

Minot State University
Social Media Policy for Pre-Service Teachers

This social media policy applies to all teacher education students, in particular those enrolled in a clinical course who have been assigned clinical hours to complete at a P-12 school or in a community program where P-12 students are present (ED 284L). The policy is intended to highlight expectations of the Teacher Education Unit at Minot State University in regards to social media and technology.

Social Media includes, but is not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, Pinterest, Whatsapp, or in-game communications.

Technology includes, but is not limited to phones, computers, laptops, tablets, smart watches, or other electronic devices used to access social media, send and receive email, and/or send and receive texts.

1. Despite your device settings, social media posts are rarely truly private. It is possible that posts and messages on social media will be seen by others than your intended audience. Therefore, teacher candidates are expected to ensure that social media postings represent the candidate, the university, and the teaching profession in a positive light. Refrain from profanity, pictures of you drinking alcohol, or suggestive pictures, among other things, on social media. Administrators who will interview you for a teaching position in the future will check your social media accounts; make sure your posts are not an obstacle to starting your career.
2. Do not vent online. You want to be respected, and maintaining professional behavior helps that. Do not discuss the P-12 school, the teachers, the administration, the students, or their parents in a negative way in any social media post.
3. Confidentiality is very important, so do not post pictures of students you will meet during the clinical on social media or send pictures via technology. Furthermore, do not mention any student or parent by name (or provide other identifying information) in any social media post, email, or text.
4. Student work is confidential, as well. Do not take pictures of student work unless you have the permission of the classroom teacher. Posting photos of student work to social media is never permissible.
5. Remember that your relationships with P-12 students are as professionals, not as peers. Teacher candidates should not “friend” or follow on social media P-12 students met during the clinical experience. If a P-12 student sends a friend request in a social media environment, the teacher candidate should refrain from accepting the request. Do not initiate friend requests with P-12 students. Furthermore, you should not email or text P-12 students unless directed by your cooperating teacher using approved technology and applications.
6. The purpose of the clinical is to provide you the opportunity to observe or participate in the clinical activities. You are expected to give your full attention to the clinical activity,

modeling that attention to the P-12 students. You should not use your device during your clinical experience unless you have the explicit permission of your cooperating teacher, and only in ways that support the education goals of the classroom.

If you are unsure whether your social media or technology behavior is appropriate, you should ask your cooperating teacher or university faculty member. If you have any lingering question in your mind about your social media or technology usage, it's probably better that you refrain from making the post, sending the email, etc. Better to be safe than sorry.

Failure to adhere to this policy may result in disciplinary action, not limited to reprimand, remediation on appropriate social media/technology use, referral to the Title IX office, referral to the Vice President of Student Affairs, removal from the teacher education program, or an inappropriate disposition referral to the Teacher Education Administrative Council (TEAC).