The culture of the Internet is about much more than information transfer. It has become increasingly social and communal. Social media tools, which facilitate both one-to-many communications and presumably private communications, have grown to become a significant part of how people interact via Internet. Because social media are widely used as promotional tools, personal postings on public media sites can sometimes blur the line between the individual and the institutional voice. This policy provides guidance for members of Georgia Perimeter College Dental Hygiene Community to protect both their personal reputations and the public image of the institution, department and profession.

Furthermore, although not intended, never forget as faculty, staff, or student you may always be perceived as a representative of GPC. It is therefore in the best interest of the College and all members of the GPC Community to provide its employees and students with a roadmap for safe, smart use of social media.

1. Be respectful.
2. Assume anything you post is public, regardless of privacy settings.
3. Assume anything you post is permanent.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) ensures the privacy of “Educational records” of students. At no time should information that is considered part of the student’s educational record be submitted, posted, or referenced through a social media network. **DO NOT post anything about student or classmate grades.**

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA; Pub.L. 104-191, 110 Stat. 1936, enacted August 21, 1996) that is intended to provide the portability of health records, must be adhered to at all times. This act contains a Privacy Rule which establishes a provision for the use and disclosure of Protected Health Information. Under no circumstances should patient privacy be violated through the use of social media. **DO NOT post ANYTHING about patients in the GPC Dental Hygiene Clinic or that can be linked to the patients or clinic.**


All faculty, staff, students, community partners, and student organizations are encouraged to participate in GPC social media pages.

**General Rules:**

**Be a valued member of the community**

When participating in an online community, content of postings should benefit the community as a whole. Consider the nature of the community and the expectations of its members when contributing. Do not use membership purely as a means of promoting yourself or your organization. Do not use the name GPC to endorse products, causes, political parties, or candidates.

**Do no harm**

Postings, both in content and in substance, must not harm either GPC network or the social networks themselves. Do not overload these networks with content that is repetitive, promotional, or will otherwise devalue the service for the rest of the community.
Georgia Perimeter College
Dental Hygiene
Social Media Policy

Be respectful of others

Keep a cool head when discussing and debating online. Be passionate on matters about which you are passionate, but always be constructive, exercise discretion, and be respectful of those with whom you disagree.

No stalking, flaming, or bullying
Abusive language, behavior, and content is not appropriate in any context. Do not insult, attack, threaten, or otherwise harass others. Remember that how a message is intended is less important than how it is perceived. If another individual indicates they find behavior threatening, cease this behavior immediately.

Think before posting
Nothing posted on the internet is truly private. Anything put online can easily be shared and re-shared, and archiving systems preserve even content that has been deleted. As a result, content posted privately now may appear in search results for many years to come. Post only content you are comfortable sharing with the general public, including current and future employers. Remember these three words: ‘Google Never Forgets’. Faculty should not talk about the details of their work at GPC at all on social media networks, and should choose a more secure form of communication. Students should not discuss any details about school administrators, faculty, staff, classmates, patients, the Dental Hygiene Program or GPC that could be considered damaging or derogatory.

Maintain your social media pages
When a site or page provides space for the community to interact, usually through comments or other feedback systems, it is important to keep these spaces free of spam and abusive content. Postings in these spaces should be edited to ensure there are no liability issues (e.g., removing links to content that violates copyright or breaks confidentiality rules), but should not be edited because their content is disagreeable.

Unauthorized or inappropriate commentary or posts online can:

• Get GPC, and you, in legal trouble with the U.S., state of GA and other government agencies, other companies, customers or the general public.
• Diminish GPC name by creating negative publicity for the school, as well as yourself or your Program of Study.
• Cause damage to GPC by releasing non-public information or proprietary information.
• Cost us the ability to get future students, patients or undermine the image of the Dental Hygiene profession or GPC.
• Cost you your position at GPC or in the Dental Hygiene Program. Employers are looking at social media sites before hiring. Ask yourself before posting. “Would I want my future employer to see the posting or picture?”

Term: Social media includes web-based and mobile based technologies which are used to turn communication into interactive dialogue among organizations, communities, and individuals. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_media

Sites may include but not limited to Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, email, blog, podcast, or website