

What are your thoughts on connecting with students on social media?

Since I began teaching, I have always held the belief that there has to be boundaries between students and teachers... keeping a certain level of separation between my personal and professional life. I have to admit that the longer I teach and the more relationships I develop with my students, the more lax I become with “this is how it has to be” stuff. Over the years, I have gotten to the point of making access to me on social media a “graduate privilege”. As students matriculate, they joke with me about sending me friend requests when they graduate. Quite honestly, it has become something I look forward to as well, especially with those students that I developed a closer bond with for various reasons whether it be from always being in the Dean’s office, to coming in for extra help, or to simply hang out in my room during lunch. Many students that have graduated have connected with me on Facebook or Instagram, and it is really good to see them continue to grow as young men and women. We do not communicate daily or directly all the time, but every now and again we will connect over a message one of their classmates posted to celebrate, seek advice, or seek comfort in a time of struggle or sorrow. More than anything, I think it has developed into social emotional support network.