

Defining the Topic

Social Media:

- “the collection of online platforms that facilitate user-created content and interactive communication between two or more individuals” (Mullen, Griffith, Greene, & Lambie, 2014)

Professional Usage:

- Professional development
- Professional networking
- Collaboration
- Resource/Idea sharing

Background & Relevant Literature

Social media platforms allow us to expand our professional networks outside of our workspaces into the global community (Robbins & Singer, 2014; Veletsianos, 2013).

- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
→ Professional Learning Networks (PLNs)

Carpenter and Krutka (2014) found that the most common reason cited by K-16 educators for using Twitter was professional development.

Immediate access to information presented in a brief format (Carpenter & Krutka, 2014)

Another method of communicating with school stakeholders (Mullen et al., 2014)

Tillman, Dinsmore, Chasek, and Hof (2013) discussed using social media in counselor education:

- Recruiting prospective students
- Integrated into curriculum
- Student extracurricular engagement
- Ethical issues and preliminary implications

Helpful in the research process (Singer, 2014):

- Learning about new trends
- Soliciting participants
- Getting feedback on manuscripts & ideas

Social Media Platforms & Professional Usage in Counselor Education

Twitter:

- Microblogging application that allows users to share posts of 140 characters or less
- Utilizes hashtags to crosslink information
- Hashtags create smaller PLNs and facilitate chats
- Counselor educators can connect with live Twitter chats during classes or encourage student participation
- Locating information that hasn't yet made it into counseling literature

Counseling & Mental Health Hashtags	
Hashtag	Description / Chat time
#scchat	School Counselor Chat 1 st Tuesday of each month at 8pm EST
#mhchat	Mental Health Chat Wednesdays at 3pm EST
#SCcrowd	School Counselor Crowd (International) 2 nd Wednesday of each month at 8pm EST
#yourMH	Your Mental Health Fridays at 12:00pm EST
Other Hashtags	
#escchat:	Elementary School Counselor chat
#psycchat:	Psychology chat
#emchat:	Enrollment management chat
#PSCchat:	Principal/School Counselor chat

Facebook:

- Microblogging application that allows users to share longer posts.
- Can join open and closed groups based on interests, affiliations, and location (e.g. ACA, ASCA, School Counselors Rock, MHCCF, etc.)
- Can follow fan pages for organizations, public figures, news agencies, etc.
- Graduate program student groups can allow students to share resources (e.g. textbooks) and receive programmatic announcements

LinkedIn:

- Social media platform specifically for professional networking
- Can create a professional profile that serves as a digital resume / CV
- Can connect with other users individually or through groups based on affiliations or interest
- Can endorse other members' skills and write professional recommendations
- Great tool for post-conference networking

Social Media Platforms & Professional Usage in Counselor Education

Blogger, Weebly, & Tumblr:

- Blogging platforms for creating longer online posts, typically around a common theme (e.g. elementary counseling, eating disorders, etc.)
- Can write posts for a public audience or a target audience
- Can attach blogs to professional websites as supplemental information for clientele
- Can create a professional profile site with work samples, resources, and experiences
- Can write entries with practical application information about their research, about programs created or run, about new technologies or techniques, etc.

YouTube:

- Video sharing site that allows users to upload original videos or watch others' videos
- Users can create channels for others to follow
- Students can find or create videos demonstrating techniques or counseling theories
- Can be built into class projects (e.g. creating advocacy public service announcements, recording and sharing presentations, demonstrating activities/techniques)

Skype & Google Hangouts:

- Video chat applications that allow for multi-site/ multi-member calling
- Virtual “face-to-face” conferencing for live meetings
- Users can share computer screens to collaborate and share documents, data files, and presentation materials.
- Counselor educators can invite guest speakers to present to classes
- Students can collaborate and meet for group projects

Pinterest:

- Designed for sharing and organizing ideas, projects, and resources
- Can create “pinboards” for specific topics to help categorize resources, links, and pictures
- Users can search through other members' boards

Ethical Considerations

- Separate personal and professional profiles to prevent blurring of professional boundaries (ACA Code of Ethics, H.6.a).
- Explain boundaries of counselor/ client social media engagement in the informed consent (ACA Code of Ethics, H.6.b).
- Similarly, explain the boundaries of counselor educator/student and supervisor/supervisee engagement on social media at the beginning of the relationship.
- Counselor educators, supervisors, counselors, & students should refrain from sharing confidential information on social media.
- Know social media policies of your university, site, or agency. Their policies may be stricter.
- Credit others when they have contributed to your scholarship and activity, even if the collaboration took place through social media (i.e. If someone gives you an idea on Twitter, credit them; ACA Code of Ethics, G.5).
- Stay up to date with ethical codes. Social media was only recently addressed by ACA's code, and others will likely follow suit in their next version.

References

- American Counseling Association. (2014). *ACA Code of Ethics*. Alexandria, VA: Author.
- Carpenter, J. P., & Krutka, D. G. (2014). How and why educators use Twitter: A survey of the field. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, 46(4), 414-434. doi:10.1080/15391523.2014.925701.
- Mullen, P. R., Griffith, C., Greene, J. H., & Lambie, G. W. (2014). Social media and professional school counselors: Ethical and legal considerations. *Journal of School Counseling*, 12(8). Retrieved from <http://www.jsc.montana.edu/articles/v12n8.pdf>
- Robbins, S. P., & Singer, J. B. (2014). From the editor—The medium is the message: Integrating social media and social work education. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 50, 387-390. doi: 10.1080/10437797.2014.916957
- Tillman, D. R., Dinsmore, J. A., Chasek, C. L., & Hof, D. D. (2013). The use of social media in counselor education. *VISTAS Online*, 1-13. Retrieved from <http://www.counseling.org/docs/vistas/the-use-of-social-media-in-counselor-education.pdf?sfvrsn=2>
- Veletsianos, G. (2013). Open practices and identity: Evidence from researchers and educators' social media participation. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 44(4), 639-651. doi:10.1111/bjet.12052