

**Truman State University Department of Athletic Training
Social Media Policy**

Athletic Trainers must be concerned with any behavior that might compromise the confidentiality of their patients, harm the integrity of the profession, or violate the NATA Code of Ethics. Principle 4.1 of the NATA Code of Ethics states, “Members should conduct themselves personally and professionally in a manner that does not compromise their professional responsibilities or the practice of athletic training.” Principle 3.1 states, “Members shall preserve the confidentiality of privileged information and shall not release such information to a third party not involved in the patient’s care without a release unless required by law.” This includes participating in online social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.). This includes any activities conducted online. Think about what you post, when in doubt don’t post. Think about who you add as a friend.

Truman State University supports the individuals’ expression of First Amendment rights of free speech. As an athletic trainer, you must accept responsibility for your social media use. It is your responsibility – as a medical professional and visible member of the institution and the larger community – to protect the values of Truman State University. Any inappropriate use of social media platforms shall not be tolerated. Inappropriate or malicious use may include but is not limited to:

1. Posting any information (pictures, comments, etc) about patients. Even if the patient is not named directly, this is a direct violation of the patient’s privacy.
2. Derogatory language or remarks regarding patients, fellow students, coaches, administrators, faculty and staff of Truman State University or other colleges and universities.
3. Demeaning statements or threats that endanger the safety of another person.
4. Incriminating photos or statements regarding illegal criminal behavior, underage drinking, usage of illegal drugs, sexual harassment, or violence.
5. Indicating knowledge of the acts listed above.

Please keep the following guidelines in mind as you participate on social networking websites:

1. Before participating in any online community, understand that anything posted online is available to anyone in the world. Any text or photo placed online is completely out of your control the moment it is placed online – **even if you limit access to your site.**
2. You should not post information, photos, or other items online that could embarrass you, your family, your patients, or the profession. This includes information, photos and items that may be posted by others on your page.
3. Exercise caution as to what information you post on your website about your whereabouts or plans – you could be opening yourself up to predators.

Individuals within the University and law enforcement personnel check these websites regularly. In addition to the unfortunate reality of online predators, potential employers and internship supervisors also use these sites to screen candidates. Many graduate programs and scholarship committees now search these sites to screen applications. We advise Truman students to exercise extreme caution in their use of social networking websites.

By signing this policy, you hereby understand and agree to all information outlined in the above statement regarding the usage of social media as a student-athlete at Truman State University.

Name

Date