UTC School of Nursing
Student Social Media Policy

I. **Purpose**

The UTC School of Nursing (SON) supports the use of social media to reach audiences important to the University such as students, prospective students, faculty and staff. This policy identifies applicable University policies and guidelines applicable to official University social media accounts and the acceptable use of University information technology resources. This policy also identifies prohibited conduct and best practices regarding SON students' general use of social media.

II. **Definitions**

For purposes of this policy, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

A. **"Social media"** shall mean, but not be limited to, web-based or mobile technologies used for interactive communications. Examples of social media include, but are not limited to, collaborative projects (e.g., Wikipedia), blogs and microblogs (e.g., Twitter), content communities (e.g., YouTube), social networking sites (e.g., Facebook), virtual game worlds (e.g., World of Warcraft), virtual social worlds (e.g., Second Life). Regardless of how these forms of social media are used, students are responsible for the content they post or promote. Content contributed on these platforms is immediately searchable and shareable, regardless of whether that is the intention of the contributor. Once posted online, the content leaves the contributing individual's control forever and may be traced back to the individual in perpetuity.

B. **"Other electronic means"** shall mean any other web-based or mobile technologies by which users can communicate electronically, including, without limitation, text messaging, electronic messaging platforms (e.g., Whatsapp), and video-conferencing technologies (e.g., Zoom, Facetime, Skype).

III. **Official University Social Media Accounts**

Social media accounts officially recognized or sanctioned by the University (e.g., the official UTC School of Nursing Facebook page) must comply with the University's Social Media Policy https://www.utc.edu/communications-marketing/social-media/policies.php). SON students who contribute content to social media accounts officially recognized or sanctioned by the University must comply with the University's Social Media Policy regarding the content they contribute to such accounts.

IV. **Acceptable Use of University Information Technology Resources**

SON students must comply with University policy regarding the acceptable use of the University's information technology resources (UT System Policy IT0110 - Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources).

V. **General Use of Social Media**

A. Prohibited Conduct
SON students are prohibited from engaging in the following conduct in connection with their use of social media:

1. Accessing, posting information on, or communicating through social media or other electronic means, during didactic, clinical or volunteer activities of their SON program, unless approved by the course instructor as part of a course assignment or activity.

2. Posting or distributing photographs or videos obtained during any didactic, lab or clinical session, through social media or other electronic means, unless approved by the course instructor as part of a course assignment or activity.

3. Posting information on social media, or through other electronic means, about, or images of, a patient, fellow student, instructor or research subject, including references to the health care of family members, employment or employers, conditions, locations of treatment, or any circumstances surrounding a situation, which violate federal or state privacy laws, including without limitation, HIPAA and FERPA. Accordingly, the use of social media for clinical discussions that include any identifiable information related to patients or SON-affiliated clinical facilities is prohibited.

4. Posting comments that express or imply sponsorship or endorsement by the University or SON, unless the University or SON officially authorize the student to act in such capacity on behalf of the University or SON. (If a SON student identifies herself/himself online as a SON student (e.g., list affiliation with the SON in their Facebook profile), a disclaimer should be added that any opinions or views expressed do not represent the opinions or views of the SON or the University).

B. Compliance with Ethical and Professional Standards
SON students are expected to comply with the American Nurses Association (ANA) ethical and professional standards at all times, including, without limitation, in connection with their use of social media (https://www.nursingworld.org/social/). The SON considers compliance with the ANA ethical and professional standards an academic requirement of all SON programs, and a student may be subject to remedial action, up to and including dismissal from the SON program in which the student is enrolled, if it is determined that the student has failed to comply with the academic requirements of the program by failing to adhere to the ANA ethical and professional standards.

C. UTC Student Code of Conduct
Separate and apart from any remedial action that the SON may implement concerning a SON student who fails to adhere to the ANA ethical and professional standards in connection with their use of social media, a SON student may be subject to disciplinary action under the UTC Student Code of Conduct, up to and including permanent

dismissal from the University, for engaging in conduct in violation of the code, including, without limitation, conduct prohibited under this policy.

D. Social Media Best Practices
SON students are encouraged to review and follow the University's guidance on social media best practices (https://www.utc.edu/communications-marketing/social-media/best-practices.php) and the ANA social media policy and guidance (https://www.nursingworld.org/social/).

VI. First Amendment Rights

In no event shall this policy be construed or enforced in a manner that prohibits or infringes on speech protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understand this policy and agree to abide by the requirements of this policy.

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Student Signature   Date