



## facebook.com

### How Cyber Communities are Affecting our Campus Communities

#### Facebook Basics

- An online directory that connects people through social networks at schools
- Launched to the public February 4, 2004 by Harvard student Mark Zuckerberg
- Primarily used as networking tool for College Students and soon High School students

#### Some Facebook Statistics

- Has grown to 8.5 million users
- Registers more than 5,800 new users a day
- It typically attracts 80% of a school's undergraduate population
- 60% of Facebook members log in daily, and 85% log in weekly
- Facebook now places 9th in terms of overall traffic on the Internet
- Currently valued at around \$100 million

#### All About Profiles

- Must have University email address to create a profile
- Customizing the Profile:
  - ⇒ *Provide contact information*
  - ⇒ *Majors, current courses*
  - ⇒ *List hobbies, music interests, favorite books & movies*
  - ⇒ *Post pictures & create photo albums*
  - ⇒ *Join Groups*
  - ⇒ *Relationship Status Information*
- Students can then search other profiles

#### The Positives

- Free & easy to use
- Way to foster communication & share ideas
- Make new friends...
- ... and Keep the old
- Get to know Classmates/study groups
- Share photographs
- Get involved with a club or organization
- Advertising through announcements

#### The Negatives

- A tempting distraction & procrastination tool
- Easy to get addicted & obsessed
- Decreases genuine human interaction
- Increases the "drama" factor – propensity for the rumor mill to run more quickly
- Personal information listed – false sense of security about the information they post
- Potentially a stalkers' paradise
- Advertising for unauthorized parties



## **Strategies for Administrator Response**

### Campus Response

- Totally blocking Facebook
- Policing of Facebook
- Using Facebook profile information selectively
- Avoiding any type of affiliation with Facebook

### Privacy & Facebook

- Security Settings Exist
  - ⇒ *Students believe it is important to know & use privacy settings*
  - ⇒ *Few students actually take steps to do so*
- Are more likely to explore and flex their identity online
  - ⇒ *View Facebook is a “closed community” immune to eyes of non-students*



### Facebook & the Law

- Free speech – Students feel that administrator oversight is an invasion of privacy
  - ⇒ *“Assuming they are being punished for the conduct itself, then I don’t see a First Amendment problem.” - Mark Cordes, Law Professor at Northern Illinois University*
- Student concerns over right to Privacy in a “private forum”
  - ⇒ *“If an individual waives a portion [of their right to privacy] for some reason, (such as joining Facebook), then they’ve waived it.” ~James Devine, Assoc. Dean of the School of Law at the Missouri University*

### What Can We Do?

- Be proactive
- Educate students about risks to reputation and personal safety
  - ⇒ Rule of thumb: only posting something that your grandmother could see!
  - ⇒ Becoming familiar with terms of use
  - ⇒ Using profile settings to maximize security and limit access
- Take advantage of “Teachable Moments”
- Develop a task force to clarify what the school policy is
- Develop programs and/or presentations to share with colleagues
- Incorporate responsible use of Technology into Orientation Programs

### Additional Resources

- Aquino, J. (2006, January 31). Study: Internet users are more social. *The Minnesota Daily*. Retrieved February 14, 2006 from <http://www.mndaily.com/articles/2006/01/31/66893>.
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- Medintz, S. (2006, February 1). Talkin’ bout MySpace Generation. *CNNMoney.com*. Retrieved January 24, 2006 from [http://money.cnn.com/magazines/moneymag/moneymag\\_archive/2006/02/01/8367515/](http://money.cnn.com/magazines/moneymag/moneymag_archive/2006/02/01/8367515/)
- Shotick, J. & Stephens, P. (2005, December 21). Do Students Use Technology Wisely? *NASPA Net Results*. Retrieved January 27, 2006 from <http://www.naspa.org/membership/mem/nr/article.cfm?id=1514>

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