Purpose:
The purpose of this policy is to outline the Indiana University Kokomo School of Nursing (IUKSON) guidelines for appropriate use of Internet social networking sites by students engaging in online discourse and identifying themselves with IUKSON.

Policy:
Use of electronic media, i.e. internet sites or social networking sites, blogs etc. offer an opportunity for nursing students to engage in professional and personal conversations and form networks. However, improper postings on these sites can have legal ramification if state and federal laws established to protect patient privacy and confidentiality are violated. Violations may include but are not limited to improper postings about the care of a patient or comments/images that portray the individual, facility, faculty, university or a colleague in an unprofessional manner on social networking sites. Students may not take or post images or videos of peers, colleagues, or faculty without consent. These violations can be used in court or other disciplinary proceedings (i.e. State Nursing Licensing Boards).

Consequently, IUKSON students must adhere to the IUKSON Confidentiality Policy (SON-G-12), HIPAA obligations related to patient privacy, confidentiality and code of conduct at all times when using the Internet and social networking sites.

It is the individual student’s responsibility to: 1) closely monitor the privacy settings of their social network accounts to optimize their privacy and security and 2) ensure that posts or photos are appropriate and are not embarrassing or professionally compromising. Avoid sharing personal identification numbers and data on your personal profile. This would include address, telephone numbers, social security numbers, passport numbers, driver’s license numbers, birth date, and place of employment or any other data that could be used to obtain your personal records.

In reference to the National Council of State Boards of Nursing’s “A Nurse’s Guide to the Use of Social Media” the following guidelines are set forth to address instances of inappropriate use of the Internet and social media networking sites.

IUUKSON Guidelines for Online Social Networking:
- Students have an ethical and legal obligation to maintain patient privacy and confidentiality at all times. Postings within social network sites are subject to the same professionalism standards as any other personal interactions. Statements
made within online networks will be treated as if the statement was made verbally in a public place.

- Sharing of any patient related data or images by electronic media is strictly prohibited. Students must not identify patients by name or post information about the patient’s illness or condition that may lead to the identification of a patient. Limiting access to postings through privacy settings is not sufficient to ensure privacy.

- When using electronic media, professional boundaries must be maintained at all times. Faculty, staff and students have an obligation to establish, communicate and enforce professional boundaries with patients in the online environment. One must use caution when having online social contact with patients or former patients. The fact that a patient may initiate contact does not permit the student to engage in a personal relationship.

- Do not violate copyrighted or trademarked materials. If you post content, photos or other media, you are acknowledging that you own or have the right to use these items. IU, IUK and IUKSON logos may not be used on any social media site without the approval of the Director of Media and Marketing.

- Disclosure of information regarding course assignments or exams on social networks is a form of academic misconduct and students will be disciplined according to the procedures outlined in the Indiana University Kokomo Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities and Conduct.

- Students are encouraged to immediately contact an appropriate IUKSON administrator or staff about unprofessional or potentially offensive comments or images on social networking sites. Students have a responsibility to promptly report any identified breach of confidentiality or privacy.

- Students must be aware of and comply with IUKSON and clinical sites policies regarding the use of computers, cameras and other electronic devices in the clinical setting.

If it is determined that the student has violated the Social Networking Policy or behaved in an unprofessional manner in contexts related to your role as a nursing student, the student will be subject to any and all disciplinary actions set forth by Indiana University Kokomo School of Nursing (IUKSON), which could include termination from the IUKSON program.