



## **Medical Student Social Media and Online Activity Policy**

edu-adm-0007

### **About This Policy**

**Effective Dates:**

07-01-2021

**Last Updated:**

06-24-2021

**Responsible University Administrator:**

Associate Dean of Student Affairs

**Policy Contact:**

### **Scope**

IUSM medical students' digital and online activity, including social media engagement.

### **Policy Statement**

The Indiana University School of Medicine (IUSM) encourages free, open, and robust discussion and dialogue among and between IUSM students, faculty, and staff, and the general public. However, use of social media and other digital platforms to share information presents certain risks, including risks that private information will be publicly disseminated in violation of law and/or IU policy. IUSM students should also be aware that their online activity is subject to the same policies and professionalism expectations as any other conduct or communications.

### **Use of Social Media and Other Digital Platforms for Personal Purposes**

IUSM students should be cognizant of the fact that use of social media to share information or engage with others carries the risk that confidential information may be disseminated in violation of IU policy or legal requirements. Such confidential information includes, but is not limited to, identifiable information about patients deemed confidential pursuant to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) or applicable IU or hospital policy, identifiable information about students deemed confidential pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and information protected by state law. Confidential information should never be shared or disseminated online or via social media.

When engaging in online activity or utilizing social media, IUSM students are required to uphold and abide by all IU and IUSM policies, including the IUSM Professional Conduct Policy and the IUSM Honor Code. University policies apply to all communications, including digital, mobile, and social-media related content.

IUSM does not monitor IUSM students' private social media accounts or online activity. However, IUSM may become aware of and review online activity, including social media activity, for violations of law or IU policy, including applicable HIPAA policies, the IUSM Honor Code, the IUSM Professional Conduct policy, and/or IU's Non-Discrimination policy.

### **Reason For Policy**

Establishing standards for the means by which IUSM will disseminate official communications to IUSM students enhances the effectiveness and efficiency of such communications. IUSM students must also be cognizant of the policies and laws that may be implicated when considering what information to share or disseminate.

## Procedure

1. At all times, IUSM students should observe patient confidentiality, in keeping with HIPAA and other applicable laws and policies. IUSM students must avoid communications that could in any way convey a patient's identity, even accidentally, and must abide by applicable policies regarding sharing patient data or images even when the patient is not identifiable and/or a patient authorization has been obtained. IUSM students should only use approved, secure communication channels when sharing any kind of patient information with authorized parties.
2. IUSM students should familiarize themselves with the expectations and standards of conduct expressed in IU's policies, including the IUSM Professional Conduct Policy and IUSM Honor Code. IUSM students' participation in online activities should conform to the standards of conduct expressed in these policies.
3. IUSM students should never, explicitly or implicitly, represent that they speak for or on behalf of IU or the IU School of Medicine unless they have been formally authorized to do so.
4. IUSM students should never disclose confidential IUSM or other proprietary information to any third party. IUSM students must respect copyright, trademarks, and other intellectual property rights of others.
5. IUSM students should not disclose information about another student's individual academic performance or other educational information.
6. IUSM students should avoid any kind of communication that may be considered defamatory, harassing, obscene, that may pose a "true threat," or that incite imminent lawless action, as these terms are defined by law.

## Sanctions

Online and digital activity is subject to the same University policies and expectations as any other conduct. Violations of law and/or University policy may result in sanctions up to and including dismissal, or as may be proscribed by other applicable policy.

## Additional Contacts

Associate Dean of Student Affairs: MSE Operations (317) 274-0758 [askmse@iu.edu](mailto:askmse@iu.edu)

## History

1. New policy created and placed into the policy template. Policy effective date 01 July 2021.
2. Policy approved by Dean's Executive Committee 16 June 2021.
3. Policy published to the policy portal 01 July 2021.