanding and controlling privacy settings on such sites. An institution's online educational materials for students frequently offer such information. Excellent online sites are also available, such as that of the University of Texas at Austin (n.d.). Students need to learn how to find and manage privacy settings on key social media platforms. Privacy settings and other features of social media may also evolve over time, so repeat review of settings is recommended.

Second, students must understand their ethical and legal obligations as professional social workers. Although much of this content is addressed in the social work curriculum, some areas of social media use warrant particular attention. The NASW Code of Ethics establishes protections for privacy in communications with clients that are also required by federal law, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996. Section 2.01 of the *Code of Ethics* states that "social workers should treat colleagues with respect and should represent accurately and fairly the qualifications, views, and obligations of colleagues" and "should avoid unwarranted negative criticism of colleagues in communications with clients or with other professionals" (NASW, 2008). Such criticism is defined as wide ranging, including:

demeaning comments that refer to colleagues' level of competence or to individuals' attributes such as race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical disability. (NASW, 2008, Section 2.01)

Hasty social media comments about difficult clients, supervisors, instructors, or peers are all inappropriate. Social media policies should also inform students that their posts are subject to copyright, slander, and libel laws. Further, social media policies should remind students that they should not offer advice outside their areas of competence. Any state level licensing regulations could also be mentioned here.

Third, students should be prompted to review their personal and professional online presence, and to anticipate that field instructors, agency administrators, future employers, and current and future clients may access their social media postings. Students should be encouraged to view their online presence, as would a client or employer, and to manage their privacy settings and current available content through that lens. Students should be reminded that their social media posts are searchable and that it may not be possible to delete posted materials. Students' information is searchable at all times, and thus it is vital for them to understand that supervisors, clients, and colleagues may access their online presence at any point in time. Students should be reminded to think critically about visual images as well as written content.

Fourth, a comprehensive social media policy should remind students of their institutional obligations. Institutions should be broadly interpreted to include the educational institution as well as any field placement sites. In addition, federal and state institutions that govern or fund their placement sites (for instance, child welfare) may have additional regulations regarding use of social media. State or local funders may have their own guidelines regarding social media use. Schools should clearly state who is authorized to represent their institution on social media sites and to clarify the process for gaining permission to use the institution's name in a social media post. Students should be reminded that they have an obligation to use the formal problem-solving process of the institution (school or placement), and that social media is not a platform to address concerns about their program, faculty, or field supervisors. The policy should clearly articulate the right of field agencies to require adherence to their own social media policies and request or require the removal of a student's post should administrators deem it to be potentially damaging.

Fifth, social media policies should address the impact of use on productivity in the classroom and in the field. Students should be reminded that any use of social media should be work related or sanctioned if it occurs during class or field placement hours. Social media posts are often date and time stamped. Social media activity during field placement hours can generate conflict at the field site. In addition, the use of social media in the classroom should be similarly addressed, ensuring that such use is relevant to the content at hand.

Sixth, a social media policy should identify potential consequences for policy violations. This may include references to other policies or procedures in use by the institution or specific consequences determined by the institution.

An exemplar social media policy

The exemplar policy (see [Appendix A](#)) from the Smith College School for Social Work (2013) addresses the six elements described in the previous section. It is intended to be educational and to guide students regarding their ethical, legal, and professional obligations in social media usage. The policy addresses the six areas we have identified and is intended to be educational and regulatory. Additional exemplar policies are provided in [Appendix B](#).

Limitations to Smith's social media policy

Smith's social media policy addresses the six topics of concern identified in this article. Determining the boundaries (if any) that distinguish the use of personal social media accounts versus institutional accounts is not explicitly addressed in this policy. Our focus is on the content of social media policies, and it appears that the content of communications matters more than the electronic source of a publicly accessible communication. Many institutions have in place policies on the appropriate use of institutional technology that apply to social media use. Still, using a personal account to post content does not end one's professional ethical responsibilities nor potential legal obligations.

Students and practicing social workers have found many appropriate and valuable ways to use social media in their practice activities. Although such individual social media policies are beyond the scope of this article, social work practitioners may wish to develop their own social media policies and include them in their practice-based postings. Such policies are often more detailed than the institutional policy discussed here (Lannin & Scott, 2014). An example of such an individual practice-based policy is provided by psychologist Keely Kolmes (2010). Policies for mezzo and macro social work practice are in need of development.

Areas for future research and policy development

Although social media policies have been developed and implemented by some institutions, further empirical research is needed in the new area of social scholarship. The elements of the social media policy presented here are based on strong scholarship and emerging ethical and legal concerns affecting social work education. Although we believe that social media policies can be valuable educationally and practically, there is very little empirical support for this claim. Social work program administrators should conduct research on how such policies affect students' development of professional identity and behavior, preparedness to practice, and digital literacy. Programs, faculty, practitioners and the public should all be part of evaluating how such policies encourage or discourage optimal use of social media.

Summary

Given the extensive and expanding social media usage by students in social work programs, we strongly recommend that program directors develop and promulgate their own policies. Many

online resources can guide students in creating an appropriate and constructive online presence. Yet because many of these sites focus more on promoting business or popularity, social workers need to balance online presence with professional ethics and purposes. Some educational institutions offer useful starting points for guiding students in the appropriate professional use of social media.

Beyond educating social work students in how to use social media, institutions of higher education must also establish boundaries on its professional use. A social work program's social media policy should balance educating students with guiding and regulating the use of social media. Legal, ethical, and practical interests require professionals to be knowledgeable about social media's merits and potential pitfalls. This is a rapidly evolving area of technology that will require ongoing attention from higher education programs.

This article demonstrates the need for many social work programs to develop and promulgate their own social media policies. It identifies six areas of content to be considered and addressed by such policies and offers an exemplar social media policy. These starting points should help guide future social media policy development in social work.

Notes on contributors

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Appendix A: Smith College School for Social Work's social media policy

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Social media includes many widely used forms of electronic communication (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram, SnapChat, microblogs, web sites, etc.) allowing users to create online communities and to share information, messages, and other content. It offers quick and effective ways to stay in touch with family, friends and colleagues. It is vibrant and immediate. It also offers many ways to make new connections and has been widely used to promote political advocacy and social justice. Social media can be a valuable part of professional and personal activities, but must be used thoughtfully and in accordance with the NASW Code of Ethics (2008), within the confines of agency policies, the policies of the Smith School of Social Work, and all local, state and federal laws.

When used in relation to one's professional activities, social media deserves some careful consideration. There are legal risks, ethical risks and pragmatic risks along with social media's many merits. Be mindful that once information is posted on social media it may be impossible to delete. The technology for capturing online information is already well developed. You may not be able to retract or correct any information you post—forever. Recent newspaper reports indicate that employers are increasingly checking job applicant's social media sites and using the data they find for formal and informal decision-making. Both your personal and professional information may be searched and viewed by employers, by clients and by others.

Learning about, carefully setting and regularly reviewing the privacy settings and other features of any social media you use is wise for all professionals. A simple search will identify many sites to help guide you about using social media programs. However, bear in mind that many of these sites are business oriented and assume you mainly wish to build referral traffic. Social workers must carefully distinguish their personal and professional uses of social media. For social workers, one helpful starting point is the University of Texas at Austin's "How to Manage Your Social Media Privacy Settings" online at <https://identity.utexas.edu/everyone/how-to-manage-your-social-media-privacy-settings> It is wise to review your online presence as a client or employer might do.

Several ethical obligations must be kept in mind. First, discussion or disclosure of client information without documented client consent is prohibited by law, institutional policies and social work ethics. Federal HIPPA regulations, state licensure and practice laws and agency policies all prohibit disclosure of client information to others not directly charged with the client's care. Professional advice should never be offered outside an agency or practice setting. Social workers should always practice in their areas of competence in defined relationships to clients (NASW Code of Ethics, Section 104).

Second, social work professional ethics also prohibit discussion of client information outside of direct work activities. It is inappropriate to refer to clients, client situations, supervisors or field agencies on social media regardless of efforts to restrict or limit access to the information. The NASW Code of Ethics, Section 1.07 (i) states that "Social workers should not discuss confidential information in any setting unless privacy can be ensured. Social workers should not discuss confidential information in public or semipublic areas such as hallways, waiting rooms, elevators, and restaurants." Social media are effectively public or semipublic locations. The Code also states that "(k) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients when responding to requests from members of the media." Even restricted access social media sites may be viewed as media outlets. If you are speaking for an agency or group, (and only ever with explicit written permission and direction from that group) you should use their name to be transparent to other users. Only use your institutional affiliation when you are making professional postings, never for personal ones.

Third, the NASW *Code of Ethics*, Section 2.01 states that "(a) Social workers should treat colleagues with respect and should represent accurately and fairly the qualifications, views, and obligations of colleagues, and (b) Social workers should avoid unwarranted negative criticism of colleagues in communications with clients or with other professionals". Postings on social media about other professionals and about professional matters should be respectful, fair, accurate, and without undue criticism, including field agencies and their personnel. Your colleagues deserve to be treated with the same dignity and respect as social workers treat our clients. Hasty social media postings may violate these standards, make the evidence of such an infraction widely known, and may be difficult or impossible to undo.

Agencies and institutions have the authority to ask social media organizations to refuse, or to terminate, social media groups that use their institutional names and/or images. The reputation and social 'face' of an institution may be enhanced or undermined by social media sites, and thus these agencies and institutions have rights to limit how their names and images are used. Many names and images are copyrighted or trademarked. Using such names and images may violate the law. Always ask for approval before using institutional or agency names in online posts. If you need to make an institutional connection, ask permission from the Director or Dean before making any post including institutional names, content or images.

Finally, any academic process or information that is considered confidential should not be shared publicly on social media. This includes, but is not limited to professional review proceedings or information about other student's academic and professional performance.

Failing to use professional judgment when using social media may harm you, colleagues and clients. Professional conduct on social media deserves appropriate care. Failing to meet the policies of Smith College School for Social Work, applicable laws, agency policies, and the NASW *Code of Ethics* and can lead to consultation, review and potentially dismissal from the program. It may also lead to external actions through professional sanction or legal suit. Use social media wisely and with care when it has any link to your professional activities.

Appendix B: Some exemplar social work program social media use policies

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