

USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING AS AN
INSTRUCTIONAL AIDE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

By

BRIAN EDWARD PERRYMAN

Bachelor of Business Administration
Oklahoma University
Norman, Oklahoma
1984

Master of Business Administration
Oklahoma City University
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
1989

Submitted to the Faculty of the
College of Education
Oklahoma State University
In partial fulfillment of
the requirements for
the Degree of
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
May, 2011

USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING AS AN
INSTRUCTIONAL AIDE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Dissertation Approved:

Dr. Mary Kutz

Dissertation Adviser

Dr. Steve Marks

Dr. Gary Conti

Dr. Lynna Ausburn

Outside Committee Member

Dr. Mark E. Payton

Dean of the Graduate College

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am forever indebted to those who helped me in my pursuit of an education. Throughout the years a number of teachers, instructors and professors along with counselors, advisors and mentors, have offered much needed words of wisdom, encouragement and direction. The support of my wife Jolinda Perryman and my children Madison Skye Perryman, Angela Peralta-Anderson, Anthony Peralta and Vincent Peralta was a major factor in my success. Thank you to my parents, grandparents, extended family, friends, and co-workers who helped support my educational efforts over the years in one way or another.

A special thank you goes to my doctoral classmates for being supportive and encouraging throughout this process. A world of gratitude goes to my doctoral advisor, Dr. Mary Kutz, for guiding me through the degree program. Additional thanks goes to my committee members, to Dr. Lynna Ausburn in helping me with direction on my research topic and to Dr. Gary Conti for his help in developing my research instruments. Thank you to Dr. Steve Marks for his assistance in being accepted to this degree program. And thank you to my heavenly father for providing me the strength and mental capacity to endure long sometimes sleepless nights during this process.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Concepts.....	2
Key Concept 1: Community Colleges	2
Key Concept 2: Social Media and Social Networking	3
Key Concept 3: Instructional Aides	3
Problem Statement	4
Purpose of the Study	4
Research Questions	5
Significance of the Study	5
Definitions.....	5
Limitations	9
Delimitations.....	10
Assumptions.....	11
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	12
Key Concept 1: Community Colleges	13
Key Concept 2: Social Media and Social Networking	15
Key Concept 3: Instructional Aides	31
Course Delivery Modes	32
Communication with Students.....	37
Learning Styles	40
Instructional Aides	42
Social Networking sites as Instructional Aides	46
Facebook®	49
Twitter®.....	52
Blogs	56
III. METHODOLOGY	58
Introduction.....	58
Theoretical Perspective	59
Research Design.....	62
Population	63
Demographic Survey Sample	64

Chapter	Page
III. METHODOLOGY (Continued)	
Instruments.....	66
Trusting the Data.....	67
Data Collection Procedures.....	77
Data Analysis	80
IV. FINDINGS.....	82
Introduction.....	82
Key Themes	83
Touchpoint	83
Relevancy.....	84
Usability or Functionality	84
Privacy	85
Demographics	84
Research Question 1	86
Research Question 2	88
Research Question 3	91
Research Question 4	106
Research Question 5	116
Social Networking Training.....	126
General Comments from Interviewees	129
Summary of Findings.....	133
V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	137
Introduction	137
Four Major Themes.....	138
Research Question 1	140
Research Question 2	140
Research Question 3	142
Research Question 4	143
Research Question 5	143
Summary Conclusion.....	145
REFERENCES	147
APPENDICES	162

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
I	Worldwide Social Networking Growth	18
II	Unique Vistors to Facebook®, Twitter® and MySpace®	20
III	Unique Vistors Sessions: Facebook®, Twitter® and MySpace®	21
IV	Compete.com Ranking of Facebook®, Twitter® and MySpace®.	22
V	Population	64
VI	Research Questions & Data Source	81
VII	Demographic Data of Participants	86
VIII	Faculty Technology Familiarization and Use	86
IX	Use of Multiple Social Networks	87
X	Other Technology Related Demographic Data on Participants	88
XI	Demographic Survey Questions Part two	88
XII	Demographic Survey Questions 1-3	89
XIII	Demographic Survey Questions 4-5	89
XIV	Demographic Survey Questions 6-7	90
XV	Demographic Survey Question 8	91

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Societies have always relied on communication as a necessary tool for everything that occurs within the society. Communication is always present whether verbal or nonverbal. Devices used to enhance communications have evolved from the telegraph to telephone to computers to mobile phones. As computer technology grew and expanded so did the ability to communicate using computer technology.

Society enjoys the benefits of technology that started out as a septic, plain, cold, insensitive impersonal medium. As with most things the pendulum swings back and forth over time. Now more people are trying to connect with feeling, and regain what technology has taken from them as evidenced by the popularity of social networking. People want to be *in-the-know* and *up-to-date* with friends and family. Social networking is allowing the users that benefit via the use of technology.

In teaching and education, communication between the instructor and the student is a key part of student success. Students are among the largest demographic of people using social networking to communicate. This study utilizes the perceptions of faculty of a community college to assess the value of social networking as a tool for improving the learning experience for students in a community college.

Concepts

This study will discuss the following three key concepts as they relate to this study, (1) Rose State College, a Community College, (2) Social Media and Social Networking, and (3) Instructional Aides.

Key Concept 1- Rose State College, a Community College

Rose State College was established in 1970 and is located in Midwest City, Oklahoma, a suburb of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Rose State College is a two year or community college and is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Universities (www.ncahlc.org, 2010). Community colleges often referred to as junior colleges are two year colleges offering associate's degrees and certification programs. Community colleges are entry points into higher education and the university system offering students required general studies courses that are typically transferable to other colleges or universities.

Most universities are known for conducting research and leading the way in the advancement of science, technology, engineering, medicine, the arts, and more. Community colleges are not known for research but instead known for teaching. Community colleges are typically somewhat slow in adopting new technology for two reasons. The first reason is they are a teaching college and not typically engaged in research, and thus may not always be on the leading edge of new knowledge in potential new technological advancements. The second is funding, community colleges typically do not receive vast amounts of funding from the state or local taxing authority to invest in the newest technology on a frequent basis.

Key Concept 2 – Social Media & Social Networking

The term social networking is prevalent in modern society, yet few people know just exactly what it means. Social media and social networking are new terms often used interchangeably by the public and members of industry. Social media is a noun, and is the platform used for social networking. Social media websites offer products or services that allow users to social network. Thus the action of social networking results from individuals using social media to allow people to communicate with each other.

Social networking is accepted by many members of the business community who use it to promote their organization's products or services. Organizations can create pages then search for potential customers or persons with similar interests and invite them to view and possibly join the organization's page as a friend or follower. Organizations also use social networking to broadcast announcements or communicate with members. A search of Facebook®, Twitter® and other social media websites will provide a researcher with a broad representation of businesses promoting themselves.

Key Concept 3 – Instructional Aides

College faculty members have the option to use many different instructional aides. Colleges use the term "academic freedom" when referring to what an instructor is allowed to do to provide instruction to the students. Academic freedom allows instructors to use unconventional teaching methods, styles, or examples if necessary when instructing a class. Instructional aides have varied widely and have grown and progressed with advances in technology. Instructional aides have included slate boards with chalk, overhead projectors, opaque projectors, flip charts, tape recorders, slide rules, calculators, computers,

PowerPoint® presentations, hand-held audience response systems, text messaging, and others.

Problem Statement

Social networking is one of the fastest growing methods of communication with more than 300 million users on Facebook® alone (Zuckerberg, 2009). Some individuals use multiple social media websites and social networks to communicate and connect with others. The communication and interaction between individuals on social networks can in some instances be used as an instructional aide in education.

Little is known about the use of social networking by community college faculty to help facilitate the instructional process. Specifically, Rose State College does not have information regarding the use of social networking websites such as Facebook® and Twitter® by faculty to help facilitate the instructional process. Rose State College could benefit from this research in helping to determine policies regarding the implementation and use of such social networking websites as an instructional aide for all adult and continuing education.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to describe the use of social networking sites such as Facebook® and Twitter® as instructional aides in a community college environment. The study will focus specifically on the faculty of Rose State College and faculty members' use of such social media websites as Facebook®.com® and Twitter®.com® as well as any others that may be used by the faculty.

Research Questions

1. What is the profile of faculty who use social networking?
2. Which social networking tools are faculty using to connect with students?
3. How do faculties use social networking to communicate with students?
4. What are faculty recommendations for use of social networking?
5. What do faculty members cite as advantages and disadvantages to using social networking as an instructional aide?

Significance of the study

The results of this study could help Rose State College determine a future course of action related to use of social networking by faculty as an instructional aide. The methods and findings of this study could also be beneficial for assisting other two-year colleges interested in exploring the use of social networking as an instructional tool. Appropriate parties at each school could be contacted for permission to build a demographic profile of faculty and to survey the faculty using the same set of questions used with Rose State College. Upon completion of the research, a comparison could be made of the demographic differences and usage among other colleges to determine if there is significant variation and benefit for its use by one discipline or subject area over another.

Definitions

Many different terms and words are used that relate to social media, social networking, and technology. The definitions section of this study will help the reader understand the terms used in this study.

Differences: Facebook®, Twitter® and Blogging

Not everyone is familiar with Facebook® or Twitter®, and some people have never heard of or do not know what a blog is or does. Facebook® allows users to interact with each other by sharing short blurbs about anything the user wants to share. Users can share things in the form of short paragraphs (420 characters maximum), pictures, video clips, and web links. Facebook® allows users to have *friends* and allows users the ability to *like* or *comment* on another Facebook® user's postings or comments. Facebook® users can also create *fan pages* and *group pages* where they can post additional material related specifically to a certain item or event. For example, there are fan pages for people who like chocolate or Elvis, and as an example, group pages exist for college alumni associations and car clubs. The list of fan and group pages contains thousands of fan and group pages.

Twitter® allows users up to 140 characters to share information. Through the use of add-on applications user can send links to pictures and videos. Users on Tweeter refer to posting content as *tweeting*. On Tweeter, people may *follow* other users, meaning they can receive notification of what those other users post content. So Users follow users and have followers (people who follow them). Tweeter also uses hash tags that consist of putting a # sign in front of a term that other users can follow. For example, people attending a Jethro Tull concert may tweet about the concert and put #JethroTull in the tweets so other people interested in the concert can read them.

Blogs, short for *web logs*, are self-publishing websites that allow users to *log* or post any type of content including text, pictures, video clips, web links etc., for users to view. Blogs do not have the limitation on character counts like Facebook® and Twitter®. A blog is a form of online journaling.

All three allow for one-way or two-way communication between the person publishing the content and the viewers of the content. In layman's terms Facebook® is a glorified and spruced up condensed email, Twitter® is advanced text messaging, blogs are online journaling.

Operational Definitions

Asynchronous messages – The exchange of messages that is not synchronized, or not happening at the same time. Example: Email messages are asynchronous since one party is unsure when the other will reply. Instant messaging where people chat with each other similar to a phone call would be considered synchronous messages.

Blog – Blog is an abbreviation for web-log. Blogs are popular ways for people to share information with others across the Internet or World Wide Web. The *log* part of the term came from people *logging* his or her thoughts or ideas. Blogs are used by individuals wanting to self-publish content on the Internet or by individuals seeking to journal activities or thoughts.

Desire2 Learn® (D2L®) – A popular learning management system (LMS) used by organizations, primarily schools, to deliver educational content to students or employees. Desire2Learn® and D2L® are both registered trademarks of Desire2Learn Incorporated. D2L® offers many features including discussion areas, blogging, grade book, and more.

E-Mail – The abbreviated term for electronic mail. E-mail is typically delivered over the Internet using an e-mail program or service that allows or facilitates the electronic transmission of messaging.

Facebook® – A social networking website that allows users to communicate in a primarily asynchronous format. Facebook® users update his or her status or account by posting or publishing textual, audio and visual content to his or her user account or profile and to the profile of other Facebook® users depending on the other users privacy settings. Facebook® also allows users to set-up or create additional pages for groups or organizations. Facebook® also allows users the ability to use third-party software applications that work in conjunction with Facebook®. Facebook® is a registered trademark of Facebook®, Inc.

Follower – A term used by Twitter® for a user who has decided to *follow* what a specific user posts on Twitter®.

Friend – A term used on Facebook® for a people who have agreed that they want some connection to another user, i.e. a *friend*. Typically, people allow *friends* to see what another *friend* posts to his or her Facebook® account.

Hybrid course – A course that uses more than one mode or modality of delivery; for example, a combination of classroom and online course delivery.

Instant messaging – The delivery of a message, usually limited in the number of characters, to another user of the same technology or software.

Learning Management System (LMS) – A computer based software program to manage the function of learning. The program is typically used with online courses, however some LMS systems also let organizations track traditional classroom course.

Profile – The public persona users of social networking sites use to describe or tell about themselves.

SAVI – Learners have different learning styles. Four different styles have been identified as (S)omatic – hands on or kinesthetic, (A)uditory – by listening, (V)isual – by seeing, (I)ntellectual – critical thinking.

Social media websites – Websites that allow users to interact and engage in various forms of discourse and expression. Hundreds of websites promote themselves as social media sites. Facebook®, MySpace®, Twitter®, and LinkedIn® are recognized as social media websites.

Social Networking – The act of using a social media website to connect with other users of the same website or service.

Text Message – Similar to an instant message, however limited almost exclusively to handheld portable devices such as cell phones and pagers. Systems typically use SMS (Short Messaging Service) messaging with a limit of 140 characters or spaces.

Twitter® – A popular social networking website that uses SMS technology to limit the number of characters transmitted in a message. Twitter® also allows users the ability to use third-party software applications that work in conjunction with Twitter®.

Limitations

This descriptive study is limited in scope to only one organization, and does not contain a significantly large sample of a population from across a state, region or nation to draw meaningful widespread conclusions indicative of such a larger population.

The researcher is a professional educator and uses Facebook® and Twitter® on a regular basis, including using Facebook® as an instructional aide. A potential limitation is possible bias from participants who may not disclose any known biases or may not disclose any concerns for potential biases.

Delimitations

The research questions and participant selection were based on the goal of the research, to discover more on how faculty are using social networking tools such as Facebook® and Twitter® as instructional aides. Faculty, both full-time and part-time, were asked to answer a demographic questionnaire and subsequently asked at the end of the questionnaire if he or she would volunteer to participate in a personal interview to further discuss social networking. This study involved a sample from one community college, and is not to be indicative of a much larger sample of colleges from a vast geographic dispersion.

The purpose of this study did not include details regarding the faculty members' usage of social networking or details that would be personal in nature. Some participants did self disclose information regarding his or her personal use of social networking and such comments or quotes were anonymized without a material change in content or meaning. For example, a faculty member mentioning his or her specific college or discipline has been anonymized to protect the identity of the participants.

Participants volunteering to take part in the personal interviews came from the respondents to the demographic survey. Participants with positive responses to questions regarding social networking were purposively selected for inclusion in the personal interview process. The goal of determining faculty usage of social networking remained the focus of the research. Some participants not using social networking were also purposively selected in an effort to determine the reasoning for faculty member's non-usage of social networking. Personal interview participants were also purposively selected to give a fair representation to full-time and part-time faculty, males and females, online and in-class instruction. Because of

the communicative nature of social networking a purposive selection was made to include both light and heavy users of technology to communicate with students.

Assumptions

It is assumed by the researcher that all participants in the study honestly and accurately answered the questions on the demographic survey to the best of his or her ability.

It is assumed that all participants in the personal interviews were honest, to the extent that they believed they could be, in his or her responses to the questions asked without violating his or her loyalty to their employer. It is also assumed that people not responding to the request to complete the survey or participate in the personal interviews did so for legitimate reasons and not because of a fear of reprisal for participating in the study, nor for his or her potential answers to questions.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This purpose of the following literature review is to examine the concepts of this research study. While there are likely thousands of news articles, stories and reports and hundreds were read in preparing this research, there is little empirical research on the concept of using Facebook®, Twitter® or any other social networking tools or websites as instructional aides. There have been articles written for academic and professional trade journals that touch upon the concept. This literature review contains information from academic journals, trade journals, dissertations, internet, textbooks, other commercial research, industry publications and articles that were deemed appropriate to the research.

The three major concepts of the research are community colleges, social networking (focusing on Facebook® and Twitter®) and instructional aides. Below is a summarization of the relevant studies and literature on the three topics and sub-topics as they relate to the focus of the research.

The Oklahoma State University online library for the Stillwater and Tulsa Campuses was utilized to research the topic through title and keyword searches. The vast majority of the results returned by the database searches came from the EBSCO-Host website and the ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) database. Many articles were identified outside of the confines of the two databases.

The following is a partial list of key word and phrase searches which were used in searching for literature on the research topics.

- Community Colleges
- Facebook®
- Facebook® and Twitter®
- Facebook® in Community Colleges
- Facebook® in Education
- Facebook® in Higher Education
- Higher Education
- Social Networking
- Social Networking in Education
- Social Networking in Higher Education
- Technology in Higher Education
- Twitter®
- Twitter® in Community Colleges
- Twitter® in Education
- Twitter® in Higher Education

Concept 1: Community Colleges

Community colleges often referred to as junior colleges are two year colleges offering Associate degrees and certification programs. Community colleges are an entry point into higher education and the university system, offering students required general studies courses which are transferable to other colleges or universities. According to the Oklahoma Association of Community Colleges (2009),

In the 2008-09 academic school year, 71,654 (unduplicated), or 60% of all college freshman and sophomores attended community colleges. ... Of the 28,507 students awarded baccalaureate degrees in 2008-09 (including private institutions), 9,968 or 54% had at least one credit hour earned at an Oklahoma community college. (p. 1)

Most universities are known for conducting research and leading the way in the advancement of science, technology, engineering, medicine, the arts and more.

Community colleges are not known for research but instead known for teaching. As such community colleges are not always “new adopters” of new technology, but are typically slow in adopting new technology for two reasons. The first reason is they are not typically on the leading edge of research related to the latest and greatest technological advancements on the horizon. The second is funding; community colleges typically do not receive vast amounts of funding from the state or local taxing authority, generous benefactors or philanthropists to continually invest in the newest technology.

Rose State College was established in 1970 and is located in Midwest City, Oklahoma, a suburb of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Rose State College is a two year or community college and is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Universities (www.ncahlc.org, 2010). Rose State College is approved to offer the following seven fully online degree programs, “Associate of Arts in Liberal Studies, Associate of Arts in English, Associate of Arts in History, Associate of Arts in Social Sciences, Associate of Arts in Business, Associate in Applied Science in E-commerce & Webmaster Technology, and Associate in Applied Science in Library Technical Assistant” (www.ncahlc.org, 2010).

According to Issabelle Billen the Director of Information Systems and Institutional Research at Rose State College (RSC), during the Fall 2009 semester 24% of the 8982 RSC students had at least one online course (personal communication email, March 8, 2010). Ms. Billen also stated that during the Fall 2009 semester there were 138 online courses with an average enrollment of 26 students. Ms. Billen said that enrollment in traditionally offered classroom based courses for Fall 2009 totalled 1213 courses, averaging 19 students per class. Rose State College uses Desire to Learn (D2L) as its learning management system (LMS). Director of Learning Management at RSC, Chris Meyer (personal communication email, and March 1, 2010) provided Spring 2010 enrollment figures showing 6,772 students enrolled. Mr. Meyer also reported that Rose State College offered 155 course sections online and that number represented 99 distinct courses with an average enrollment of 24.36 students. Mr. Meyers also reported that 31.39% of the students enrolled were taking an online course.

Concept 2 – Social Media & Social Networking

The second concept, social networking, covers the popularity of social networking websites, and characteristics of social networking as they related to higher education. This research looks at two popular social networking websites, Facebook®, and Twitter®; also discussed are blogs, along with privacy and safety concerns. The use of social networking sites as instructional aides is addressed in the discussion of the third concept.

Social Networking is a popular term used in popular culture, society, news media, academia and elsewhere, yet few people know just exactly what the term means. Social media and social networking are new terms that are often used interchangeably by the

public and members of industry. Social media is a noun and is the platform used for social networking. Social media websites offer products or services also referred to as SaaS (Software as a Service) that allow users to social network. Thus the action of social networking results from individuals using social media that allows people to communicate with each other.

“Social networking tools are among the most dominant on the Web today. These services bring people together with common interests, experiences, and activities, allowing people to share their commonalities” (Bonk, 2009, p. 329).

Social networking is also accepted by many members of the business community who utilize it to promote their organizations products or services. Business schools such as Harvard, Columbia, Boston College and others offering courses on social networking “addressing the corporate demand for social-network-savvy employees” (Saadi, 2010, p.1). Organizations can create pages then search for potential customers or persons with similar interests and invite them to view and possibly join the organization’s page as a friend or follower. Ladika (2010) states “Companies that champion social networking believe that it enhances communication throughout the organization. Employees are less likely to tune out corporate messages if they are delivered interactively as a live chat or blog posting” (p. 20).

However, as a result of efforts to increase productivity, products like GFIWebmonitor® available from (www.gfi.com) allow organizations to block employee access to websites that would detract from employee productivity. Software company Teneros (<http://www.teneros.com>) sells a product that will track employees use of social networking sites on or off the job. Spector360 software from SpectorSoft Corporation

(www.spector360.com) allows employers to record any and all activity of a user, including recording instant messaging. Organizations both public and private, as well as educators and non-educators, struggle with whether or not to allow members of their organization or students in their schools to have access to social networking while on the job or at school. Still organizations use social networking to broadcast announcements or communicate with members. President Barack Obama sent out a text message just after taking the Presidential Oath of Office (Martin, 2009, p.1). A search of Facebook®, Twitter® and other social media websites will provide a researcher with a broad representation of businesses promoting themselves.

According to Bonk (2009), "In social networking sites, people can chat, share files, discuss ideas, email each other, and send emoticons [screen avatars that indicate an emotional feeling, such as a smiley face]. These are the standard communication vehicle for young people" (p. 333). People want social interaction and not simply to just send email and pictures over the Internet. The result of this need for a more personal level of contact led to the development of social media and its use for social networking. People now can put some of that personal feeling and interaction into his or her interactions by using the social media websites. Social media websites allow users to connect; this connecting is referred to as social networking. Bonk (2009) believes that with the use of social media, "the web is increasingly an oral culture" (p. 353). Bonk (2009) says "the experience [social networking] is synchronous and immediate, rather than asynchronous with long lags between interactions" (p. 353). Social Networking websites such as Facebook®, Twitter® and MySpace® have become extremely popular drawing hundreds of millions page views per month (www.compete.com, 2010).

Social Networking has global acceptance, which is an accomplishment given socio-political and cultural differences. According to ComScore.com (August 12, 2008) for the period ending June 2008 North America ranked third worldwide in the number of people engaging in social networking, behind Asia Pacific and Europe, ranked number one and two respectively see Table I.

Table I. Worldwide Social Networking Growth

Social Networking Growth by Worldwide Region
 June 2008 vs. June 2007
 Total Worldwide Audience, Age 15+ - Home and Work Locations
 Source: comScore World Metrix

	Unique Visitors (000)		Percent Change
	Jun-07	Jun-08	
Worldwide	464,437	580,510	25%
Asia Pacific	162,738	200,555	23%
Europe	122,527	165,256	35%
North America	120,848	131,255	9%
Latin America	40,098	53,248	33%
Middle East- Africa	18,226	30,197	66%

Source: Comscore World Metrix available online at:
http://www.comscore.com/Press_Events/Press_Releases/2008/08/Social_Networking_World_Wide/%28language%29/eng-US

Similar to other things in life, the popularity for social networking sites ebb and flow. Some websites are in vogue today and out of business tomorrow. New sites come online all the time to try and be the next *greatest place* online. This trend will likely continue as more companies enter the business of social networking. MySpace® was once the top social networking website and its numbers continue to decline as competitor Facebook® continues to grow in popularity. As a result MySpace® is changing its focus

to a music oriented social networking site where bands can promote their music and concerts to fans and potential fans.

There are hundreds of free social networking sites for people to join; it is just a matter of visiting the website and signing up for a free (in most cases) account. The majority of social networking websites make money by selling advertising or selling upgrades to users' accounts. People like to connect with others with whom they have things in common. It may be that a user is looking for people who work at the same company or possibly at a company that he or she wants to apply for a job. The social media sites have made it simple for users. Individuals can search for users by name and in some instances narrow the search by other keywords, schooling, city, or workplace.

Several types of social media sites focus on different market niches. Some popular examples in the United States include:

- Personal (non-adult): Classmates.com®, Facebook.com®, or MySpace.com®.
- Dating websites: Match.com®, eHarmony.com®
- Adult oriented dating: Fling.com®, xxxbook.com®
- Business related: LinkedIn.com®,

Most social networking websites are heavily based in textual content, allowing users to post paragraphs of content, pictures, video clips and more. Whereas other sites such as Twitter.com® allow users to send short bursts of information [140 characters or less] using SMS to large numbers of friends or “followers.” There are social networking aggregator websites that allow users to update multiple social network sites with just one posting. Website www.ping.fm allows users the ability to post content to approximately 29 social networking sites with just one post.

Table II from Compete.com shows unique visitors over the last 12 months ending in December 2010 to Facebook®.com, Twitter®.com, and MySpace.com. Readers should note monthly change percentages.

Table II. Unique Visitors to Facebook®, Twitter® and MySpace®.

Unique Visitors from 12/2009 to 12/2010						
	Facebook®.com		Twitter®.com		MySpace.com	
Date	Unique Visitors	Growth	Unique Visitors	Growth	Unique Visitors	Growth
Dec-09	117,616,535	4.45%	24,787,183	0.90%	76,943,688	3.62%
Jan-10	121,210,792	3.06%	24,813,434	0.11%	77,583,474	0.83%
Feb-10	118,547,252	-2.20%	23,867,354	-3.81%	74,939,198	-3.41%
Mar-10	122,932,172	3.70%	27,385,280	14.74%	75,558,559	0.83%
Apr-10	121,698,115	-1.00%	27,711,024	1.19%	70,854,599	-6.23%
May-10	123,783,111	1.71%	28,235,647	1.89%	67,625,040	-4.56%
Jun-10	124,708,005	0.75%	28,026,876	-0.74%	65,210,607	-3.57%
Jul-10	128,101,745	2.72%	28,887,203	3.07%	64,415,467	-1.22%
Aug-10	127,557,110	-0.43%	28,638,357	-0.86%	62,956,810	-2.26%
Sep-10	130,812,106	2.55%	28,353,704	-0.99%	59,475,424	-5.53%
Oct-10	133,541,892	2.09%	25,677,370	-9.44%	58,052,784	-2.39%
Nov-10	132,665,694	-0.66%	26,385,917	2.76%	51,874,016	-10.64%
Dec-10	134,050,710	1.04%	26,391,404	0.02%	47,073,376	-9.25%

Source:
<http://siteanalytics.compete.com/yahoo.com+google.com+Facebook.com+Twitter.com+myspace.com/?metric=uv&months=12>

Compete.com analyzes Internet traffic from 2 million users and reports on the top 1 million websites. See Appendix C for more details on the statistical methodology used by Compete.com and the numerical ranking methodology used for Tables II, III and IV.

Table III, shows the number of visits to the three social media websites. The chart indicates Facebook®.com has grown from monthly visits of just over 2.6 billion per month in December 2009 to just over 3.5 billion in December 2010 an increase of 35.414 percent. Twitter®.com according to the chart has dropped from 190 million in December

2009 to 171 million in December 2010, a decrease of 9.709 percent. The chart shows MySpace.com was the biggest loser of the three sites dropped from 999.9 million in December 2009 to 230.1 million in December 2010, a decrease of 76.986 percent.

Table III. Unique Visitors Sessions: Facebook®, Twitter® and MySpace®.

Visitor Sessions from 12/2009 to 12/2010						
	Facebook®.com®		Twitter®.com®		MySpace.com®	
Date	Unique Visitors	Growth	Unique Visitors	Growth	Unique Visitors	Growth
Dec-09	2,619,184,356	2.34%	190,078,644	0.98%	999,905,056	5.80%
Jan-10	2,684,932,183	2.51%	201,765,005	6.15%	998,218,291	-0.17%
Feb-10	2,499,366,728	-6.91%	195,210,565	-3.25%	841,665,563	-15.68%
Mar-10	2,876,423,412	15.09%	258,300,144	32.32%	818,455,619	-2.76%
Apr-10	2,831,355,850	-1.57%	234,382,643	-9.26%	725,395,243	-11.37%
May-10	3,082,525,077	8.87%	229,216,050	-2.20%	695,895,632	-4.07%
Jun-10	3,038,822,617	-1.42%	230,305,268	0.48%	656,607,887	-5.65%
Jul-10	3,152,327,206	3.74%	230,768,122	0.20%	598,360,104	-8.87%
Aug-10	3,426,543,545	8.70%	232,993,916	0.96%	630,083,236	5.30%
Sep-10	3,416,501,818	-0.29%	212,714,166	-8.70%	490,910,635	-22.09%
Oct-10	3,541,659,918	3.66%	186,046,399	-12.54%	422,872,396	-13.86%
Nov-10	3,522,649,213	-0.54%	174,213,264	-6.36%	318,840,585	-24.60%
Dec-10	3,546,745,385	0.68%	171,623,339	-1.49%	230,114,431	-27.83%

Source:

<http://siteanalytics.compete.com/yahoo.com+google.com+Facebook®.com+Twitter®.com+m yspace.com/?metric=segs&months=12>

Table IV, shows the ranking of the three websites from December 2009 to December 2010 and shows how many places the individual websites rose or declined in the rankings according to Compete.com. Facebook® stayed ranked in the number three position, while Twitter® started at number 38 for the period, moved up to 27 and ended the period at number 35. MySpace® started at number seven, rose to number five and fell to number 20. Compete.com is one of many different organizations that rank websites and activity.

Table IV. Compete.com Ranking of Facebook®, Twitter® and MySpace

Compete Rank from 12/2009 to 12/2010						
	Facebook®.com®		Twitter®.com®		MySpace.com®	
Date	Compete Rank	Growth	Compete Rank	Growth	Compete Rank	Growth
Dec-09	3	0	38	-5	7	0
Jan-10	3	0	33	5	5	2
Feb-10	3	0	30	3	5	0
Mar-10	3	0	30	0	6	-1
Apr-10	3	0	29	1	7	-1
May-10	3	0	28	1	9	-2
Jun-10	3	0	29	-1	10	-1
Jul-10	3	0	27	2	9	1
Aug-10	3	0	28	-1	10	-1
Sep-10	3	0	29	-1	14	-4
Oct-10	3	0	30	-1	14	0
Nov-10	3	0	30	0	18	-4
Dec-10	3	0	35	-5	20	-2

Source:

<http://siteanalytics.compete.com/yahoo.com+google.com+Facebook®.com+Twitter®.com+myspace.com/?metric=rank&months=12>

Violino (2009) talking about the growth of the “social networking phenomenon” stated that “scores of Internet users” including “Community colleges”.... “are getting into the act, launching online initiatives and harnessing the technology to communicate, promote, and conduct important school business” (p. 28). Violino (2009) suggests that students feel comfortable communicating using social networking and that communication builds relationships. Stevens-Long and Crowell (2002) make the point that “in cyberspace, everyone’s voice is equally loud. Everyone speaks without interruption” (p.167). Berg, et al.(2007) make the following recommendations using social networking for higher education:

- Listen to students.
- Be open to change.
- Be willing to try something new.

- Be aware of fears about technology.
- Create "collaboratories" (collaborative laboratories) of thought from across campus.
- Bring up social networking at every opportunity. (p. 1)

According to Armstrong and Franklin's report (2008), regarding the use of social networking in higher education,

Social networking sites such as Facebook®, MySpace®, and Bebo® allow the creation of online communities of people with common interests (which could include a course). These include a wide variety of tools (often allowing third party plug-ins) which may include blogs and media sharing. An interesting recent development is Ning® which allows users to set up their own social network sites, hosted by Ning®, and control who has access, and what facilities are made available. We are beginning to see this being used in learning and teaching as an alternative to the institutional virtual learning environment. (p. 8-9)

Five Best Practices to Harness Social Media in Learning (Clay, 2010)

1. Incorporate specific assignments using social media in the learning design.
2. Ensure learners are oriented to the virtual environment.
3. Help learners build a virtual presence to encourage peer-to-peer learning.
4. Build asynchronous (on-demand) social media with instructor-lead synchronous (scheduled) events.
5. Develop learner accountability. Track, monitor, and award participation. ([Edited for length], p.2)

Technology in education is not a new idea. The 2003 copy of Higher Learning Commission's *Handbook of Accreditation* has the following to say about technology and the future of education.

Guiding the work of the Commission into the future will be the core values of quality, integrity, innovation, diversity, inclusiveness, service, collaboration, and learning, each of which is of equal weight and importance. In the future, the Commission will be known for... Responding to innovative educational models based on new technology about learning, such as those incorporating online learning, collaborative initiatives, and distributed learning environments. (p.1.1-3)

Facebook®

According to Bonk (2009), "During the past few years, Facebook® has become highly popular among college professors and other academic professionals" (p. 329).

Selwyn (2009) talking about the question from academia regarding the value of Facebook® and MySpace said, "Whilst growing numbers of educators celebrate the potential of social networking to (re)engage learners with their studies, others fear that such applications compromise and disrupt young people's engagement with 'traditional' education provision" (Abstract).

Bowers-Campbell's (2008) article speaks of potential benefits of Facebook® use by instructors and,

highlights problems of low self-efficacy and inadequate self-regulated learning for developmental college students. The author argues that the use of Facebook®, a widely-used social networking technology, may be helpful in improving low

self-efficacy and self-regulated learning by increasing connection with the instructor, increasing social contact with classmates, and providing an opportunity to guide students in their responsible use of Facebook® technology. The author outlines instructional techniques that may be utilized with Facebook®, such as the instructor creating a profile and facilitating student contact via chat rooms. (p. 74)

Pempek, Yermolayeva and Clavert (2009) in their peer reviewed journal article for *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology* refer to their study saying,

In this study, 92 undergraduates completed a diary-like measure each day for a week, reporting daily time use and responding to an activities checklist to assess their use of the popular social networking site, Facebook®. At the end of the week, they also completed a follow-up survey. Results indicated that students use Facebook® approximately 30 min throughout the day as part of their daily routine. Students communicated on Facebook® using a one-to-many style, in which they were the creators disseminating content to their friends. Even so, they spent more time observing content on Facebook® than actually posting content.

(Abstract)

According to Bonk (2009) accounting firms Deloitte and KPMG “are using Facebook® as a means to get new hires to create social networks within the company” (p. 210). Bonk (2009) goes further to say that due to this “connection” between employees, turnover is reduced and that “Facebook® and Youtube® serve as employee retention and recruitment tools. At the same time, they are powerful vehicles for learning” (p. 210).

Twitter®

“Twitter® is a microblogging service that allows users to post and read 140-character status messages” (Ovadia, 2009, p.1). Schaffhauser (2009) advises that public school districts in Florida and Alaska are now using Twitter® to communicate with parents sending out announcements via Twitter® and “the Alaska School District is focusing its Tweets on school closures” (p. 1).

Dunlap and Lowenthal (2009) have their own ideas on the use of Twitter® and stated,

To be truly effective, online learning must facilitate the social process of learning. This involves providing space and opportunities for students and faculty to engage in social activities. Although learning management systems offer several tools that support social learning and student engagement, the scope, structure, and functionality of those tools can inhibit and restrain just-in-time social connections and interactions. In this teaching tip, we describe our use of Twitter® to encourage free-flowing just-in-time interactions and how these interactions can enhance social presence in online courses. We then describe instructional benefits of Twitter®, and conclude with guidelines for incorporating Twitter® in online courses. (p. 129)

Blogs

Dippold (2007) understands the concept of blogging and the positive aspects of blogs and states,

Due to the opportunities for self-reflection and interactive learning offered by blogs, they have also become one of the emerging tools in language pedagogy and higher education. At the same time, peer feedback is a technique that is increasingly used by educators instead of, or in addition to, tutor feedback, due to its potential to develop students' understanding of standards, to initiate peer feedback, and to engage the student in the process of learning and assessment. ... Drawing on students' blogs as well as the responses given by students in questionnaires and focus groups and responses by experienced tutors in interviews, the paper argues that blogs are potentially valuable tools for peer feedback, but entail the need to address specific issues regarding the choice of CMC tool for feedback tasks, training in the use of interactive online tools and the roles of teachers and students.[online Abstract].

Dippold (2009) says, "As a freestanding or integrated tool, blogs offer the educational community a number of advantages" (p. 19). Among the advantages cited by Dippold (2009) are;

- Wider audience
- Exchange of resources
- Peer evaluations
- Critical thinking
- Collaboration
- Self-reflection (p. 19)

Privacy and Safety

Privacy and safety online are among the most discussed topics. Meister and Willyerd, (2010) address the issue saying,

To mediate an organization's concerns for security while balancing the need to allow people to connect, expect to see a proliferation of platforms aimed at Facebook®-type applications in the organization. Furthermore, expect some of these platforms to be specifically developed in the learning field and incorporated or integrated with the LMS. Learning functions will be able to determine which content is most in demand by perusing the most popular and most viewed content, and then assembling content developed by contributors into formal learning courses. (p.1)

Schaffhauser (2008), discussed privacy issues for educators after a North Carolina teacher was suspended for putting non-flattering remarks about her inner city school on Facebook®. In addition, “four other teachers in the district are also being disciplined for statements and photos posted to their Facebook® pages” (Schaffhauser, 2008, p. 1).

Freedom of speech is only one issue; privacy and safety are two more key issues. Baker and Favata (2005) talk about online safety and anonymity saying,

“Although social networking can be made to seem safe and anonymous, it is anything but that for unsuspecting young people. When a youngster posts on social networking sites it’s not just his or her friends who are looking, the whole world is watching. Teach students to be safe—keep them out of the social networking sites” (p.9).

According to Stroud (2009), “School districts are turning the tables against cyber bullies, using technology to flush out and crack down on online harassment” (p. 1).

Student safety from cyber-bullying may cause concern for some users. Users of most large social networking sites can block contact from other users who are being abusive or threatening. The State of Oklahoma (n.d.) has passed such laws Oklahoma Statute Title 21 § 1172 (n.d. a) and Oklahoma Statute Title 21 § 1173 (n.d. b).

Six Things You Should Never Reveal on Facebook® (Kristof, 2010)

1. Your birth date and place
2. Vacation plans
3. Home address
4. Confessionals
5. Password clues
6. Risky behaviors (p. 1, [edited for length])

Seven Things You Should Stop Doing Now on Facebook® (Consumer Reports, 2010)

1. Using a weak password
2. Leaving your full birth date in your profile.
3. Overlooking useful privacy controls
4. Posting your child’s name in a caption
5. Mentioning that you will be away from home
6. Letting search engines find you
7. Permitting youngsters to use Facebook® unsupervised (p. ,1[edited for length])

Public schools (K-12) are working to meet the need to communicate with students and parents while making user safety and privacy a top priority. Organizations, such as

The Eighth Floor, offer professional development for public school teachers. The Eighth Floor Course Catalog (2009) offers school teachers classes on social networking, blogs, wikis, podcasting, RSS feeds, Google Doc & Spreadsheets and more. (p. 6-7).

Demski (2009), talks about private social networking sites used by K-12 schools. The list of private sites includes www.SayWire.com, www.YourSphere.com, and www.IMBee.com. The three sites focus primarily on students between 8 and 14. Demski (2009) points out the YourSphere's commitment to the safety of the children using the YourSphere system saying,

Yoursphere collects the parent's name, date of birth, and Social Security number and screens the information over a database of 4 billion records until a match is found that confirms the identity. Once the parent's identity is established and clears a sex offender registry, the child is accepted. For users between the ages of 13 and 18, parental involvement with Yoursphere ends after the sign-up process is complete. Parents of members ages 9 through 12, however, have access to a dashboard where they can see what their child has contributed to the community. (p. 1).

A Futurelab article (2006) on social software and learning says "Call it community learning, communicative learning or collaborative learning, at its heart learning is a social process" (p. 11). The "GO Social Learning Platform solution for educational institutions focuses on the particular social tools that students, teachers, and administrators can use to connect and share ideas through discussion forums, calendars, media galleries, collaboration workgroups, and more" (Shah, 2010, p. 78).

Concept 3 – Instructional Aides

The third concept, instructional aides will look at course delivery modalities, communication with students, learning styles, value of instructional aides, classroom instructional aides, online aides inside an LMS, and the Internet using social networking, Facebook®, Twitter®, and blogs as instructional aides.

According to Knowles et al. (2005), “technology presents bold new opportunities for providing adults with rich learning experiences in the andragogical tradition” (p. 237). Knowles et al. (2005) point out three new opportunities. “First, it directly caters to adults’ desire to be self-directed in their learning” (p. 237). “Second, well-developed computer-based instruction enables adults to tailor the learning experience to fit their prior experiences” (p. 237). And “third, if properly designed, technology-based instruction easily allows learners to tailor the learning to their real-world problems” (p. 237). Knowles et al. (2005) does admit there are “special challenges” that accompany these opportunities, primarily the easy access to information on the Internet “does not ensure learning” (p. 237). Knowles et al (2005) points to other issues, including “learner impatience” and learners’ needs for “developed self-directed learning skills” (p. 237). Knowles et al. (2005) also points out that in the classroom setting the instructor can change the presentation to meet the needs of the students; however, the online setting requires the “learners be ready for self-directed learning” (p. 237). Knowles et al. (2005) sums it up by saying it is not uncommon to discover that “the intended learners do not have the metacognitive skills, motivation, or confidence to engage in the required level of self-directed learning” (p. 237).

College faculty members have the ability to use many different instructional aides. Colleges use the term “academic freedom” when referring to what an instructor is allowed to do in order to provide instruction to the students. Academic freedom allows instructors to use unconventional teaching methods, styles, or examples if necessary when instructing a class. Instructional aides have varied widely and have grown and progressed with increased technology. Instructional aides have included slate boards with chalk, overhead projectors, opaque projectors, flip charts, tape recorders, slide rules, calculators, computers, PowerPoint® presentations, hand-held audience response systems, text messaging and others.

Course Delivery Modes

There are a few key instructional delivery modes and numerous ways within each of those to deliver the content to the student. Still, two basic ways exist to deliver education. The most obvious method is in-person or face-to-face. Traditional school classrooms in the United States use face-to-face for students in grades K through 12. Traditional brick and mortar colleges and universities also use classrooms to deliver face-to-face instruction as the primary mode, in most instances, of course delivery. There are however, numerous completely online colleges and universities, and more traditional colleges and universities are offering online courses. As adults, people find that the majority of on-the-job training takes place face-to-face with someone showing the employee how to perform the task. Bonk and Zhang (2008) present the “R2D2 Model” or “read, reflect, display, do” for learning to be effective (p.1).

Rudestam and Schoenholtz-Read (2002), state, “ Good education is ‘demand driven.’ It meets the individual needs of learners and is what in networking terminology called ‘pull’ technology rather than ‘push’ technology” (p. 16). Many institutions realize there will always be a need for face-to-face instruction. However, to meet the needs of students, institutions need to offer face-to-face courses that have an online mechanism.

Draves (2007) provides eleven “ways you can use the web to enhance your face-to-face class:

1. Post homework assignments on the web.
2. Post quiz or test answers on the web.
3. Post the course outline, bibliography, and syllabus online.
4. Have students submit essays and papers as e-mail attachments.
5. Post student work, such as a paper, on the web.
6. Provide links to useful and relevant websites.
7. Post relevant articles online.
8. Produce recorded audio of some of your lectures and post it.
9. Hold online discussions in between your face-to-face meetings.
10. Establish student study groups online to assist them in studying for your final exam.
11. Post quizzes or preparatory tests online to help students study for a final test. (p. 20).

The second instructional delivery mode is distance learning which has many strategies or approaches and started with storytelling as a method of information transfer. The introduction of mail service enabled students to take correspondence or *mail-order*

courses from the traditional brick and mortar schools. As the name distance learning implies it is learning from a distance i.e... not face to face or in person. All non face-to-face learning is distance learning in the broadest sense. The distance learning format allows the delivery of instruction and instructional material via correspondence course, computer based training, Internet courses and more.

The introduction of the Internet gave traditional brick and mortar schools the opportunity to embrace the new technology and start offering online or Internet courses. The concept of Internet courses with lower overhead costs lead to the formation of online colleges and universities such as NorthCentral University and University of Phoenix. Advancements in technology allow the Internet's availability on cell phones and other web enabled mobile devices. A student can now go to his or her online class, check email, check social networking accounts such as Facebook® and Twitter® and more. Some students have portable e-book readers such as the Kindle® or the Nook® and can surf the web and read books easily online. Draves (2007), points out "several ways that online learning can be better than classroom learning... (1) a learner can learn during his or her peak learning time... (2) a learner can learn at his or her own speed... (3) a learner can focus specific content areas... (4) a learner can test himself daily... (5) a learner can interact more with the teacher"(p. 9-11).

Wise, Padmanabhana, and Duffy (2009) talk about contextual differences between online and face-to-face students saying,

Though a lack of shared context can be a problem in face-to-face learning environments, the problem is particularly acute in online distance learning

environments for two reasons. First, while face-to-face learners may have basic commonalities such as geographic proximity and connection to a local culture (loosely defined), online learners have no such necessary ties and thus are less likely to draw on similar experience bases. Second, while face-to-face conversations often have rapidly sequenced turns of talk in which interpretational confusions can be detected and remedied, online conversations in distance learning environments are commonly characterized by a lack of responsiveness between learners and long lag times between comments, making it more likely that interpretational confusions remain unrepaired. (p. 318)

“Constructivism stresses that all knowledge is context bound, and that individuals make personal meaning of their learning experiences” (Knowles, et al., 2005, p. 192). Constructivists according to Knowles et al. (2005) believe that learning experiences are cumulative and build upon previous experiences to help learners retain and use the information.

Allen (2006) suggests “fostering dynamic interactive learning experiences cannot be done” using the methods of delivering traditional face-to-face content (p. 44). Draves believes that “online education is transforming education” (2007, p. 1). According to Draves (2007), “the Internet is the biggest technological change in education and learning since the advent of the printed book some 500 years ago. It is destroying the traditional classroom and replacing it with an even better way to learn and teach” (p. 5).

Draves (2007) gives his “Top 10 reasons why cognitive learning on the Internet is BETTER than traditional in-person presentations” in reverse order as follows:

- Number 10. You can learn at your own peak learning time of the day.
- Number 9. You can learn at your own speed.
- Number 8. You can learn faster.
- Number 7. You can interact more with the teacher and other participants.
- Number 6. There are more topics and subjects online.
- Number 5. Participants come from around the world.
- Number 4. You can learn from some of the foremost authorities and experts.
- Number 3. Online learning is less expensive and thus more accessible.
- Number 2. Internet links provide more resources.
- Number 1. You can form a virtual community. (p. 12)

Draves (2007) states, “all online classrooms have three common elements: (1) Content, (2) Interaction, (3) Assessment” (p. 31). Draves elaborates on the three elements saying “the content of online courses is delivered in at least three ways: 1) written and graphic; 2) audio; and 3) video, animation, and moving pictures” (p.32). Interaction according to Draves takes place through email, asynchronous discussions and live chat rooms (p. 39). The assessment element according to Draves takes place through the use of online surveys, quizzes and tests (p. 39-40).

Interaction is a key to teaching and learning in the classroom and online.
“Interactive, on-line learning will revolutionize education” (Celente, 1997, p.249).

Draves (2007) say the “interaction between participants and the teacher” is the “heart and soul of an online course” (p. 11). According the Chapnick and Meloy (2005), the goal is to “create an organic model for lifelong eLearning” and “transform eLearning from a delivery channel to an engagement channel” (p.47). “eLearning that taps into participants’ hearts (emotions) as well as their heads (cognition and intellect) will have the greatest impact” (Chapnick and Meloy, 2005, p. 79).

Instructors have the option of utilizing a variety of instructional tools and delivery methods to appeal to a wide variety of learners. The goal is to *reach* or *connect* with the different types of learners. Most instructors whether knowingly or not, use a variety of methods or instructional aides to deliver instruction or content to the student either in person or electronically.. The book “*The Adult Learner*” states “many things can only be learned by interacting with other people, so social learning skills are most important (Knowles, Holton III, Swanson, 2005, p.319).” According to Meister and Willyerd (2010), “for a growing number of companies, the way to help employees keep their skills up to date is social learning – collaborative, immediate, relevant and presented in the context of an individual’s unique work environment” (p. 1). Many educators use a dual-coding to designing content that reaches more than one specific learning type or style student. (Bonk, Zhang, 2008, p.21).

Communication with students

Communication using computers takes on many forms including electronic mail referred to as *e-mail* or *email*, *instant messaging* and more. Today, students are just as

likely to use mobile phones and pagers utilizing SMS (Short Messaging Service) allowing messages of up to 140 characters.

The acceptance of computers and the introduction of the Internet gave the consumer global reach from his or her desktop. Individuals can use the Internet to chat, share photos, stream live video, and more. The advances in mobile phone technology in the last five years allow space for a viewing screen and an Internet connection on the mobile phone. The user of an Internet enabled mobile phone can surf or browse the Internet from his or her mobile phone. No longer is a person limited to surfing or browsing the Internet from his or her desktop computer. The mobile Internet connection has placed the ability to have global connectivity in the palm of the users' hand almost anytime and almost anywhere.

Rudestam and Schoenholtz-Read (2002), say “success in the online environment depends on the creation of safe spaces for conversation, problem solving, and intimacy among students who might never meet. The virtual online space provides metaphorical cafés for human contact” (p. 25). “The café becomes a place for academic and pragmatic learning as well as a haven for the emotional contact that is so necessary for sustenance in the online community” (Rudestam and Schoenholtz-Read, 2002, p. 25).

Foulger, Ewbank, Kay, Popp and Carter (2009), state that “MySpace and Facebook® are innovative digital communication tools that surpass traditional means of social interaction. However, in some instances in which educators have used these tools, public reactions to them have resulted in sanctions” (Abstract). Alexander (2008) speaking on the popularity of social networking software states it, “proves that people very much want to communicate with others online. They love reading other writers,

listening and communicating on their pod casts, checking their daily lives via Twitter®, laughing at the photos on MySpace” (p. 198).

Berg, Berquam and Christoph (2007) remind those in higher education that though opportunities and constraints exist with “diverse populations of students, administrators and faculty” on campus, people in higher education should “use that opportunity to make something happen” (p. 1). Podcast Alley in August 2006 according to Bonk and Zhang (2008) “indexed more than 23,000 podcast sites, nearly 1,000 of which were educational podcasts” and “contained more than 830,000 individual podcasts episodes” (p. 21). O’Hanlon (2007) points out that some educators are “recognizing the value that social networks offer in disseminating information and encouraging communication in a format that students crave, school districts nationwide are taking an if-you-can't-beat-'em-join-'em attitude and launching their own school-oriented social networks” (p. 1).

“Student collaboration can also involve more traditional instructor roles, such as using student engagement, even in evaluating individual student learning” (Draves, 2007, p. 1). One social networking prediction of Meister and Willyerd, (2010) is that “Peer-to-peer learning blossoms” stating,

When people attend conferences or workshops, it's not unusual to read in the evaluations that one of the most beneficial aspects of the event was the ability to network and learn from peers. Through technology, that peer-to-peer learning has now taken on a whole new level of meaning. While baby boomer managers fret that time spent on Facebook® is a time waster, Millennials can't imagine getting

their work done without relying on the tribe they've collected through their online social networks (p.1).

Learning Styles

People teach and learn in both formal and informal settings. An example of a formal setting would be a traditional school classroom. An example of an informal setting would be the salesperson explaining to a potential customer the directions on how properly to use a product. Draves (2007) points out “it is clear that we all do not learn one way, at one speed, or at one proficiency” (p. 2).

There are many approaches to teaching; one is the SAVI approach to teaching and training activities. SAVI was developed by Dave Meier Director of the Accelerated Learning Center. SAVI is an acronym (Meier, 2000) for four learning styles addressed here:

- Somatic (learning by physical activity that uses the body in some way)
- Auditory (learning by talking and social interaction)
- Visual (learning by watching and listening)
- Intellectual (learning by reflecting, thinking, and analyzing) (p. 42)

Instructors need to be willing and able to adapt and convert face-to-face classroom instruction and interaction to an online environment. Draves (2007) also believes that the process works both ways and that most online course content can be adapted for face-to-face courses (p. 20). Knowles et al. (2005), referring to “social learning” said “many things can only be learned by interacting with other people” (p. 319). However as Draves (2007), points out,

learners learn more, while working at their own speed, time and manner, over the Internet. There is more interaction among teachers and learners than traditional in-person presentations.... Learners and teachers can come together from all over the world, and they are able to form a virtual community that will kindle long-term relationships. (p. 5).

According to Conti (2004) “several different philosophical schools exist; they differ in the instructor having either a teacher-centered or learner centered teaching style” (p. 77). “In this teacher-centered approach, the teacher’s role is to design an environment which stimulates the desired behavior and discourages those that have been determined to be undesirable” (p. 77). “The central element in a learner-centered approach is trust; while the teacher is always available to help, the teacher trusts students to take responsibility for their own learning” (Conti, 2004, p. 78).

Schank (2002) believes that online learning needs to be engaging and “training that is on a computer, on the Web or not, must involve a simulation of some type. People need to do in order to learn” (p.10). Schank goes on to state “Effective e-learning requires real experience for use as a guide. We learn best from reality” (p. 12).

Allen (2006) areas to look at during the design phase include: learners ability to use the technology, the learning objectives, course content, course activities, technology standards (p. 15-16). Bonk and Zhang (2008) suggest online “web tours and safaris” (p. 28), “online webinars” (p. 44), “a course blog Web site where course resources and materials are shared with students” (p.93), “team blogs” (p. 94), “online resource libraries” (p. 95), “social networking linkages” (p. 97), and “synchronous and asynchronous discussion combinations” (p. 100) to help students learn.

Learning theory has progressed from pedagogy to andragogy to heutagogy. The Pedagogy model focused on teaching children. Knowles et al. (2005) explains it, “The pedagogical model assigns to the teacher full responsibility for making all decisions about what will be learned, how it will be learned, when it will be learned, and if it has been learned” (p. 61). The andragogy model is built on teaching adults. According to Knowles, et al. (2005) andragogy has three dimensions: “(1) goals and purposes for learning, (2) individual and situational differences, and (3) andragogy; core adult learning principles” (p.148). According to Knowles et al. (2005) it is a “three-dimensional model” which “recognizes the lack of homogeneity among learners and learning situations, and illustrates that the learning transaction is a multifaceted activity” (p. 148). The heutagogy theory according to Chapnick and Meloy (2005) is about the self-directed and self-determined learner (p. 36, 46).

Instructional Aides

An instructional aide is any item that is used in conjunction with teaching or instructing. A more creative and imaginative instructor has a greater possibility of turning a simple item like a paper-clip into a lesson on metallurgy. Instructional aides are not limited to classroom use only. Instructional aides can and should be used online. A school’s LMS is an instructional aide, as well as Facebook®, Twitter®, blogs and other social networking sites.

Bonk and Zhang (2008) suggest, “Learners might use online technology tools and aids” for the following reasons: (1) blogging about the week’s readings, (2) outlining and reevaluating key points for a paper or speech, (3) annotating comments on the paper of a team member or critical friend, (4) pausing or reevaluating content in a video streamed

presentation, (5) summarizing the results of a role play activity, (6) self-testing knowledge of a chapter or a topic, (7) comparing and contrasting different viewpoints in a debate, or (8) providing peer comments on a paper. (p. 77)

A school's LMS serves multiple purposes for the student and the instructor. Instructors benefit from an LMS's content management delivery, tracking and grading functions. Students benefit from an LMS in terms of its 24/7 availability and the ability to review the same content multiple times. It is not plausible for instructors to be available 24/7 or to repeat at will the exact same lecture, in this respect an LMS is an instructional aide.

Dunlap and Lowenthal (2009) came to the realization after teaching for some years using an LMS,

that we could not achieve a natural communication flow with students only using the tedious, multi-step process required. The typical LMS requires logging in, getting into the specific course's shell, entering the specific discussion forum, posting a question ... and then staying connected to the LMS while waiting for someone to respond — or giving up and moving on to other work, thoughts, and issues. (p. 1)

According to Waters (2009), D2L “has baked social networking into its product offering.” D2L contains “a set of Web 2.0 standard interface components, including a browser-based dashboard and social tagging tools” (Waters, 2009, p. 1). Water's in his interview with “Desire2Learn CEO John Baker says his company is ‘harnessing the power of the social network’ to provide an e-portfolio that's more of a social learning platform” adding “It's all about a personalized learning experience”(2009, p. 1).

Online learning or e-learning is here to stay. “Teaching online is a totally new experience. And it is taking place as part of an economic, social and educational transformation of the way we work, live and learn in the Information Age of the 21st century” (Draves, 2007, p. 1).

Draves (2007) states, “Online learning will do for society what the tractor did for food” meaning it will be less expensive and more abundant (p. 14). Draves (2007) further states “the Internet will do the same for education;” people will be able to learn more at a lower cost (p. 14). Bonk and Zhang (2008) state “most online courses, no matter what the discipline, topic, audience, or work sector, are limited in scope and fail to take advantage of the abundant educational opportunities in the Web of Learning ” (p. 3). Schank (2002) states, “e-Learning is cheaper, not because it allows you to put your training manual on a Web page, but because it allows many students to experience training that was built once and then continuously delivered” (p. xv).

Allen (2006) states, “the term e-learning applies to the broad range of ways computing and communication technologies can be used for teaching and learning” (p. xi) and defines e-learning as the “delivery of carefully constructed instructional events through computing technologies” (p. xii). Bonk and Zhang (2008) point to the fact that, “Online knowledge acquisition may also happen in virtual classrooms or Web conferences, with application sharing, Web touring, surveys and polls, online presentations, and chats” (p. 23).

According to Bozarth (2005), benefits of using e-learning include “it can ensure consistency in delivery; everyone gets the same message every time” and “good e-learning gives the learner some control over when and where to take the program, in

choosing to take breaks (or not)” and “used appropriately, e-learning is not only ‘just-in-time’ but also ‘just-for-me’” (p. 10). According to Chapnick and Meloy (2009),

eLearning owes its existence to andragogy. It was born out of the dream that computers would provide people with a new and exciting way to take control of their own learning. Informal, or less-structured, eLearning, has done wonders for learners’ ability to be self-directed” (p. 33).

Dr. Daniel Bernardi, Professor at University of Arizona in an interview for the Chapnick and Meloy’s (2005) book *Renaissance Elearning, Creating Dramatic and Unconventional Learning Experiences*, stated that they take the approach of letting the “content drive the form and not the other way around. WebCT and Blackboard have a template where you shove content into a form” (p.73). Bernardi continues “You’re trying to reach students who are in an environment that’s supposed to be cutting-edge research. You can’t go to it with the cookie cutter approach” (p. 74). “On-line course providers must embrace the web’s potential to match students with the kinds of timely knowledge and skills that address current issues head on and enable them to thrive within the global marketplace. (Masoni, 2010, p. 1). “It is not enough for a course to be accessible online; it must also be designed in a way that keys into the digital pulse endemic to the web. (Masoni, 2010, p. 1).

Watkins (2005) speaking on integrating online learning activities, stated that with the use of such activities,

you can transform your online courses into learning experiences where e-learners are immersed in thoughtful discussions, challenged by course content, motivated to work together as teams on interactive exercises, and involved in the

development of the learning communities that are too often lost when courses are offered online. (p. 2).

Schank (2002) puts it simply “when learning isn’t engaging, it’s not learning” (p. 10). According to Chapnick and Meloy (2005), “writing objectives is one of the first steps to take when developing eLearning” (p. 79). Watkins (2005) believes “by including a variety of interactive online experiences in your e-learning courses, you can improve retention rates, increase learner participation, achieve your learning objectives, develop online learning communities, and ensure that your online course engages learners” (p. 3-4). Online learners have some obstacles as Bozarth (2005) points out “one of the biggest obstacles for e-learners in the problem of interruptions” (p. 26).

Social networking sites as instructional aides

The acceptance of computers and the introduction of the Internet gave the consumer global reach from his or her desktop. Individuals can use the Internet to chat, share photos, stream live video, and more. The advances in mobile phone technology in the last five years allow space for a viewing screen and an Internet connection on the mobile phone. The user of an Internet enabled mobile phone can surf or browse the Internet from his or her mobile phone. No longer is a person limited to surfing or browsing the Internet from his or her desktop computer. The mobile Internet connection has placed the ability to have global connectivity in the palm of the users’ hand almost anytime and almost anywhere. Students can and have sat in class and surfed the Internet on their hand-held device. Sometimes the surfing is relevant and on the topic being discussed; other times the opposite is true. Students surfing the Internet in class may be

doing so because the instructor failed to keep the interest of the student or did not keep the student interacting and involved.

Rhoades, Irani, Telg & Meyers (2008) talking about the opportunity for instructors to use social networking sites said:

The frequent usage of social networking sites like Facebook® and MySpace® offer a unique new teaching opportunity to instructors. Because many students are familiar with these programs and the technology involved, instructors can utilize the communication tools in these programs to engage students in a manner comfortable and enjoyable to them. Instructors can utilize these resources to prompt out-of-class discussions and post announcements for students. These technologies offer students a real world example to draw from during discussions on information credibility and online resources. Emerging sites like wikis and social networking sites like Second Life are being explored by educators and may also offer new avenues to take the classroom outside of the classroom. (p. 114-115).

Kapuler (2010) offers his list of the “top ten social networks for education”:

1. Twitter®
2. Classroom 2.0
3. Facebook®
4. Plurk
5. Educators PLN
6. Learn Central
7. ISTE Community

8. Edutopia
9. Collaborative Translation
10. IT4ALL (p. 1).

Batson (2010). a proponent of online education using social networking, talks about the benefit of this new approach to learning saying,

Most importantly, their learning experiences often involve conversation, a process, and this conversation can include teachers and others with knowledge in their field. The skills students gain in the process are those they need to join a wider community and succeed in today's economy. Colleges and universities need to do more to incorporate social software into their courses and methodologies. I hear about faculty and administrators regularly about transformations of entire programs to social/conversational/active learning paradigm today. This extension of the learning conversation online (with blogs, wikis, email, texting, chat, conferencing systems, portfolios, and so on) helps students develop online literacy skills. Though it is dependent on technology, it represents a return to the roots of human learning. Learning has always involved conversation. In fact, knowledge results from, or increasing is, consensus building through conversation. (p. 1).

Bingham's (2009) article *Learning gets social* points out the opportunity for educators of all types to broaden their impact saying,

In a learning profession, we have never had the opportunity to broaden our impact, as we do today, through informal learning. People are demanding it, the

technology is driving it, and the economy is requiring it. The pieces are there, and now is the time to connect those pieces to create a learning masterpiece that meaningfully demonstrates the critical importance of each and every one of your roles. (p. 61).

Facebook®

Whether or not instructor or administrators want to admit it as Schroeder and Greenbowe (2009) point out,

the fact remains that students spend a significant amount of time interacting on social networking sites and Facebook® offers a dynamic and unthreatening environment for students to communicate not only with the instructor or a small study group but also with all other students in the course. (p. 2)

Ellison's (2007) presentation on "*Using Facebook® In the Classroom, Potential Benefits*" cited the following positive aspects:

- Already integrated into students' daily practices
- Higher level of engagement
- Potential to make identity information more salient during class discussions
- Adds *social* peer-to-peer component
- Digital literacy skills (slide 37)

Ganster and Schumacher (2009) describe the use of Facebook® fan pages by the State University of New York at Buffalo to "virtually reach out to patrons and market library services" (p. 111). "The librarians can update and inform students, faculty, and

staff of new events, workshops, library services, and resources” (Ganster & Schumacher, 2009, p. 111).

Nielsen’s (2011) article *Ten Ways Facebook® Strengthens the Student-Teacher Connection* offers the following suggestions [edited for length].

1. The students also explained how Facebook® has helped strengthen their connections with teachers and their principal. They also shared they do not expect their teachers to be friends with them on Facebook®, but appreciate it when they do. Below are the ways that their teachers, principal, and others have found Facebook® to be an effective tool in strengthening the educator-student bond, reaching out to a student in need.
2. Getting a peek into the lives of students.
3. The family connection.
4. Instant learning and homework support.
5. Snow day update.
6. Facebook® lets teachers create a no-excuses environment.
7. Snow days and sick days do not hold you back.
8. Using Facebook® teaches you how to deal with the world and the way it works.
9. Facebook® as a learning portal.
10. Mobilize in an instant. (p. 1).

One student attending the 2011 Heartland e-Learning conference said they had two classes where the instructor used Facebook® to communicate with students. In preparation for this research study, this concept was tested using two online courses and

attempted to utilize Facebook® as an instructional aide. The first class was asked to join or friend a Facebook® fan page for the course. One student replied with “I don’t want any of these people knowing anything about me and my situation.” The second course showed a little more promise with two students logging into a group page set-up for the class. Both students thought it was kind-of-cool that we were using Facebook® for class; however both students remarked similarly that “all the stuff we need to know for class will still be posted in D2L.” Neither student returned to the Facebook® group page or posted additional content on the page.

Ellison’s (2007) presentation on “*Using Facebook® In the Classroom, Potential Benefits*” cited the following “Concerns of Integrating Facebook® into Formal Learning:”

- Facebook®: accountability to the University? ie... terms of service, IP, privacy, archiving
- Exposure to advertising messages
- Non-users?
- FERPA consideration?
- Reshaping of instructor-student relationship?
- Student resistance? (Slide 40)

Software developers working for Facebook® and independently have developed software applications to use within Facebook®. Some of the applications are for use in an educational environment by students and or teachers. A search of Facebook®’s® applications page listed the following applications for education among the hundreds of applications for all topics. Partial list of Facebook® (2011) education related applications

- BlackBoard Learn -- Sends course information from your BlackBoard® course to your Facebook® account.
- CampusBuddy -- Application allows users to connect with classmates, past and present.
- Courses 2.0 -- The large class schedule-sharing application on Facebook®
- ExploreU -- Site lets helps match users and colleges.
- Google® Translate -- Translation with several different countries
- Maricopa Community Colleges and others including Arizona State University have applications to connect with student for recruitment, admission, activities, athletics, course work, and more.
- Quizlet -- Application allows users to build flash cards or select already constructed educational flashcards.
- StudyStack -- Educational flashcards
- Typing Speed -- Practice Typing to improve speed.
- Worldcat -- Online network of library content and services. (p.1)

Twitter®

Dunlap and Lowenthal (2009) shared the following information on how they got started using Twitter®,

We initially explored Twitter® as an instructional tool to provide an informal, just-in-time way for our students to connect with each other and with us throughout the day. We invited students to participate in Twitter® with us, explaining our goals (student-faculty connection and enhanced student

engagement). We did not require their participation because we recognized that they might already be involved in social-networking activities and not want to take on more, or because of their concerns about privacy and their online footprints (p. 1).

Dunlap and Lowenthal (2009) say, "Educators, specifically, are using Twitter® to establish and develop personal learning network" (p. 1). Dunlap and Lowenthal (2009) say that using Twitter® is "enabling us to connect and work with our students outside of the LMS, Web 2.0 tools — specifically social-networking tools — allow us to establish natural, free-flowing, just-in-time contact with students, and them with us" (p. 1). Dunlap and Lowenthal (2009) add, "the Web 2.0 tool that has helped us achieve this objective more than any other is Twitter®" (p. 1).

Aspden and Thorpe (2009) speaking on the benefits of Twitter® state that users can "update anytime, almost anywhere, and through a variety of devices that are integral to their lives (cell phones, laptops, desktop PCs)" (p. 1). Aspden and Thorpe (2009) state an added benefit of the anytime, anywhere input on Twitter® "negates the difficulties associated with information recall and minimizes the risk of not having the appropriate equipment to record key events" (p. 1). Miller-Merrell (2009) states, "Twitter® is a great way to receive real-time feedback and opinions from followers" and "seek input from your audience" (p. 93).

Bonk and Zhang (2008) state there are four good reasons to incorporate instant messaging or texting into courses.

First, there is an increased sense of awareness that others in your course are online and might be available for consultation or support.... Second, there is immediate

feedback and rapid responsiveness, also known as instructional immediacy, that occurs in IM [instant messaging] but is much less likely with asynchronous conferencing.... Third, such tools are easy and convenient to use. (p. 24).

Bonk and Zhang (2008) say the fourth, reason is the similarity to having a conversation with someone and adds that individuals “can participate in an IM while completing other tasks” (p. 24).

Dunlap and Lowenthal (2009) comment on their perception of the advantage that Twitter® has over Facebook® saying, “Twitter® is a less bounded, more open networking tool that allows asymmetric relationships. Facebook® is a more bounded community, requiring symmetric relationships” (p. 1). Twitter® users do not have a reciprocal relationship requiring both parties to consent to a “social networking” affiliation [on Twitter® the term is ‘follower’]. Facebook®’s structure requires that one user makes the request for the affiliation [on Facebook® the term is ‘friend’] and the other user can confirm or accept the “friend” request.

Software developers have developed applications for Twitter® that allow users to do more on Twitter® and just tweet. Instructors can use Twitter® to poll the students, just like using an audience response system with “clickers.” “There are different Twitter® applications that are polling tools such as Twtpoll, Poll Everywhere, and StrawPoll. “Poll Everywhere”, even enable[s] students to vote on the web or with text messaging” (Dunlap and Lowenthal, 2009, p. 1). Dunlap and Lowenthal (2009) understand that “polling can enhance student engagement during a class as well as provide information regarding the students’ conceptual understanding” (p. 1). Twitcam is another application that allows users to stream live video and chat at the same time.

Aspden and Thorpe's (2009) research found "The limited length of tweets — 140 characters — meant that updates were concise and focused on the key question. This also encouraged participants to be selective in capturing the most significant aspects to share" (p. 1).

Mansfield's (2009) article *10 Twitter® Tips for Higher Education; Making a Home in the Twitter®verse, One Tweet At a Time* contains 10 excellent tips for using Twitter® in higher education. Dunlap and Lowenthal (2009) understand the benefits and drawbacks associated with all instructional activities,

One benefit of using Twitter® in on-campus courses is tapping into the back channel of communication. Back-channeling is a term linguists use to refer to the feedback listeners share — without interrupting the speaker — related to their developing understanding and appreciation of what is being said, which is then monitored by the speaker (p. 1).

One drawback is backchannels may become negative if the students want to use it as a tool for complaints and disruptive if it is displayed live so the instructor and the students see the live, real-time postings. Dunlap and Lowenthal (2009) believe "Twitter®, despite its drawbacks (and really the drawbacks of social networking in general), can add value to online and face-to-face university courses" (p.1). Dunlap and Lowenthal (2009) offer the following:

"Guidelines for Instructional Use" [of Twitter®]

- Establish relevance for students
- Recommend people for students to follow
- Model effective Twitter® use

- Encourage students' active and ongoing participation
- Build Twitter®-derived results into assessments
- Continue to actively participate in Twitter® (p. 1)

Blogs

Blogs are popular forums for expression. There are possibly millions of blogs online covering every imaginable topic. If you can dream up a topic, there is likely a blog on that topic and if not you can start one for free. Websites, such as blogger.com, blogspot.com and wordpress.com are among the most popular websites that allow users to create free blogs. Blogs are popular enough that the LMS, Desire to Learn (D2L) added a blog feature for students. Most blogs also have the option of making the blog's content open to the public or private and requiring guests to login and be approved to view and or post items to the blog. Most blogs allow users to post WYSIWYG (What you see is what you get) text and content, photos and videos using a variety of web page layout templates. Users can also place meta-tags on content to create an automatic index of content. The format is ideal for educators to create a living and lasting repository for rich topic data.

Anderson, a doctoral student and math professor at Muskegon Community College in Michigan is the author and creator of just such a blog titled "Teaching College Math" located online at www.teachingcollegemath.com. Ms. Anderson's presentation at the 2010 Oklahoma Association of Community Colleges conference was impressive as was her passion to educate students in math.

Bonk and Zhang (2008) suggest that after the work has been done "a link to the site might be placed in a national or international knowledge repository such as

MERLOT, Connexions, or Jorum” (p. 246). Stevens-Long and Crowell (2002) state “because all interactions are written, asynchronous, and sustained over time, students have the opportunity to contribute in more thoughtful ways” (p. 167).

Ellison’s (2007) presentation on “*Using Facebook® In the Classroom, Potential Benefits*” cited the following as “Potential Educational Benefits of Blogs”:

- Focuses on critical skill of writing
- Encourages students to engage with positions divergent from their own
- Students are more invested because there is a larger audience
- Increases digital literacy
- Supports peer-to-peer learning and student-to-instruction knowledge sharing
- Learning becomes less time and space-bound (slide 41)

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to describe the use of Facebook® and Twitter® as instructional aides in Higher Education, more specifically use by the faculty of Rose State College. The information in this research report is primarily qualitative in nature. “Some of the data may be quantified as with census data but the analysis itself is a qualitative one” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 17). “Qualitative analysis builds upon natural ways of thinking” (Corbin and Strauss, 2008, p. 20). “Of course, in a qualitative inquiry, it is important to obtain as many perspectives on a topic as possible” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 26). “Some researchers gather data by means of interview and observation—techniques normally associated with qualitative methods” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 18). “The kind of research [qualitative] that produces findings arrived from real-world settings” (Golafshani, 2003, p. 600). Guba and Lincoln, addressed the imbalance of contextual information between quantitative and qualitative studies state,

Precise quantitative approaches that focus on selected subsets of variables necessarily strip from consideration, through appropriate controls or randomization,

other variables that exist in the context that might, if allowed to exert their effects, greatly alter findings. Further, such exclusionary designs, while increasing the theoretical rigor of a study, detract from its *relevance*, that is, its applicability or generalizability, because their outcomes can be properly applied only in other similarly truncated or contextually stripped situations (another laboratory, for example). Qualitative data, it is argued, can redress that imbalance by providing contextual information. (1994, p. 106). According to Patton (1990), “Qualitative designs are naturalistic in that the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the research setting” (p. 39). “Rather, the point of using qualitative methods is to understand naturally occurring phenomena in their naturally occurring states” (Patton, 1990, p. 41).

Theoretical Perspective

Theoretical perspectives or frameworks allow for different perspectives and assumptions regarding the how’s and why’s of interaction within society and acceptable or recognized societal norms (Bettis & Mills, 2006; Jamrozik & Nocella, 2000; Merriam, 2009). According to Merriam (2009), “the theoretical framework [or perspective] is derived from the orientation or stance that you bring to your study, and every study has one” (p. 66). “It is, indeed, this diversity and richness of theoretical frameworks that allow us to see in new and different ways what seems to be ordinary and familiar” (Merriam, 2009, p. 66). “A theoretical framework offers a vehicle to make generalizations to other contexts and provide an explanation for why people do and say what they do and say” (Bettis & Mills, 2006, p. 70).

Epistemology according to Crotty (2003) is “the theory of knowledge embedded in the theoretical perspective and thereby in the methodology” (p. 3). “There are three recognized epistemological positions for researchers – objectivism, constructionism and subjectivism” (Vallack, 2010, p. 110). Objectivist epistemology holds that meaning, and therefore meaningful reality, exists as such apart from the operation of any consciousness” (Crotty, 2003, p. 8).

Objectivists “work on the assumption that there are actual objects of knowledge, which exist independently, whether or not the researcher discovers or interacts with them” (Vallack, 2010, p. 110). “In this objectivist view of ‘what it means to know’, understandings and values are considered to be objectified in the people we are studying and, if we go about it in the right way, we can discover the objective truth” (Crotty, 2003, p. 8).

Whereas people ascribe subjective meanings to objects in their world, science really ‘ascribes’ no meanings at all. Instead, it discovers meaning, for it is able to grasp objective meaning, that is, meaning already inherent in the objects it considers. To say that objects have such meaning is, of course, to embrace the epistemology of objectivism. Positivism is objectivist through and through. From the positivist viewpoint, objects in the world have meaning prior to, and independently of, any consciousness of them. (Crotty, 2003, p. 27)

Discourse analysis is the methodology used in this research study. “Discourse analysis is an interdisciplinary field of inquiry”(Lupton, 1992, Abstract). Crotty (2003) defines methodology as “the strategy, plan of action, process or design lying behind the choice and use of particular methods and linking the choice and use of methods to the

desired outcomes” (p. 3). “The methodology involves a focus upon the sociocultural and political context in which text and talk occur” (Lupton, 1992, Abstract). As a methodology, “Discourse analysis generates interpretive claims with regard to the effects of a discourse on the oppression and empowerment of groups of people in a specific context without claims of generalizability” (Powers, 2001, p. 1).

Brown and Yule (1984) put it simply as “the analysis of language in use” (p. 1), and continue “as such, it cannot be restricted to the description of linguistic forms independent of the purposes or functions which those forms are designed to serve in human affairs” (p. 1). Brown and Yule discussing “computing the intended meaning of a speaker or writer depends... on knowledge of many details over above those to be found in the textual record of the speaker’s /writer’s linguistic production” (p. 116). Discourse analysis is, above all, concerned with a critical analysis of the use of language and the reproduction of dominant ideologies (belief systems) in discourse (Lupton, 1992, Abstract).

The data collection method used Stakeholder Interviews. Crotty describes data collection methods as “the techniques or procedures used to gather and analyze data related to some research question or hypothesis” (2003, p. 3). “Some researchers gather data by means of interview and observation—techniques normally associated with qualitative methods” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 18)

According to Majchrzak (1984), “interviews of stakeholders can be done formally or informally, either in person or over the phone” (p. 36). Majchrzak suggests among other things that during the stakeholder interviews that you try to get “definitions, values,

and assumptions held by stakeholders about the social problem,” information regarding the “openness of stakeholders to new directions for alleviating the social problem” and “acceptability and implementability of different types of recommendations” (1984, p. 36)

Research Design

This study used a descriptive design. “Descriptive research involves collecting data in order to test hypothesis or to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study. Descriptive research according to Gay (1992),

can provide very valuable data. It represents considerably more than asking questions and reporting answers; it involves careful design and execution of each of the components of the research process, including the formulation of hypotheses, and may describe variables and relationships between variables. (p. 220)

“A descriptive study determines and reports the way things are” (Gay, 1992, p. 217). The descriptive method is useful for investigating a variety of educational problems. Typical descriptive studies are concerned with the assessment of attitudes, opinions, demographic information, conditions, and procedures. Descriptive data are usually collected through a questionnaire survey, interviews, or observation. Just as the historical researcher has no control over what *was*, the descriptive researcher has no control over what *is*, and can only measure what already exists (Gay, 1992, p. 217-218)

According to Gay (1992) there are two ways to report data in a descriptive study, either self-report or observation. This study uses self-reporting data. “In a self-report study, information is solicited from individuals using, for example, questionnaires, interviews, or standardized attitude scales” (p. 219).

This study took a two-pronged approach to research data collection taking first a demographic survey followed with a personal face-to-face interview to gain a better understanding of the participants' opinions and usage patterns as they relate to social networking. "The interview is the most appropriate for asking questions which cannot effectively be structured into a multiple-choice format, such as questions of a personal nature" (Gay, 1992, p. 231). Gay (1992) speaking on the accuracy and honesty of interview responses said:

The interview may also result in more accurate and honest responses since the interviewer can explain and clarify both the purpose of the research and the individual questions. Another advantage of the interview is that the interviewer can follow up on incomplete or unclear responses by asking additional probing questions (p.231).

According to Berg (2007), "Qualitative research properly seeks answers to questions by examining various social settings and the individuals who inhabit these settings" (p. 8).

Population

The population for the demographic survey portion of this study included all full-time and part-time faculty of Rose State College. The population is the full-time and part-time faculty listed in the official Rose State College campus e-mail system as either full-time or part-time faculty on August 1, 2011. The group included instructors for credit and non-credit courses. Gay (1992) offered the following definition of population,

The population is the group of interest to the researcher, the group to which she or he would like the results of the study to be generalizable... The population that

the researcher would ideally like to generalize to is referred to as the *target population*; the population that the researcher can realistically select from is referred to as the *accessible* or available, *population*. Thus, the definition of a population is generally a realistic choice, not an idealistic one (pp. 124-125).

Table V: Population

Total Adjunct	331	Number	% of Adjuncts	Avg. Age
Female		180	54.55%	51
Male		145	43.94%	53
Unreported		6	1.82%	59
Total Full-time	129	Number	% of Full-time	Avg. Age
Female		82	63.57%	49
Male		47	36.43%	51
Total Per Gender		Number	% of Total	Avg. Age
Female		262	56.96%	50
Male		192	41.74%	53
Unreported		6	1.30%	
Total		460		

Source: Rose State College

The survey was emailed to the “all faculty” email list. The participants of this study are voluntary respondents to the demographic survey instrument. The demographic survey contained two sections. Section one contained basic demographic questions and section two contained technology familiarization and usage-related questions.

Samples

The demographic survey sample consisted of 105 respondents of a demographic survey that was sent to the entire population. The personal interview sample came from

those demographic survey participants who volunteered on the demographic survey to take part in the personal interviews and is thus a sub-set of the demographic survey.

The participants answering demographic survey Phase II questions numbers 8, 5, 4, and 7 in the affirmative were prioritized by his or her answers on the aforementioned questions in their respective order and invited to participate in a personal interview. Fifty participants indicated a willingness to participate in a personal, face-to-face interview. The goal was to interview between 8 and 15 participants or until saturation occurred with the responses to the interview questions. The sample size for the personal interviews consisted of the 26 participants who responded to the email sent to the 50 people who initially indicated an interest to participate in an interview. Seidman (2006) stated the following regarding interview participants and randomization, “interview participants must consent to be interviewed, so there is always an element of self-selection in an interview study. Self-selection and randomness are not compatible” (p. 51). Gay (1992) discussing the quality of the sample said, “as with populations, we sometimes have to compromise the ideal for the real, that is, what is feasible” (p. 126).

According to Gay (1992), “The purpose of selecting a sample is to gain information concerning a population” (p. 121). “Sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals represent the larger group from which they were selected” (Gay, 1992, p. 123). According to Gay (1992), “purposive sampling basically involves selecting a sample which is believed to be representative of a given population. In other words, the researcher uses expert judgment to select a representative sample” (p. 139).

Instruments

“The nature of descriptive research often necessitates the development of instruments for particular studies” (Gay, 1992, p. 153). This research used a preliminary instrument to gather data that would be used for the possible selection of personal interview participants.

Demographic Survey Instrument

The demographic survey instrument received approval from the Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to being administered. The demographic survey (see Appendix A) gathered general demographic data from the target population and answered Research Questions 1 and 2. The instrument contained two sections: Section 1 contained four basic demographic questions (Appendix A, Section 1) and Section 2 contained eight questions (Appendix A, Section 2) on technology familiarization and use by the target population.

The goal of Section 1 (Appendix A) was purposive to record basic gender, age, teaching responsibility, and area of instruction. Collection of this demographic information could be beneficial for the personal interviews. The information would allow if needed the purposive selection of a cross-section of participants to include a variety of participants from each demographic segment.

The goal of Section 2 (Appendix A) was also purposive. Section 2 asked eight questions related to technology usage, social networking usage, and methods of communicating with students. Immediately following the completion of Section 2, participants were asked if they would volunteer for a personal interview regarding Social

Networking. The interview questions were designed to elicit more detailed information from participants.

Interview Guide and Personal Interviews

The Interview Guide and personal interview questions received approval from the Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to being administered. The Interview Guide and questions as shown in Appendix B were designed to elicit open-ended responses to broad-based Research Questions 3, 4 and 5. These questions seek to determine the advantages or disadvantages from a faculty perspective of any social networking tools or website that faculty are using to communicate with students.

Trusting the Data

This section will look at the data collected, during the demographic survey and the personal interviews. This discussion will include the reasoning behind and the methodology of the questions.

Demographic Survey – Validity

The demographic survey collected quantitative type data from the perspective of type and format of data collected, it was not designed to be a quantitatively analyzed survey. The purpose of the survey was twofold. First, to give a reader a deep and richer understanding of the population surveyed and to give the reader some background and to set the scene as the reader absorbs the qualitatively approached personal interviews. Secondly, to allow the research to select purposively prospective participants for the

personal interviews, though only 50 of the 105 volunteered to take part in the interviews and only 26 of those followed through. The researcher interviewed all 26 in an effort to make sure everyone who wanted to share his or her thoughts, opinions, and attitudes was heard. Saturation occurred around participant 15, though each additional interview contained miniscule amounts of new information.

Qualitative researchers strive for ‘understanding,’ that deep structure of knowledge that comes from visiting personally with participants, spending extensive time in the field, and probing to obtain detailed meanings” (Cresswell, 2007, p. 201). According to Winter (2000) “validity is not a single, fixed or universal concept, but rather a contingent construct, inescapably grounded in the processes and intentions of particular research methodologies and projects” (p.1). Golafshani indicates, “Although some qualitative researchers have argued that the term validity is not applicable to qualitative research, but at the same time, they have realized the need for some kind of qualifying check or measure for their research” (2003, p. 602). The three main types of validity are construct, content, and criterion-related validity.

Construct Validity

Construct validity is “the degree to which a test measures an intended hypothetical construct. A construct is a non-observable trait, such as intelligence, which explains behavior” (Gay, 1992, p. 189). Constructs were ‘invented’ to explain behavior. We cannot prove they exist”... they do a “good job of explaining differences between individuals” (Gay, 1992, p. 157).

Content Validity

“Content validity is the degree to which a test measures an intended content area” (Gay, 1992, p. 189). Speaking on content validity, Gay (1992), stated “the number one rule is that each question should deal with a single concept and be worded as clearly as possible; any term or concept that might mean different things to different people should be defined” (p. 225). According to Gay (1992), “the researcher determines whether the test is content valid for his or her study” (p. 189). The instrument meets the criteria of accurate measuring of the intended area. The survey questions were successfully pilot tested with three members of the academic community to test for understanding and clarity of questions. According to Salkind (2010), you use content validity “when you want to know whether a sample of items truly reflects an entire universe of items in a certain topic” (p. 152).

Pilot Tested

The questions asked of participants both in the demographic survey and the personal interviews were pilot tested with other members of academia including full-time and part-time instructors. According to Russ-Eft and Preskill (2001) pilot testing the instruments involves

trying out each of the data collection instruments with a sample of the population (or one similar to it). This enables the evaluator to determine if the questions are likely to elicit the kinds and quality of information being sought. Revisions can be made before implementing the instruments to the total sample or population. (p. 157)

Second, with the dissertation committee members who reviewed the questions as part of the proposal; and third, with some of the participants of the study. It should be noted that minor adjustments took place after the review by members of academia and prior to submission to the committee and participants of the study.

The survey questions accurately measured what they were supposed to and thus met Gay's definition of validity; "Validity is the degree to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure" (Gay, 1992, p. 189). The work of Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtle, (2010) echoes Gay's definition saying validity "focuses on ensuring that what the instrument 'claims' to measure is truly what it is measuring" (p. 93). According to Gay (1992), "A common misconception is that a test is, or is not, valid. A test is not 'valid or invalid' but rather, 'valid for what and for whom?' " (p. 155). "Reliability is the degree to which a test consistently measures whatever it measures" (Gay, 1992, p. 161). The reliability of the research data varies with respect to being replicable in two respects. First, future researchers could easily replicate findings related to gender and age of participants. Second, the reliability of the data with regard to social networking usage and preferences was a "snap-shot" that over time will change to some unknown degree. The "snap-shot" of participants' usage and preferences is an accurate representation of the data at the time collected. The demographic survey was conducted electronically and thus all identical in form and delivery to each participant.

Each of the demographic survey questions was valid for one or more reasons. The first reason is to provide a richer descriptive background of the participants. Demographic Survey, Section 1 (Appendix A), Questions 1 and 2 give the reader basic demographic data. Questions 3 and 4 give the researcher information needed to help in

the purposive selection of participants to ensure inclusion of full-time and part-time faculty from various academic and non-academic teaching divisions, thus not purposefully skewing the research by only interviewing participants from one area. It should be noted that there was not an equal distribution between all academic divisions, but each academic area had representation with one or more participants. The researcher feels this did not have a negative impact on the validity or reliability of the study.

Demographic Survey, Section 2 (Appendix A), Question 1 dealt with teaching online. This would give the researcher more insight given the focus of the study that dealt with an online or web-based instructional aide. Questions 2 and 3 dealt with the instructor's online experiences and usage of web pages. These questions too are valid for determining whether or not participants have technical skills or knowledge with regard to developing or maintaining a presence on the Internet. Questions 4 and 5 narrow down participants to social networking pages on the Internet whether personal or professional. These questions will help focus on the goal of the research. If participants have the pages, might they be using them to communicate with students? The question was in an unstructured response format so that participants could select *other* and then provide an alternate answer not already listed.

Questions 6 and 7 dealt with sending messages electronically to students in the form of email and the frequency of any such email transmissions. The questions gave an indication of the usage of technology to communicate with students. Question 8 addresses communication with students and introduces the possibility that there are multiple ways of communicating with students. The question permits the purposive selection of participants who specifically use social networking to communicate with

students. It should be noted that of the 13 participants who indicated the use of social networking to contact or communicate with students only agreed to personal interviews. Because of the anonymity factor of the demographic survey there was no way to determine the faculty members who indicated usage of social networking to communicate with students and who did not want to be interviewed. Therefore, his or her reasoning for opting out of the interviews is, and will remain unknown. The researcher did not believe this had a negative impact on the findings of the study.

Qualitative Data – Personal Interviews

The terminology in quantitative and qualitative research is different yet similar when discussing the validity and reliability of the information in question. The discussion of quality in qualitative research initiated from the concerns about validity and reliability in quantitative tradition which created a perceived need for alternate terminology. Some qualitative researchers hold to using validity and reliability. Regardless of what a researcher calls validity and reliability, they play a major role in every research project. The end users of all research need a comfort level with data collected, how it was collected, and how it is reported. This study will look at the quality, rigor, and trustworthiness of the personal interviews.

Quality

According to Patton (1990), “in qualitative inquiry the researcher is the instrument” (p. 14). If we see the idea of testing as a way of information elicitation then the most important test of any qualitative study is its quality” (Golafshani, 2003, p. 601).

Readers must trust the researcher and in the quality of the data collected. How good then is the instrument? Can it be trusted? Where the questions clear and without ambiguity? Where there any biases? Did the questions collect the true answers?

“The validity and reliability of qualitative data depend to a great extent on the methodological skill, sensitivity, and integrity of researcher” (Patton, 1990, p. 11).

“Qualitative methods consist of three kinds of data collection: (1) in-depth, open-ended interviews; (2) direct observation; and (3) written documents. The data from interviews consist of direct quotations from people about their experiences, opinions, feelings, and knowledge” (Patton, 1990, p. 10). “The qualitative researcher talks with people about their experiences and perceptions. More formal individual or group interviews may be conducted” (Patton, 1990, p. 10).

“Qualitative methods permit the evaluator to study selected issues in depth and detail” (Patton, 1990, p. 13). Qualitative research is an approach to understanding human and social behavior that emphasizes the collection of “thick” data. Contemporary qualitative research is the result of more than a hundred years of development, and that history is an important part of the context in which qualitative research is conducted” (Willis, 2007, p. 181). “A good qualitative study can help us understand a situation that would otherwise be enigmatic or confusing. One reads a narrative, reflects on its contents, and puts the pieces together” (Eisner, 1991, p. 58).

Rigor

According to Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson & Spiers (2002) by “ensuring reliability and validity” helps ensure “the rigor of a study”(p. 5). A key component of this

process is verification. “In qualitative research, verification refers to the mechanisms used during the process of research” which according to Morse et al. (2002) occurs “incrementally” during the process. Morse et al. (2002) state “verification is the process of checking, confirming, making sure, and being certain”(p. 5). Strauss and Corbin (1990) state, “data collection and analytical procedures are designed to give rigor to a study” (p. 45).

Trustworthiness

Golafshani (2003) said “to ensure reliability in qualitative research, examination of trustworthiness is crucial” (p. 601). According to Golafshani (2003), there is a wide “spectrum of conceptualization of reliability and revealing the congruence of reliability and validity in qualitative research” (p. 601). Lincoln and Guba (1985) state “there can be no validity without reliability” (p. 316). “In qualitative methods, validity hinges to a greater extent on the skill, competence, and rigor of the researcher because the observer or interviewer is the instrument” (Patton, 2008, p. 398).

The personal interview data for this was recorded with a portable electronic voice recorder at the same time the researcher was taking handwritten notes. The interviewer asked the participants in a systematic and methodical manner, all the same questions in the same order they appeared in the IRB approved formats. Gay (1992) speaking on reliability stated, “it is especially important that measurement of the target behavior, or performance, be done in exactly the same way every time, or as nearly the same as humanly possible” (p. 336).

Guba and Lincoln (1994) ask the question “What criteria are appropriate for judging the goodness or quality of an inquiry?” (p. 114) . Guba and Lincoln (1994) propose two different sets of criteria,

[first] the *trustworthiness* criteria of

- credibility (paralleling internal validity),
- transferability (paralleling external validity),
- dependability (paralleling reliability), and,
- confirmability (paralleling objectivity)

and

[second] the *authenticity* criteria of

- fairness, ontological authenticity (enlarges personal constructions),
- educative authenticity (leads to improved understanding of constructions of others),
- catalytic authenticity (stimulates to action), and,
- tactical authenticity (empowers action) (p. 114)

Guba and Lincoln (1981) state, “The four terms naming these concerns within the scientific paradigm are, of course, internal validity for truth value, external validity or generalizability for applicability, reliability for consistency and objectivity for neutrality” (p. 104). Russ-Eft & Preskill, (2001), defined the four terms used by Guba and Lincoln to describe the trustworthiness criteria. Russ-Eft & Preskill, (2001), defined “Truth Value” [Credibility/Internal Validity] this way:

Whereas, the scientific paradigm asserts that there is one reality and that information is valid when all relevant variables can be controlled; a naturalistic paradigm assumes that multiple realities exist in the minds of individuals. Thus when using qualitative methods, the evaluator seeks to establish the credibility of individuals' responses. The study must be believable by those who provide the data and by those who will use its findings. (p. 153-154).

Russ-Eft & Preskill, (2001), defined "Applicability" [Transferability/External Validity] by saying,

How transferable the findings are to another setting is called generalizability in scientific paradigm. The goal of qualitative methods is to provide richly detailed description; such a description can help the reader relate certain findings to his or her own experience. We often think of these as "lessons learned." Although the entire set of findings may not be applicable to his context, some issues identified may have applicability in other contexts. (p. 154).

Russ-Eft & Preskill, (2001), defined "Consistency [Dependability/Reliability] saying,

In the scientific paradigm, the notion of consistency is called reliability where a study or instrument's consistency, predictability or stability is measured. Since reliability is necessary for validity, it is critical that data of any kind be reliable. Instead of considering data unreliable if it is inconsistent, evaluators using qualitative methods look for reasons that cause the data to appear unstable (inconsistent). For example, an interviewee might give an opinion one day, and when asked again the following week might say something slightly different. What would be important to understand and capture are the reasons for this

change in perception. Such inconsistencies may stem from respondent error, an increase in available information, or changes in the situation. (p. 154).

Russ-Eft & Preskill, (2001), defined “Neutrality” [Confirmability / Objectivity) in this manner,

Objectivity is often viewed as the goal of most evaluation and research studies. Evaluators and researchers who use qualitative methods don’t necessarily believe that true objectivity can ever be fully achieved. They believe that it is impossible to completely separate the evaluator from the method. Instead of trying to ensure that the data are free from the evaluator’s biases, the goal is to determine the extent to which the data provide confirming evidence. (p. 155).

Patton (1990) summed it up saying, “There are no simple formulas or clear-cut rules about how to do a credible, high-quality analysis. The task is to do one’s best to make sense out of things” (p. 477). The iterative process of revisiting and reviewing that data was addressed by Patton who said, “A qualitative analyst returns to the data over and over again to see if the constructs, categories, explanations, and interpretations make sense, if they really reflect the nature of the phenomena” (p. 477).

Data Collection Procedure

The following steps and data collection procedures were systematically and methodically followed to help preserve the integrity of the data collected using the IRB approved forms and questions.

Demographic Survey

1. The target population was identified.
2. The demographic survey was developed and beta tested with members of academia to determine usefulness and clarity of questions.
3. The demographic survey was emailed to the target population using the *all faculty* email list that is maintained by the Information Technology department at Rose State College.
4. Survey recipients received appropriate IRB verbiage and that explained their rights including the right to stop at any time during the survey.
5. Recipients electing to respond did so by completing the secured online survey using www.surveymonkey.com, with results available to the researcher and staff of the surveying website.
6. At the end of the survey, the participants' final question asked if they were willing to participate in a 30 minute personal interview regarding the subject of social networking as it relates to higher education. If the survey participants responded in the affirmative to an interview he or she entered his or her email address. The email addresses collected were used to contact those participants to schedule interviews. If the participant declined the personal interview, he or she received a thank you for his or her participation.
7. The electronic results the survey were compiled to generate a demographic profile of the Rose State College faculty using social networking.

Personal Interviews

- 8 . Participants volunteering to participate in the personal interviews were sent email invitations to schedule a time for his or her personal interview. Participants received a schedule of available dates and times and were asked to select the time that best fit into his or her schedule at the location of his or her choosing. Those 50 emails resulted in 26 scheduled interviews. The website www.eventbrite.com was used to manage scheduling and avoid duplication of interview bookings.
- 9 . Interviews were scheduled and participants again given the appropriate IRB documentation and the option to stop the interview at any time.
- 10 . The participants were given the option of stopping or exiting the interview at any time. Each participant was assigned a number one through 26. It was determine that a number rather than the initials of the participants names would better protect the participants' identity. A listing of the true identities and the participant numbers were maintained in a separate file in an alternate location.
- 11 . The questions asked during the personal interviews were systematically and methodically asked and digitally recorded. Each participant was asked the same questions in sequence. "Qualitative methods can (and should) be extremely systematic" (Berg, 2007, p. 9).

12. The questions were approved by the Oklahoma State University IRB and did not appear to present any potential harm to the research study participants who elected to participate.
13. Interviews were conducted until all volunteer participants were interviewed.
14. The interview information, transcribed conversations including the IRB consent forms were maintained in separate locations in accordance with the OSU IRB highest and utmost standards.

Data Analysis

Berg (2007) points out, “The analysis of qualitative data allows researchers to discuss in detail the various social contours and processes human beings use to create and maintain their social realities.” The research questions posed in the study allowed participants to self-report their answers, views, and opinions to the questions” (p. 9).

Table VI. Research Questions & Data Source

Question	Data Source	Procedure
1. What is the profile of Rose State Faculty who use social networking?	Demographic Survey	Write a descriptive narrative of findings.
2. Which Social Networking tools are Faculty using to connect with students?	Demographic Survey	Write a descriptive narrative of findings.
3. How do RSC faculty use social networking to communicate with students?	Personal Interview Guide	Perform a thematic analysis looking for common themes.
4. Recommendations for use of social networking?	Personal Interview Guide	Perform a thematic analysis looking for common themes.
5. What do faculty members cite as advantages and disadvantages to using social networking as an instructional aide?	Personal Interview Guide	Perform a thematic analysis looking for common themes.

Chapter four of this study details the findings with respect to each of the five research questions. The research indentified perceptions and behaviors of faculty in several areas.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Introduction

The research data collected for this study takes into consideration five key research questions. The answers to the research questions came from an initial survey, followed by personal interviews of purposively selected volunteer participants. The answers to Research Questions 1 and 2 come directly from the demographic survey, whereas the answers to Research Questions 3, 4 and 5 come from the personal interviews with participants.

This chapter will address each of the individual research questions and findings related to those questions. The research while focusing on Facebook® and Twitter® remained unbiased in the approach taken to collect the data and analyze the findings. The demographic survey asked participants, to identify the social network(s), if any; they used both personally and professionally.

During the personal interviews participants started describing how they were using the learning management system (LMS) Desire to Learn (D2L) as a form of a

social network to communicate and work with students. The participants disclosed a great deal on how they use the D2L LMS to communicate with students in terms of sharing of content, assessment, and feedback. Individual participants also disclosed details on his or her usage of Facebook®, Twitter® and other social media websites.

The research data collected includes both positive and negative answers to questions asked during the research. The negative answers or feedback to questions are labeled *counterpoints*.

Key Themes

The interview research data was broken down and analyzed using an open coding process looking for common themes and relationships as the interviews progressed. During the course of the interviews the data was continually reviewed looking for new or emerging themes (Cresswell, 2003, p. 190-195; Gay, 1992, p.375-378). The transcribed quotes were looked at individually, taking into consideration the context of the quote, to determine the appropriate open coded theme. This open coding technique identified the following four key themes: touchpoints, relevancy, usability, and privacy. These four themes emerged as common comments from all participants almost without exception.

Touchpoint

The touchpoint theme addresses interaction between two or more parties (Choy, 2008). The Oxford Pocket Dictionary defines a touchpoint in terms of commerce as “any point of contact between a buyer and a seller” (2009) Touchpoint is a commonly used theme in marketing and refers to contact with the customer. In education, the student is

the customer and the instructor is one of the many salespeople. Thus, each interaction or possible interaction with another person or student is referred to as a touchpoint.

Touchpoints with students include all types of communication whether direct or indirect, whether in person or electronic, whether written or verbal. Dr. Werner Wert, Professor of Empirical Communication at University in an article with Christopher Spengler founder of Accelerom AG (2009) wrote on the importance of touchpoints in building customer satisfaction and loyalty. According to Wert and Spengler (2009), each of these touchpoints has a different impact on the client experience. The more this succeeds in meeting client expectations and needs, the higher its success, as measured by new-client acquisition, client satisfaction and client loyalty (p. 1)

Relevancy

The theme of relevancy points to communication that is relevant and not senseless, frivolous or inane. An example might be content posted in a class folder that is unrelated to the topic, material that has no significance or correlation to the subject matter.

Usability or Functionality

The theme of usability or functionality is similar to relevancy but dealt more with the end-user friendliness of content shared. This would include ease of use of the website or learning platform and the functionality of the website or tool.

Privacy

The last theme that emerged was privacy. Privacy appeared in the remarks from over half the participants. Privacy dealt with information sharing that may contain personal and confidential data that a user only wishes to share with a limited number of individuals or friends.

This chapter will look at each research question with regard to the social networking tool, and one or more of the four major themes, including the positive and negative responses from participants.

Demographics

Participant Profile

Emails sent to population of 460 potential participants and resulted in the voluntary completion of an online survey by 105 individuals. Fifty of the 105 respondents indicated an interest in participating in a personal interview. Of the 50 interested in the interview only 26 replied to the interview request and scheduled interviews. All of the 26 individuals completed the personal interview.

The IRB approved demographic survey of faculty included 12 questions (See Appendix A). The first four demographic questions focused on gender, age, teaching responsibility, and subject areas taught. The next eight questions dealt with technology familiarization and usage.

Female participations made up 67.62% (71/105) of the demographic sample and male participants made up the other 32.38% (34/105) (Table VII).

Table VII. Demographic Data of Participants

Gender	Sample Size	Median Age	Mean Age
Male	34	56.5	52.44
Female	71	50.0	48.29
Combined	105	50.0	49.59

Research Question 1.

What is the profile of faculty who use social networking?

Research Question 1 examined the profile of the participants allowing the reader additional information regarding the proportion/break-down of the 105 demographic survey participants. The demographic survey contained two parts. Part one addressed demographic data (Table VII) and part two addressed Technology Familiarization and use (Table VIII).

Table VIII. Faculty Technology Familiarization and Use

Median and Mean Age of Users by Gender	Male		Female	
Sample Size 105	Median	Mean	Median	Mean
Sample (34 M + 71 F)	56.5	52.44	50	48.29
Facebook® (22 M + 51 F)	48.0	50.29	45	45.98
Twitter® (2 M + 11 F)	58.0	58.00	33	39.82
MySpace® (6 M + 13 F)	40.5	44.00	32	35.77
LinkedIn® (5 M + 8 F)	41.0	44.60	43	42.57

The demographic data contained in Table VIII appears to show the mean and median ages of female faculty well below in some cases that of male faculty. Again, it should be noted that the small sample size may not be indicative or representative of a much larger sample population. The data indicates in the sample population a mean age difference between two years and 18 years depending on the social network selected. The greatest mean age difference exists between male and female users of Twitter®.

The data in Table IX offers further detail on the usage of multiple social networks depicting that of the 105 sample (34 male and 71 female), 73 participants (22 male and 51 female) or 69.52% use at least Facebook®. Over half of the 73 participants using social networking use only Facebook® (11 male and 30 female), while the remainder chose to use a combination of social networking tools.

Table IX Use of Multiple Social Networks

	Male	Percentage of Population	Percent of Facebook® Users	Female	Percentage of Population	Percent of Facebook® Users
Population / Sample Size	34	100%		71	100%	
Facebook®	22	64.71%	100.00%	51	71.83%	100.00%
Facebook® Only	11	32.35%	50.00%	30	42.25%	58.82%
Facebook® + Twitter®	2	5.88%	9.09%	11	15.49%	21.57%
Facebook® + MySpace®	6	17.65%	27.27%	13	18.31%	25.49%
Facebook® + LinkedIn®	5	14.71%	22.73%	8	11.27%	15.69%
Facebook® + Friendster®	0	0.00%	0.00%	1	1.41%	1.96%
Facebook® + Blogspot®	1	2.94%	4.55%	5	7.04%	9.80%
Facebook® + Blogger®	2	5.88%	9.09%	3	4.23%	5.88%
Facebook® + Other	2	5.88%	9.09%	2	2.82%	3.92%
Facebook® + Twitter® + MySpace®	1	2.94%	4.55%	7	9.86%	13.73%
Facebook® + Twitter® + MySpace® + LinkedIn®	0	0.00%	0.00%	3	4.23%	5.88%
Facebook® + Myspace® + LinkedIn®	3	8.82%	13.64%	2	2.82%	3.92%

Other technology related demographic data in Table X- covers online teaching experience, mass emailing students, text messaging and faculty status, related to faculty using or not using Facebook®.

Table X. Other Technology Related Demographic Data on Participants

Item	Faculty Using Facebook® (73)	Percent	Faculty not using Facebook® (32)	Percent
Never Taught Online	31	42.47%	13	40.63%
Text Messaged Students	29	39.73%	9	28.13%
Never Mass/Bulk Emailed Students	11	15.07%	4	12.50%
Mass Emailed 10 or more Times	43	65.75%	18	56.25%
Full-time Faculty	38	52.05%	21	65.63%

Research Question 2.

Which social networking tools are faculty using to connect with students?

Research question two asked for details on the application and use of social networking with students. Part two of the demographic survey addressed the question by asking participants eight questions Table XI.

Table XI Demographic Survey Question Part two

Do you teach online?
Do you have an official RSC faculty webpage?
Do you have a personal webpage?
Do you have personal account or page on any of the following? check all that apply Facebook®, Twitter®, MySpace®, LinkedIn®, Friendster®, Blogspot.com®, Blogger®, other (if so.. the name)
Do you have professional or business home page on any of the following? check all that apply Facebook®, Twitter®, MySpace®, LinkedIn®, Friendster®, Blogspot.com®, Blogger®, other (if so.. the name)
Do you email students directly?
Have you ever sent one email addressed to more than one student at the same time? No, 1 or 2 times, 3 to 10 times, over 10 times
Which if any of the following have you used to communicate with students? Phone Calls, Paging, Text messaging, email, Facebook®, Twitter®, MySpace®, LinkedIn®, Friendster®, Blogspot.com®, Blogger®, other (if so.. the name), NONE

The answers to the questions contained in Table XI are presented sequentially in individual Tables XII through XV.

Table XII. Questions 1-3

Question 1: Do you teach online?
YES Answer: 61/105 = 58.10%
Question 3: Do you have a personal webpage?
YES Answer: 32/105 = 30.48%
Question 2: Do you have an official faculty webpage?
YES Answer: 19/105 = 18.10%

Responses to question 1 indicate that 58.10% responding teach online. Responses to question 2 indicate that 18.10% have an official faculty webpage, while responses to question 3 indicate that 30.48% have a personal webpage.

Table XIII. Questions 4-5

Question 4: Do you have a personal account or page on any of the following?	Responses	Percentage Responses/105
Facebook®	73	69.52%
Twitter®	13	12.38%
MySpace®	19	18.10%
LinkedIn®	13	12.38%
Friendster®	1	0.95%
Blogspot.com®	6	5.71%
Blogger®	5	4.76%
Other	4	3.81%

Question 5: Do you have a professional account or page on any of the following?	Responses	Percentage Responses/105
Facebook®	7	6.67%
Twitter®	0	0.00%
MySpace®	2	1.90%
LinkedIn®	5	4.76%
Friendster®	0	0.00%
Blogspot.com®	2	1.90%
Blogger®	0	0.00%
Other	3	2.86%

The responses to question 4 indicate that the top two social networks on which faculty have a “personal” page are Facebook®, MySpace®, with 69.52%, 18.10% respectively having a web page. Twitter® and LinkedIn® tied for third place with each

having 12.38% of the faculty having a page on that website. Question 5 asked about faculty having “professional” pages on social networking sites and responses indicated that 6.67% had a professional page on Facebook® and 4.67% on LinkedIn®.

Table XIV. Questions 6-7

Question 6: Do you email students directly?
Answer: 99 yes 4 No 2 No Response

Question 7: Have you ever sent one email addressed to more than one student at the same time?	Responses	Percentage Responses/103
No	15	14.56%
1 or 2 times	10	9.71%
3 to 10 times	18	17.48%
over 10 times	61	59.22%

Question 6 responses indicated that 98.29% of faculty send direct emails to students. Question 7 asked about the efficiency of the emails with regards to sending the students the same email, but sending it one email at a time or “mass” emailing students and saving the instructor time. Question 7 responses indicate that 59.22% mass emailed students ten or more times, while 17.48% mass emailed students three to ten times and 14.56% do not mass email students.

Question 8 (Table XV) breaks down the modes of communication used to reach students. The top answer was email, with 95.24% of faculty using email to communicate with students. The second highest answer was phone calls with 84.76%, followed by texting with 29.52% and then Facebook and D2L both tied with 10.48%.

Table XV. Question 8

Question8: Which if any of the following have you used to communicate with students?	Responses/ 105 (Total)	Percentage Responses/105
E-Mail	100	95.24%
Phone Calls	89	84.76%
Texting	31	29.52%
Facebook®	11	10.48%
Other -D2L	11	10.48%
Paging	8	7.62%
Twitter®	3	2.86%
Other- Textbook related web pages	2	1.90%
Other - InClass	2	1.90%
Blogspot.com®	1	0.95%
Blogger®	1	0.95%
None	1	0.95%
Other - Google Docs	1	0.95%
Other- Post-it Notes on office door	1	0.95%
Other - Letters	1	0.95%
MySpace®	0	0.00%
LinkedIn®	0	0.00%
Friendster®	0	0.00%

Research Question 3.

How do RSC faculty use social networking to communicate with students?

The third research question follows up on the previous two research questions with the goal of finding out “how” faculty use social networking with students. This research question was addressed using personal interview questions one through four (See Appendix B). This method focused purposively on the faculty using social media and technology and purposively include faculty who do not use those technologies or tools to find out reasons for not using the technologies or tools. Each participant interview followed a systematic and structured question format.

Personal Interview Question 1

Which social networking site(s) or tool(s) do you use and why?

The first question asked which social networks the participants use and why. The responses to this question alone shed new light on the perception by college faculty of what constituted social networking. Participants responded with answers of Facebook®, MySpace®, Twitter®, LinkedIn® and others. It should be noted that some people consider YouTube® a social network because people can post feedback in the form of written comments and video replies to videos that are posted.

Another popular answer from faculty was that D2L (Desire to Learn) is a social network they use. Desire to Learn referred to in higher education as “D2L” is the Learning Management System or “LMS” used on campus for the delivery of online courses and course content. Though participants labeled D2L as a social network during the participant interviews, D2L did not receive any mention in the initial questionnaire by the same group of participants. The narrative that follows includes the responses by participants grouped by social network.

Why – D2L?

Responses from interviewees citing the use of Desire to Learn (D2L) as a social network centered on D2L as a touchpoint with students both for the communication of assignments to the students and the delivery or presentation of the course content.

Participant 18 stated,

I use D2L for every class. If they are not in an online class, they still get all their assignments on D2L. They may have to print an assignment and bring it to class.

It keeps me from having to print things at school. They can see their grades updated on D2L. They have a discussion board. I have a discussion with the heading *Questions for Classmates* where they can ask each other questions.

Participant 13 comments were in line with other participants stating,

As soon as they get enrolled they start looking at D2L to see if there is anything there and I don't want to disappoint them so I started adding things like the syllabus and the schedule and a *get acquainted* assignment so they can get on the discussion board.

Why – Facebook®?

Participant's comments on using Facebook® focused on touchpoints with peers and family. Participant 17 stated "I use Facebook® regularly to keep in touch with family, high school and college colleagues, and a few work acquaintances." Similarly Participant 1 commented,

I was encouraged to get on Facebook® about a year ago by some old friends from college. At one time I was on the Board of an organization, and the President encouraged me to get on it [Facebook®] and I created a profile.

Some participants joined Facebook® because of recommendations by friends, family or colleagues. Participant 22 stated,

I stopped 'doing' MySpace because Facebook® got so popular and any friends I had on MySpace were on Facebook®. It was just one place to check in instead of two. Facebook® has much neater options and more networking tools. It is more of a professional site than MySpace.

Social Networking sites such as Facebook® allow users to set privacy settings to determine what viewers will see. Participant 21 presented the one positive comment regarding privacy, stating that,

I do allow students to friend me but I block them from having access to having anything real, anything of substance. They basically see a page with a little tiny bit of information. I use it occasionally to update my status, say once a week.

Why – Others?

Not all participants focused on D2L® or Facebook®. Participant 3 made the following comment regarding LinkedIn, "I use LinkedIn because I am trying to build a network with my job." Participant 21 admitted the following about Twitter®, "I used to look at Twitter®, constantly, every minute every day. I was posting random thoughts and witty things that popped into my head. I also used it to microblog." Participant 19 said the following about social networking YouTube®,

The videos are generally short and sometimes I will use a video that is fun and entertaining, but also pertains to the topic we are discussing in class. So I use that to break up the monotony, or try to engage or interest the students.

Why – Not?

The alternate response to the second half of the question was “why not” regarding not using a specific social network. Participants openly commented on the “why not.” Participant 1 who is not currently using any social networking, stated the following regarding not using Facebook®,

I got on it [Facebook®] and created a profile, and I think I was on it for 3 months. I just came to the conclusion that it was inane, and I got off. I currently do not use any social networking.

Participant 18 stated the following reasons for not using Facebook®,

I tried to close my Facebook® because I didn't keep up with it. I feel I have enough hours in the day on my computer with my online courses so I don't want to use it [computer] for fun because it isn't fun, its work. I don't care what somebody had for breakfast, or what somebody is doing now, or that somebody has a runny nose today. I don't care, it may sound 'un-feeling' but I just don't care. When I get messages about 'somebody' wants to be your friend, I don't have time to communicate with them. So, I just didn't want to do it anymore. You feel compelled as a nice person to answer all these people back. If they want to talk to me they can email me or call me.

Participant 23 focused on the student saying, “students are already checking in to D2L, his or her email and in to the physical classroom.” Participant 23 continued saying,

I didn't want to give them another place to check, but my recent thought is that they are going to be on Facebook® anyway. They bring their laptops to class. I don't think Facebook® is a bad thing. In the spring I would like to have a page for all my students not a separate one for each class. I will just have one page where I can post reminders... because I know they are checking Facebook® anyway. I created a little more work for myself but it is worth it if they will check the reminders and they will because they're on Facebook®.

Participant 24 indicated that seeing the “other side” of his students’ life affected the student teacher relationship. Participant 24 stated,

I had a Facebook® account, and I closed it. I closed the account because it affected my relationship with my students. There are some sides of me I don't want my students to see and there are some sides of them I don't want to see.

Participant 21 speaking about not using Facebook®, said

In the past, I used it a lot. Now I get a little freaked out about it. I posted something on someone else's wall that I didn't realize other people would see automatically. I got embarrassed, and over reacted and deleted everything I ever had on Facebook®.

The data collected indicated that the overwhelming majority of users had positive responses to question one, regarding *Why* they use social networking. People want to connect with others whether D2L®, Facebook® or other sites. Regardless of relationship, whether faculty and student or faculty and peers, people are using social networking to communicate. The comments regarding the *Why Not* included concerns of privacy and the irrelevancy of the content. One participant referred to the content being “inane.”

Personal Interview Question 2

How do you think social networking helps you as an instructor?

The themes of touchpoint, relevancy and usability appeared evident in personal interview question two. Each participant shared his or her candid thoughts and feelings on this question.

Touchpoints

Participants who decided to respond about Facebook® spoke of touchpoints both in terms of communicating with students and researching students. Participant 10 made the following comment on communicating with students, "Sometimes if you want to get information out, Facebook® is a better venue." Participant 12 made a similar remark, in stating,

Students wouldn't use D2L if I didn't make them, but you don't have to make people use Facebook®. I haven't used it yet, but I think it will help me to reach them. Sometimes they don't check their email regularly. But, they check their Facebook® regularly. They are not checking D2L or their student email because they don't value it as much.

Participant 14 made the following comment regarding the benefit of using Facebook® to communicate with students.

Being on Facebook® with my students allows me to answer questions they have outside class time--as they are working on assignments, or individual problems they might not want to bring up in class. If they forget instructions or an assignment, I can clarify or resend the info via Facebook®. It seems fewer of them are accessing their e-mails, choosing to use social networks for their primary communication vehicles.

Participants mentioned using Facebook® and social networking for research on students.

Participant 11 stated,

I don't use it [Facebook®] with my classes. I do use it when I am concerned about a student who is doing poorly in the class. So, occasionally I will pop on there and

see if they have an open profile... Sometimes I am really curious about what is going on with my students.

Participant 13 stated the following with regard to being Facebook® friends with current students “I don't want it to be a conflict of interest, so I don't comment on anything they talk about related to school. For the most part they talk to me as an individual and not as an instructor.” Participant 17 similarly stated,

Social networking gives you more insights into students' individual characteristics. It helps you to see what they {students} are sincere about, what their passion is. Social networking helps me relate to students because it is just another avenue to communicate, some people have different ways of feeling comfortable, and this is one way for some people.

Most comments regarding D2L® center on the characteristics or finer points of usability, which includes content, quizzes, grading, and printing. Two participants made touchpoint related comments. Participant 1 stated "D2L helps make a community out of the class, sometimes we have a chat room in D2L." Participant 18 stated "I couldn't live without D2L."

Usability

D2L markets the D2L LMS as a learning management system and not as a social network as seen by some participants in taking part in this research study. The majority of participants commented on D2L's usability with regard to this question. Participant 2 stated that “with D2L, I load a lot of content. I rarely put anything written on D2L. I put the entire PowerPoint on there, none of my lecture.” Participant 1 remarked “Even just

announcements on the [D2L] news page. If I walk out of class and realize I forgot to tell the students something or if I find a great article or website I can post that on the news page."

Participant 10, pointing to another benefit stated, "It decreases the paper trail, with the posted lecture notes the student could just view them on line or print them."

Participant 9 stated "students are happier taking their quizzes on D2L because they are open book and students can do it at their convenience." Participant 13 said "It is graded automatically so it [the grade] is automatically put in [to the online grade book in D2L]."

Relevancy

Participants 7, 15, and 19 commented on relevancy, following peers online, and staying up on developments in his or her field of study. Participant 15 said the following about LinkedIn®, "It helps keep me abreast of what others are doing within the area."

Participant 7 stated "I am tied in with several other instructors [using Blogger] who will ask questions and it will stimulate discussion in a given area." Participant 19 added "There are a lot of academic bloggers that I read daily. I don't have any Facebook® connections with other faculty. I follow several people on Twitter® who are professors or academic bloggers. I guess that makes me a better instructor."

Counterpoints

Participants who did not agree that social networking helped them as an instructor commented along two lines of thought; the first was mode of communication. Participant 21 stated,

I don't use it. I dialogue with my students via email or more importantly in person if possible. I am not into the human disconnect. Online courses are a prime example, they are entirely different monsters than traditional in class courses, and a lot of that is due to the anonymity involved. There is no human contact. I usually contact the students through email, if I have to deal with them, not in person.

The second line of comments focused on the relevancy and usability of postings and content on Facebook®. Participant 20 said "It was a hindrance; it put up walls because I would see students drinking and carousing. I thought grow-up"! Participant 22 stated "I am not looking to be a friend to my students; I need to be their instructor." Participant 23 said "I want to be as approachable as possible, but my intent is not to 'buddy-buddy' with them and learn about their families." Participant 25 commented "D2L® allows me to give a longer response [compared to Facebook® or Twitter®] and a more definitive answer."

1

Personal Interview Question 3

How does your social networking benefit your students?

Touchpoints

The common theme in comment from participants dealt with touchpoints. D2L® and Facebook® users commented on building rapport and bonding. Participant 13 said the following regarding students,

They get to know each other from the D2L® assignment so when they come into class they see face-to-face who they have been discussing things online with. I

think they get closer [to each other] and network and form study groups. I have known them to do things like help with transportation back and forth to classes and other needs.

Participant 9 stated "by posting your picture, they feel like they are talking to a real individual; then students start to see some of your preferences."

Other comments dealing with touchpoints focused on accessibility of the instructor. Participant 3 said "Students are able to communicate with me, I have it [Facebook®] hooked up to my Iphone® so I can see it immediately if they have issues of some type." Participant 26 stated,

Students can contact me 24/7, letting me know if they will be absent, if something interesting in the media is going on (so I can record a TV show, for example, to show in class), or if they do not understand an assignment. I think it also allows more shy students to speak with me about confidential information or to ask what they deem 'a stupid question' that they may be made fun of in class.

Relevancy

Participant 8 brought up a point mentioned by a few others regarding the relevancy of the social networking content by saying, "Sometimes you are exposed to new things that you have not thought about that may generate some research of your own to update the information you have."

Counterpoints

Comments from participants responding negatively to the question made comments similar to Participant 23 who stated,

In theory I would like to say that it [Facebook®] helped them keep abreast of the assignments in class. I never measured it, but I don't believe that it didn't. About three quarters of the way through the class I stopped using and not a single student commented that they wanted me to keep using it.

Similarly Participant 7 commented,

I honestly don't know if social networking helps students. I would presume that students are comfortable talking back and forth on issues that might be significant to them. However, I have never seen [with emphasis] any discussion on Facebook® that I felt was worth reading. Even the questions posted are awfully simplistic. I don't think I am terribly impressed with its use as an educational tool.

Several participants indicated the Dean of his or her division told them that faculty is not supposed to be friends with students. Participant 2 stated "I think it is boundary crossing; I don't think you need to 'hang out' with your students and social networks are hangouts. I don't agree with it at all." While Participant 18 said "Online students are not there to be social; they are there to learn something."

Personal Interview Question 4

How has social networking changed how you approach teaching?

Touchpoints

The question of “How has social networking changed your approach to teaching?” elicited a variety of responses. Participants using D2L® and Facebook® spoke about the common themes of touchpoints and usability.

D2L. Participant 18 talking about using D2L® said:

D2L has changed many things about my teaching. It makes it easier on people who are absent, they see the assignments, they can get them, and they don't have to wait until they come back to class. Students can see what assignments are due and keep up with their grades. It [D2L®] is just a way to keep things organized and I would not want to be without D2L.

Participant 19 speaking about using D2L to reach student with different learning styles said,

I think it [D2L®] helps me to make sure I am providing a lot of different ways to hit the different learning styles. It helps me add to my lecture, depending on our unit of instruction; I may still give a few questions on our written worksheet in class. Due to the area of instruction, students must have some sort of in-class practice where I can move around and see their work. I think it really helps me address more completely different learning styles, because I still do some of the old some things like in-class worksheets, lecture, small group work, and the assignments and quizzes on D2L.

Facebook®. Participant 26 speaking about using Facebook® as a touchpoint to communicate with students said,

I encourage them [students] to ‘friend’ me and often give hints on quizzes, updates [on campus information] via Facebook®. If I am sick, and will be absent; I can post information about that and they can get the assignments without having to drive to campus, only to find their class is not meeting. And, if I forget an important piece of information in class, I can post it.

Participants 9 and 21 spoke about more personal touchpoints using Facebook® with students. Participant 9 said,

It [Facebook®] helps give you insight into some of the personal situations students are dealing with. It allows you to see the ‘human side’ and for the student to know you are a human with feelings and that you care about them.

Participant 21 gave a similar response saying,

I do feel we have a closer relationship with students now, compared to when I was student, prior to Facebook®. Even if we don't use it there is a 'realm' where we mix together in a way we didn't have before, where our worlds were very separate. We have the classroom and maybe office hours, but now there is a whole middle ground where we have to choose whether or not we mix with students on a daily basis, that makes things interesting.

Participant 3 made the following comment on the communications touchpoint with students saying "If a student connects with me via Facebook® then I will communicate with them that way, whereas before it was email or phone."

Usability

Participant 16 likes students to be prepared for class and stated,

It [D2L®] allowed me to post PowerPoint notes from one of the sections online, they were able to print them, bring them to class and we were able to cover the material a little faster. They were also able to ask more pertinent questions that related to specifically what was in the notes.

Participant 15 commented on the student tracking feature in D2L, stating,

I know that with D2L® I can tell whether the student has been online or not, I can check and see if they are checking their things [online course material] and I think that has helped a lot. I can see if they are utilizing some of that information. You can't tell exactly what they are doing but you can find out if they have been on there [in the D2L® course] or not.

Counterpoints

Participants with comments contrary to the question asked regarding how social networking has changed how the faculty member approaches teaching spoke about the lack of usefulness. Participant 1 who does not use social networking said "None what so ever" and then stated,

What I discovered on the brief time I was on Facebook® was that people use it for inane chatter and that's what began driving me crazy. Like people need to know what I am doing at any given moment of the day! I just thought this is absurd. I think most people use them [social networking sites] to post pictures of

themselves and to talk about irrelevant things as opposed to networks of communities interested in specific things such as types of music.

Participant 10 stated,

I have not seen an opportunity there [on social networking] to enhance what I am doing in the classroom. Even for my online students it would be moving them external to the current system and I don't see that being a good decision for me.

Research Question 4

The fourth research question asks “What are faculty’s recommendations for use of social networking”? The objective of this question is to determine from actual users of social networking recommendations for use and possibly learn of some best practices. Personal interview question five was used to answer the first half of research question four.

Personal Interview Question 5

“What one thing would you tell a new instructor about the benefits of using social networking to instruct a class”?

Touchpoints

D2L. Participants 13 and 18 answered the question focusing on the touchpoint theme, specifically bonding. Participant 13 stated, "I believe the students are 'happier' because they know each other better. In class they don't have time to get acquainted."

While Participant 18 indicated students benefit by getting to know each other through the online posting of a photo and a short auto-biographical paragraph.

Participants also made comments on the touchpoint theme but focused on communication in D2L. Participant 10 stated,

Theoretically, I could see in a class, that is discussion oriented it would allow you to have time to cogitate and think about your response before you had to post it.

That could potentially improve the quality of discussion about the topic.

Participant 12 spoke about clarity in the communication, stating,

You have the ability to really layout what you expect and how you are going to approach the class. You can expand as much as you want initially. Right up front you can tell them the information and they can go back and read it and review as they want.

Participant 17 touched on the openness of communication in D2L stating,

It might open up the class so students are more comfortable and engaging in the classroom physically. A D2L benefit is it allows for open communication between the students and the teachers; it is not limited to a time or physical space.

Furthermore, the shy students find it easier to communicate with you through a social network than in person sometimes.

Participant 24 commented that "It covers the 'learning style issue' with different students."

Some participants discussed the usability of D2L with regard to content updating and printing materials. Participant 20 stated the following regarding content,

The more I got into it [D2L] the more I was able to use it. Every year I build the courses based on what I did the previous semester. Each year the content gets richer, the activities get more interactive and honestly I don't know what I would do without it [D2L].

Facebook®

Participants using Facebook® commented on communicating with students, peers, and others. Participant 26 stated, "It allows conversations that begin in class to bloom, either in private messages or on the wall for all to see." Participant 22 speaking in anticipation of using Facebook® stated,

If things go well in the Spring when I set this up [Facebook® Group Page], I think that this will be a great way to communicate with them and make sure they are actually reading what I post. I think that half the time I don't think they are reading what I put on D2L. Well, I know they are not because they are not following directions. I think that what I have to say to them and remind them about will actually be read when I start using Facebook®.

Usability

D2L. Participant 7 remarked on not having to print materials "It [D2L] is a shortcut, rather than make copies of everything. It is an easy way to communicate with an entire class at once." Participant 16 commented on printing materials stating, "You don't have to carry your papers around all the time. I don't have to carry a syllabus around for the students that missed the first day of class." Participant 7 commented "It shifts the responsibility to them, the student, who has to go to D2L and look it up."

Facebook®, Participants 3 and 11 commented on technological aspects of usability. Participant 3 stated,

I think more and more students are using some form of social networking so I think we need to stay updated and on the cutting edge, and give some homework assignments that way [using social networking]. Right now I am not giving any homework assignments through any forms of social networking, but I think we always need to keep looking at that avenue.

According to Participant 11, using social networking would show that as an instructor, "you were more up to date with technology and knew how to do it and incorporate it so they [students] were more engaged."

Counterpoints

Some participants made statements that did not promote or tout a benefit of using social networking to instruct a class but instead they presented a contrary point of view, that of non-benefits or obstacles to using social media to instruct a class.

Participant 19 made the following comment regarding challenges faced with using D2L,

It is a little bit of a hurdle learning how to use D2L, but it is worth learning how to use the system and the tools that are available. Once you get past that hurdle you will benefit equally, reaching your students and being able to provide a variety of ways to help them learn the material.

Participant 21 made the following point regarding contact with students using social networking, specifically Facebook® and the possibility of having two online personas.

Be careful, you have to make a conscious choice with how much of yourself you are comfortable allowing students having access to. If you are naïve you go into teaching and Facebook®, especially if you are young and seen as hip, students want to friend you. You really have to think, how familiar do I want my students to be with me as a person rather as their professor. I am always concerned about that potential for conflict. Maybe you set up two separate pages, one in your professor persona and one in your personal persona and keep them separate, then it could be extremely useful as a class tool. I am thinking about doing that but not sure how I would pull it off.

Participants 5 and 25 made similar statements regarding not using social media. Participant 5 stated, "to me it [Social Networking] is not a benefit. I steer my students from putting too much out there, versus telling them to bare their soul, some of them [students] have no discretion." While participant 25 stated "I would never use social networking to instruct a class."

Participant 20 addressed the issue of constant connectivity to the class stating, I know a lot of my colleagues are on the computer and the phone outside of class. I try very hard not to make the computer like a monkey on my back. When I go home at night I don't want to have to turn it on.

Personal Interview Question 6

What one thing would you warn a new instructor about when using social networking to instruct a class?

The second part of research question four answered using personal interview question six. Answers to the question covered the themes of privacy, touchpoints, and usability in detail.

Privacy

Twelve participant's comments focused on the theme of privacy when answering personal interview question six. Participant 21 stated [with emphasis], "Oh my gosh, privacy.... We don't need to use social networking as our primary teaching tool just for privacy and security purposes." Participant 8 warned about adding students as friends stating "When you add students as friends it takes away your ability to have a social

network." Privacy of your postings prompted Participant 2 to state "If you put things up there [on Facebook®] it can become misrepresented and go places you didn't want it to go.... Think very carefully about every single aspect of what you put out there, pictures, or rants." Participants 12 and 6's warning concentrated on posting photographs.

Participant 12 warned "be careful what you put out there, don't post the pictures from the weekend party." Participant 6 warned "If you allow people to take photos of you or if anyone has ever taken a picture of you, you don't know and you can't control it."

Participant 6 compared the privacy of online postings to living in a glass house saying,

We have to think every minute about what we are putting out there. It is not a matter of just 'how do I behave in class and when I am in my office,' now it is everything about me is open to the public. We all live in a glass house today.

Participant 15 and 16's warnings to new instructors addressed the safety side of privacy.

Participant 16 stated "Don't let your students get too close, there has to be a boundary.

People get stalked or hassled or whatever when they put out too much information out there, you have to watch your information." While participant 15 spoke of personal safety and stated,

Be wary of negative things that can happen in social media like discussing personal information like where you live, that you are going to be out of town, and where you have a checking account, etc... Be a little on the secure, safety conscious side.

Privacy with respect to who a person selects to associate with online was the focus of Participant 1, who stated,

Connections that you make, even using the 'like' button, cause you to think 'who do I want to see this?'.... You could 'get hooked in with' [be Facebook® friends with] which could come back and 'bite you' because of the other person or groups' inappropriate behavior. You could be setting yourself up for failure, through the "guilt by association" concept.

Touchpoints

Boundaries. Eleven participants added warnings to new instructors relating to touchpoints. The first touchpoints comments focused on boundaries between instructors and students. Participant 25 commented, "Keep your Student instructor boundaries well defined." Participant 17 indicated the line between instructor and friend could be "blurred" during that four months you have them as a student and that there still needs to be respect. Participant 5 commented on boundaries saying,

Some instructors have students added [as Facebook® Friends] on their page and that is an issue! You have friends from here and there and you never know what any of them are going to say. I would say 'don't ever add students to your personal page.'

Participant 21's warning "set expectations of the students and tell them upfront. Tell them the guidelines for how they will interact with you."

Participants also commented on communicating with students and offered warnings related to ‘not’ hearing or communicating with students. Participant 21 stated, You are not going to get a feel for the class [D2L] the way you do in a lecture environment. You won't be able to put your finger on the pulse of how your class is doing because you don't see your students. You only see feedback from students who use the discussion page or email. You won't hear from students who think they are doing well.

Participant 11 commented, "You have to have feedback, and if the students don't come to you with feedback, you don't know how they are really doing you just know that you are not hearing from them." Participant 12 made a similar comment stating "Students who think they are doing well, whether they are or they aren't, you will never hear from them.... Some classes are not willing to share and discuss things."

Role Model

Participants also voiced comments on role models and decorum or appropriateness of postings. Participants 9 and 24 commented on professionalism with Participant 24 suggesting “maintain professionalism.” Participant 9 added to that comment saying “be a good role model.” Addressing decorum or appropriateness from students, Participant 3 stated, “There is a great deal of rudeness as well that is another problem, there just seems to be a lack of manners and that goes back to anonymity. Participant 21 commented on the appropriateness of posting by the instructor saying, You need to be cautious with what you put on there in print for all the world to see. I would make certain that you were not inappropriate in comments that you

thought a particular student would understand as sarcastic or flip or jovial that by the time it is printed and seen by others might sound different...it would be awful for a student to see a picture of me with a drink, even a glass of wine.

Participant 22 speaking on the appropriateness of postings indicated that they never comment on another instructor's teaching methods and refuse to comment on school policies and procedures and instead refers those students elsewhere.

Content and Delivery

Participants also commented on touchpoints with students focusing on content and content delivery. Participant 19 pointed out the ability [in D2L] to “copy content from year to year.” Participant 19 also offered the following caveat to copying materials stating instructors need to know "the ins and outs of setting the start date. If you don't want the class to see everything and if you don't have it ready use the ‘Hide’ feature.”

Usability

Participant 19 commented the usability and functionality regarding the grading of quizzes and assignments stating “you have to be careful about the submission view; you cannot let the students take an open book test online and get immediate results or they could tell the other students what is on the exam.”

Relevancy

Participant 24 speaking on relevancy with regard to content stated "If you use Youtube®, you want to make sure it matches what we teach, that it doesn't conflict with

what we teach students.” Participant 17 added "Be careful of the sources out there [online].... You have to be very selective."

Participants also warned about plagiarism with Participant 9 attributing some blame to technology stating,

D2L is bad enough; there are inherent problems in that technology. The primary problem is no human contact and no quality control. There seems to be an enormous amount of cheating in online courses because students are left on their own. Even the most honest students are inclined to do that [cheat].

Participant 1 also commented on plagiarism stating, "You have to deal with the anonymity of the web and the un-civility it promotes and so it compromises people’s integrity. Cheating is a significant problem for anyone who teaches online.”

Several participants commented on the time consuming nature of D2L®, Facebook® and Twitter®. Participant 23 added "At first it is a lot more work on how you have to set it up and put things on it" such as formats for online tests.”

Research Question 5

What do faculty members cite as advantages and dis-advantages to using social networking as an instructional aide?

The first half of the answer to this research question came from Personal Interview Question 7. The answer to this research question will help to determine if any best-practices or commonalities occur in responses. The answers to this question could indicate areas for product improvement.

Personal Interview Question 7

What are the advantages of the site(s) or tool(s) you are using?

Touchpoint

D2L. Participant 7 addressed the touchpoint theme when speaking on the advantages of D2L stating, "Its availability is one of its strongest points. D2L is easy and available to them [students] 24/7. It is very advantageous for those students who have missed a class or are trying to review." Participants also commented on contacting large groups of students. Participant 9 stated, "I use D2L to contact large groups of students and get information to them." Similarly Participant 1 stated, "You can dialogue with entire classes of students and in that way it is beneficial. I dialogue more with online students because the in class students see me physically two days a week." Participant 13 pointed out "they [students] can contact each other on D2L." Participant 11 likes seeing student photos on D2L stating that "D2L having pictures now helps you in relating to the student as a person and not just a name."

Facebook®. Participants using Facebook® made the following comments regarding the advantages of using Facebook® as it relates to the touchpoint theme. Participant 15 stated, "It is instant, I can get an instant message to them and I think it is a better way to get information to them when you can't see them face-to-face. Participant 26 agreed on the comment of timeliness when stating, "Facebook® advantages include timeliness, the ability to have private conversations with students, the sense of connectedness to the professor, and hopefully then the material".

Participant 14 pointed out "It brings another way to provide information and younger students sometimes prefer these avenues of communication." Touchpoint related

comments also came from participants 7 and 2, with Participant 7 stating “I have my own personal page and have never thought of having one for my students. I have a peer who has a page for students and I refer my students to that page. While Participant 2 shared the following, “A person that I always looked up to found me on there [Facebook®]. I think it is neat how you can see how someone's life has changed, that part is good, other than that 'not so good'." Participant 2 offered the following caveat to their previous statement, saying that you have “people in your business that you don’t even know.”

Usability

Participants made more than 40 comments related to the theme of usability. The following quotes are reflective of the participant’s responses.

D2L – Content. Participants 24 and 16 see D2L saving time for students.

Participant 16 states, "The advantage for my online students is that everything I do is online and it is convenient for students. It allows them to work at their own times."

Participant 24 states D2L "saves time, the students can do it [D2L] on their own schedule."

Participant 5 places several items in D2L for students saying, "I do the syllabus, the PowerPoints from the textbook, class schedules, and projects. If I want to send them something I will just do an email if I have special handouts for them." Participant 12 points out,

The obvious advantage is that students have to log in to D2L because that's where their class information is located. I have ability to put out the information they need. Unfortunately, it’s like the 'horse and water', you can't force your students

who are signed up for an online class to go out and read the materials that are out there. For every one of my classes, I put a full set of PowerPoint® slides for every chapter we cover. I put multiple pages of notes for each chapter we cover. I have some student who never read the notes.

Participant 18 speaking on course content in D2L stated, "It is a way to keep everything organized....To know that everything they need for the class is available, though I may not be available to them."

Participant 4 speaks of providing links to additional content in D2L stating, "I use D2L and because the class is completely online, much of the information students get in addition to my content are links to websites that give them quality information and additional materials such as videos."

D2L Discussion Questions

Participants had varying responses on the advantages of discussion questions in D2L. Participant 17 stated "I don't put specific course related discussion questions in D2L, but it is a good idea." Participant 17 also indicated allowing students but not requiring the students' use of the discussions area in D2L, however "some semesters that students go rampant using the discussion boards." Participant 9 talking about discussion questions in D2L states, "We put discussion questions under the 'Blog' in D2L but main discussion questions are the 'discussion' area of D2L." Similarly, Participant 7 states "I post everything under content" and does not use discussions on D2L. The only area they use is "content."

Additional advantages noted by D2L users varied. Participant 1 stated "I use D2L in all my courses, and essays can be put in a dropbox and it cuts down on late assignments." Participant 11 comments that the D2L locker feature benefits students stating "Having a locker so they can work on stuff then come back to it is a benefit."

D2L – News Page and Pager

Participants 18 and 22 made note of the news page and pager functions respectively. Participant 18 said, "They [students] don't have to ask what did I miss, it is there on the news page. It [D2L] eliminates a lot of questions or potential questions." Participant 22 stated "The pager feature is useful along with the email and discussions."

D2L – Quizzes and Testing

Participants 9 and 11 see online testing and quizzes as advantages of D2L. Participant 11 stated, "taking online quizzes at their discretion" is a big advantage." Participant 9 stated, "We use D2L for testing and use randomized testing so nobody gets the same question at the same time."

Other Advantages

Additional advantages mentioned by participants include, Participant 11 speaking about students being online stated, "The big advantage is that everything is there [online] they can get to it any time." Participant 13 indicated that YouTube contained both good and bad examples of everything which is useful in teaching. Participant 4 uses Youtube® videos and commented "I put links to Youtube® videos to demonstrate processes in the content section so they know it is not optional." Participant 20 speaking about using

online sources for content said, "They [online sources] provide a different perspective on some of the content I teach, which encourages students to accept the fact that not everyone is thinking the same way." Participant 20 also indicated that bringing in many different perspectives forces students to use critical thinking skills.

Participant 21 speaking about the advantages in a "perfect world" of social networking stated,

If I had all of my students following me on Twitter® in a 'perfect world' where everybody was on Twitter® and everybody was using it properly. I could put links to articles that are related to class and I could do the same on Facebook® and all the students who were active on that site would have instant access to things that I might have to share with them that are beyond the scope of what we would do in class.

Participants 1 and 3 see the plagiarism checker as an advantage. Participant 1 stated "It is beneficial that we can submit student written work in to plagiarism tools like turnitin.com, it has cut down on plagiarism but not totally."

Personal Interview Question 8

What are the disadvantages or drawbacks of the same site(s)?

The answer to the second half of Research Question 5 comes from Personal Interview Question 8. Participants did not hold back on the responses.

Privacy

Participants commented on the privacy theme. Participant 21 commented on a few aspects of privacy saying,

The loss of privacy, it is not just the loss of not having secrets that only your close friends know...The loss of control of your persona could be a real danger... and students could see me on Facebook® and think I am available.

Participant 2 commented on privacy saying without it you have "people in your business that you don't even know." Participant 6 commented on privacy issues with making students your friends [Facebook®] saying "because you make your students your friends, they see your posts that were not meant for students to see."

Relevancy

Participants commented on the theme of relevancy of the information or content. Participants 14 and 8 commented on the accuracy of information online. According to Participant 14 "misinformation can be posted." Participant 8 referred to students receiving "felonious information from websites."

Participant 1 commented on information overload with social networking and the Internet saying,

It allows people to acquire a lot more information and have quicker access to enormous amounts of information, but people seem to use that information in superficial ways. It is the nature of the 'point and click', the 'surfing' to a site and 'surf out', the constant hyper-links that move people from one thing to another."

Participant 26 comment regarding privacy centered around finding out too much saying,

The idea of seeing too much of a student's personal life, such as party pictures or private facts. Although, it has helped me understand what some students are going through outside class, like a death in the family is a disadvantage. As is the idea they have access to me 24/7 and think if they post three minutes before class that I will have read their post before I arrive.

Touchpoints

Participants commented on touchpoints with students and focused on social networking's impersonal non-human contact side. Participants 9 and 1 commented specifically on human contact with Participant 9 saying "It's not face-to-face; some people need that auditory, face-to-face piece. Sometimes you cannot set up a live chat which works good for the auditory learners." Participant 1 similarly stated, "I truly believe that human beings are social creatures that need contact and I don't think the Internet encourages that; it reinforces isolation." Participant 24 commented, "It [social networking, D2L] will never replace the instructor." Participant 12 mentioned the need for non-verbal feedback from the students stating,

The biggest drawback is that you have no idea how of what your students are really doing. Unless they come to you with questions you don't see from their expressions, you don't get a feel of how they are doing. The student's perception [of their grade] is not reflected in their testing.

Participant 17 commented on the frequency of use of social networking sites saying "Not all students may access these sites on a regular basis and thus may miss important things that are posted."

Usability

The majority of disadvantages related to the theme of usability focused on D2L. Participant 23 commented "The online videos are not ADA (American Disabilities Act) compliant." Participant 1 shared: "My students have grown more impatient, they don't have the ability to sit down and spend time looking at a book." According to P1 students say, "I can just go to a websites and starting cutting and pasting," Participant 19 commented on difficulties with D2L email saying,

D2L email is a disadvantage, it is a drawback when students will email you through D2L; you can get a notice... but cannot reply... the instructor must be in D2L to reply... D2L email away from the office is difficult, easier to do d2l from your office PC.

Participant 19 also mentioned issues with lockdown browser stating,

One problem was with the lock down browser feature, if you want to make your quiz secure and make sure your students cannot do a print screen or copy it into Paint, you can have your students go through "lock down" browser.

Due to technology issues on campus, students can take the test on campus and get around the 'lock down' browser." Incompatible software is an issue according to Participant 5 who stated "The students tend not to have the same versions of the software that we are

using at the college. The downside is sometimes my inability to understand it all and I think the students are better than I am."

Usability - Technology

Participants speaking about the technology side of the usability theme commented on system downtime and students lacking high speed Internet. Participant 3 commented "System down time can be an issue and may require giving students extra time to complete their assignments." Participant 25 pointed out "not all students have access or have high speed access." Participants 15 and 16 make note of computer literacy with Participant 15 stating "The biggest disadvantage is that you have some people who don't know how to use the computer well enough and they get intimidated." Participant 16 points out "I have a lot of students who don't use email, but they can do stuff with their phone." Participant 13 and 22 commented on the students lack of knowledge regarding D2L Participant 13 stated "some students don't know how to use it [D2L]... I haven't had any [students] who didn't eventually learn how to use it [D2L]. I basically have other students help the ones who don't and it has worked so far." Participant 22 commented that they are making extra postings to compensate for students not understanding how to navigate D2L. Participant 22 stated

When you post something on your discussion board it will say new discussion board posting. But when you post an announcement for your class the students do not see that there is an 'announcement.' I find myself posting on the discussion board that there is a new announcement since they will see that. There are little quirks in D2L that you have to figure out.

Other disadvantages noted came from Participant 4 who stated, "The links change so frequently. I don't teach the same classes every semester, so by the time I teach the course again, the links do work and I have to search for links again." Participant 9 stated "D2L does not give good statistics on test question validity." Participant 5 pointed out "[D2L] is handy but you can't make them [students] go in and check."

Social Networking Training.

If training on social networking were offered what topics would you like to see covered?

The participants' recommendations for future training covered a broad range of topics. Participant 11 stated "students need basic computer skills before we start teaching them social networking." Participant 7 commented "I am open for any kind of training." Participant 5 qualified a similar comment stating, "I don't want a manual, I want hands on training where I can actually practice it."

Participant 12 showed interest in D2L training but not on Facebook® or Twitter®, stating,

If we are talking about D2L it is always nice to have more training... that would be more useful. If we are talking Facebook® and Twitter® I don't know that I would ever be interested in that training at all. It is maybe that I am too old to see the benefits of Facebook® and Twitter® in the classes I teach.

A few participants commented on the presumed feasibility of using social networking in all disciplines. Select participants stated that social networking would not work from a practical perspective in their discipline. One participant referred to an article that spoke about instructors using Facebook® and Twitter® in the social sciences and humanities areas, but not in the business area or the engineering and science areas."

Participant 10 stated “I would like to training on the basic stuff and then moving on I would like to see interest groups where faculty start discussing how they are using it.” Participant 21 suggests "having a panel discussion on ways to use it to disseminate information that is relevant to students and colleagues, rather than just a place to post your random thoughts."

The participants’ additional recommendations for future training have been consolidated and are offered as follows:

D2L® Training

- Advanced uses of D2L®.
- How to keep some stuff private from certain friends.
- How to protect you and your friend’s privacy.
- How to set up and effectively using groups.
- How to set up, explain everything and get it started.
- How to show videos online that my division has purchased.
- How to use D2L and nothing else.
- How to use the D2L discussion boards better.

Facebook® Training

- How I could use Facebook® and Twitter® for my classes and make it useful.
- How it fits with my subject.
- How to connect with students on Facebook®.
- How you make connections with the people that you want to make and yet keep some privacy.
- Is it better to have a group page or a personal page.

- Learn the difference between Fan and Group pages.
- Security and privacy settings.
- Training on all the things it [Facebook®] can do.
- What is the maximum security [privacy] I can implement.
- What things can you turn on and off on your profile.

Social Networking Training

- How to appropriately use the sites.
- How to employ social networking in the classroom.
- How to evaluate the effectiveness of social networking.
- How to measure a students use of social networking.
- How to use these [social networking] sites in your teaching.
- Netiquette, what is appropriate online.
- Periodic workshops on the updates and changes to these [social networking] sites.
- Social networking for dummies.
- The history of Social Networking likes Facebook®.
- The pluses and minuses of social networking sites.
- What it costs you to use social networking.

LinkedIn® and Twitter® Training

- How kids are using Twitter®.
- How the business community is using LinkedIn® for job searches, following business leads, etcetera.

General Comments from Interviewees

During the interview process participants opened up and shared thoughts or comments independent of the survey questions. The participants' additional comments have been consolidated and are offered as follows:

General Comments from Interviewees

- What greater social network takes place than in the classroom where you meet new people and you exchange new ideas and work together, that to me is a social network.
- We are missing out on a lot of the aspects of communication, that's my main concern, missing the interaction and learning that takes place in the classroom from interacting with your peers.
- I want more direct contact with my students.
- Concerned with not knowing who is taking the test or doing the online work. Without the Face to Face we are missing out.

D2L®

- The D2L Blog acts as a repository for ideas from all classmates to use as a resource for a future assignment.
- Most of the students grumble about it [D2L®] and don't see it as a useful tool and several of them don't like for other students to comment on their blog posts.
- I am using it as a way to compile data for their papers.

- We haven't finished the term but it [D2L®] appears to be exceeding my expectations.
- I don't use the [D2L®] survey tool, but I want to use it.
- I use D2L® and a lot of links on the web and I love the accessibility that the email and discussion lists give as a professor to interact with my students and I am not sure that Facebook® would do any better with that. Although with the pictures [in Facebook®] it might.
- The discussion list in D2L is the place they can talk back and forth about what is going on.

Facebook®

- I guess I could start my own Facebook® page to use with students, but how many hours do I want to spend communicating.
- We have been instructed that we should not friend a student on Facebook® while the student is in your class. There is fear that the friendship could influence the grade in the course.
- Don't know why public school teachers can be friends with students and college professors cannot be friends. Are there specific policies?
- I am curious if there are rules for public school teachers or university professors using Facebook® to communicate with students.
- I think that social networking, particularly Facebook® is being more and more invaluable depending on the friends you have to keep you in touch with current issues.

- It would be nice to keep high school and grade school friends separate from my work friends.
- I would like to use Facebook® more, I think it would be a good tool.
- A lot of my friends are old graduates and it is nice to see what they are up to and what is going on, even though they don't discuss work you can tell what's going on with them.
- I have a lot of friend requests but it [Facebook®] is not a priority.
- I have a lot of friend requests from students but I don't have a problem with that there is nothing inappropriate on there.
- I go ahead and friend students; to say no would be rude and it is not hurting anything.
- Befriending and not-befriending. I do not see any problem befriending my students.
- If you trust me as an employee and an instructor you should be able to trust that I would maintain the proper form, policy or procedure online.
- I think there needs to be a standardized training on understanding accepting students and how to maintain integrity and have your students on there.
- I don't know what the official college statement is on befriending students.
- I don't see any problem befriending students as long as I can keep my integrity. I think the school should be able to trust me to do that.
- I would like to know what the college's stance is and I think it varies by department.

Social Networking

- It [social networking] is not appropriate for my classes.
- Use it [social networking, D2L®] with caution, not make it the class. It [social networking, D2L®] is a tool to be used, not to take over and be used as the instructor. I believe we still have a place even though it is going to all online.

Technology

- There are lots of people addicted to their smart phone.
- I am on the other side of the [technology] curve and trying desperately to keep up. I honestly want to use my computer and use my phone, but I don't need it to live and I still like turning a page in a book. I don't like e-books.
- I think it is intimidating when your students know so much more and you start slowly picking it up. I am not into the fanciest Smart Phone, but some students are so far ahead {with technology}.
- Don't be afraid of technology, just jump in and try it. You are not going to find out the benefits if you don't try it. Invite it [technology] into the classroom, it makes a difference in their [students] learning. When the students are involved they feel like they are a part of the learning process.
- I was dragged kicking and screaming into this 'tech age' but now that I am here, I really like the fact that I can do stuff. I just don't know how far it can go. It is frightening to think that the 'tech age' is going to take over our whole way of existing.

Second Life® and Twitter®

- Second Life® might be interesting; they actually have training classes in Second Life, but I have never been able to get it to work.
- I don't even know what Twitter® looks like. I hear about it all the time but I don't have a clue.
- You are not going to get voice intonation or body language in a Twitter® message.
- The clicker system I have seen used offers more control over how the students are responding versus using Twitter®.

Youtube®2

- I have asked IT [Information Technology] Services to give us streaming video. I haven't done that since Youtube® and Google® video are available. I rely less on IT for assistance for that.

Summary of Findings

Research Question 1.

Research Question 1 examined basic demographic information regarding the faculty responding to the survey. The mean age of the male faculty members participating in this research was 52.44 years compared to 48.29 years for female faculty. Similarly the mean age of male faculty participating on Facebook® was 50.29 years compared to 45.98 years for female faculty. Looking at the overall sample the number of female participants

was nearly doubled in each category (see Table 4.2). The notable exception was Twitter® with 5.5 times as many female faculty participating versus male faculty.

Table IX details the breakdown of social networks used by faculty, showing the majority, over 64.71% of male faculty and 71.83% of female faculty use Facebook®, with nearly half of those using only Facebook® (32.35% male faculty and 42.25% female faculty). Table VIII shows the level of technology use by faculty when communicating with students, and compares technology use between faculty using Facebook® and those not using Facebook®. Both groups were close in the percentage who have never taught online. Faculty using Facebook® were more likely to have “text messaged” students by roughly 30 percent. Neither group overwhelmed the other on having “never mass emailed” students. However, faculty using Facebook® were more likely to have “mass emailed” students 10 or more times. Fifty-two percent of the faculty using Facebook® were full-time faculty, while 65.63 percent of the faculty not using Facebook® was full-time faculty.

Research Question 2

Research Question 2 looks at the faculty’s use of technology to communicate with students. Respondents to the demographic survey reported that 58.10% teach online, while only 18.10% of the respondents have a faculty webpage, compared to 30.48% who indicated they have a personal webpage. Almost 70 percent (69.52%) reported that had a Facebook® page compared to 12.38 percent and 18.10 percent for Twitter® and MySpace® respectively. When looking to see if faculty were using social networking

sites for professional use the results were 6.67 percent and 4.76 percent using Facebook® and LinkedIn® respectively for professional purposes.

Ninety-nine of 105 faculty stated they email students. Seventy-nine faculty indicated they have mass email students 3 or more times, while 15 indicated they had never mass emailed students. The top three methods reported by faculty in this study for contacting students were email (95.24%), phone calls (84.76%) and text messaging (29.52%). An interesting result was that Facebook® and D2L® tied for fourth place with only 10.48% of faculty indicating his or her using of either Facebook® or D2L®.

Research Question 3.

Research Question 3 dealt with faculty's selection and use of social networking sites. Some faculty consider D2L a social network. D2L is designed to be a learning management system for the delivery of course content and tracking of student progress. Most faculty mentioned ease of use as a reason behind his or her selection. Many faculty indicated privacy was an issue and reason why they did not select Facebook® to communicate with students.

Most faculty made reference to "social networking", whether D2L®, Facebook®, or others was a good touchpoint and way to communicate with students. Faculty referenced the usability of D2L to post content and conduct discussions online. Some faculty realized that social networking has many benefits, while other faculty did not see the value in social networking and focused on the always present concerns over privacy.

Research Question 4.

Research Question 4 asked for faculty's recommendation for use of social networking. The question elicited faculty responses recommending the do's and don'ts of social networking with students. Faculty's most common recommendations were to maintain privacy of information and not to become "friends" with students.

Research Question 5.

Research Question 5 asked for faculty's perception of advantages and disadvantages of using social networking as an instructional aide. The question focused on the advantages and/or disadvantages of the social networking tool he or she is using, looking for any commonalities, best practices or possible areas for product improvement or enhancement of the social networking tool. Responses included the easy access from any Internet connect for all the social networking tools. D2L® users noted the ability to post content, discussion questions and only grading. Facebook® users noted a more personal connection with students as positive aspects. Negative aspects that Facebook® users noted included lack of knowledge on how to use Facebook® as an instructional aide and privacy concerns.

Chapter five will offer conclusions and recommendation to this area of research. Included in the recommendations will be further courses of action related to possible future research. .

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to describe the use of Social Networking such as Facebook®, Twitter® and others as instructional aides in a community college. Although the research focused specifically on the faculty of Rose State College and faculty member's use of such social media websites as Facebook®.com® and Twitter®.com® the study revealed extensive use of other social networking websites as well as websites specifically designed to be used as teaching aids. The findings of the study revealed that little was known about the use of social networking by community college faculty to help facilitate the instructional process. Specifically, Rose State College does not have information regarding the use of social networking websites such as Facebook® and Twitter® by faculty to help facilitate the instructional process. Rose State College can benefit from this research in determining policies regarding the implementation and use of such social networking websites as an instructional aide for all adult and continuing education.

While the results of this research cannot and should not be generalized to a much larger population, this research gives an accurate snapshot of the faculty's perception and usage of social networking tools at the time the survey was taken.

The conclusions were based upon the research data collected and the perceptions of the researcher as the collector of the primary data. Conclusions regarding each of the five research questions and recommendations for further action or research are provided in the following narrative.

Conclusions and Recommendations Related to the Four Major Themes

Four major themes were identified in this research and offered the following outcomes or conclusions.

1. The “touchpoints” dealt with perceptions related to interaction or contact between the student and the instructor and revealed that the majority of faculty perceived social networking facilitated spontaneous communication on an “as-needed” basis with students. In addition, it enhanced communications in that it allowed communication with students in a manner that was familiar to the students.

2. Relevancy dealt with the communication on social networking as it relates to the course or objective. The findings of the study indicated that social networking conversations were not always relevant to the course but did provide insight for some faculty related to better understanding of students. Faculty utilizing this method of communication with students should be educated regarding the potential benefits and pitfalls regarding social relationships with students and how to maintain those relationships in a professional manner.

3. Functionality dealt with actual benefit to the student related to its use. Faculty perceived the D2L grade book and discussion functions to be useful and relatively easy to use. Most faculty when asked; however, did not see the usefulness of the D2L blog

feature, which is interesting given their perception that D2L is a social networking tool. The D2L network was the most utilized of all of the communication tools by faculty to the point that they even viewed it as “social media.” As a valuable teaching aid it could be expanded to further enhance the capability and tie-in to social networking for those teachers who have been trained in proper use of social networking in a classroom environment.

4. Privacy dealt with the concern on the part of faculty that information online, in this case specifically social networks is not secure and that any posting makes them susceptible to identity theft. The other side of the privacy issue addresses faculty not wanting students to know too much about them and conversely them not wanting to know about the students’ personal and party life. Those are very valid concerns and for those faculty not comfortable with that kind of student relationships, social networking may not be a tool for them. One size does not fit all. For those who are only mildly uncomfortable with social networking, enhanced training on pitfalls and protective measures could provide confidence in use of the systems for professional purposes. For others, it is obviously a tool that could conceivably make their instructional process more difficult.

Just as teachers have a variety of teaching styles, so they also vary in familiarity and comfort with use of social networking. The choices of use of tools needed to communicate with their students should consist of their best fit. As protective tools are developed and as faculty become educated pertaining to their with concerns related to “socializing” with students, more and more instructors will choose begin to utilize tools that can facilitate their needs and aid in enhancement of their profession. However, it

must be their choice in order for them to use it effectively just as instructional style is their personal style aided by education on how to enhance or improve their style.

Research Question 1 Conclusion

1. What is the profile of faculty who use social networking?

The researcher concluded there is no specific or general profile of Rose State College faculty who use social networking, other than it appears that of the faculty members responding more female faculty (71.83%) use social networking than their male (64.71%) counterparts. Another conclusion is that faculty members who teach online courses do not necessarily possess a propensity to participate in social networking. Of faculty responding who use Facebook® (42.27%) reported they had never taught online. Interestingly, of the faculty not using Facebook®, (40.63%) reported never teaching online (Table X). Some faculty stated during the interviews that they were not “into technology” and were not interested in learning how to use it.

It is recommended that further research be conducted using a larger population and sample to determine if a correlation exists between gender and social networking or between teaching online and participating in social networking.

Research Question 2

2. Which Social Networking tools are faculty using to connect with students?

Conclusion, though 14 faculty members indicated using social networking; in reality, only one was truly using it as an instructional tool or aide. During the interview phase only one faculty member stated that they really “used” Facebook® and Twitter®

both to communicate with students. The other six faculty members did not say much more than they occasionally exchanged an inconsequential message with students on Facebook®. The one active user stated that students communicating with them on Facebook® or Twitter® would get extra “insight” into the testing and quizzes; that the other students who did not use social networking with them would not get that information.

Another conclusion is that the majority of interviewees stated during the personal interviews that the social networking tool they used was D2L, the online learning management system. D2L is not a social media platform, but rather a learning management platform. Another conclusion is the perception of the faculty was that there are “discussion” areas on D2L and that social networking is an online discussion. Most faculty appear to be under the impression that sending an email or uploading content to D2L is social networking, when in fact it is not social networking. D2L has a “blog” feature for a “social networking feel” but it was not designed to be a social network. Another conclusion based on comments from several faculty is even though D2L has a blog component, which is a feature of some social networks, the faculty do not know how use it or the purpose of the blog feature. D2L serves as a learning network or social learning network with limited reach to those participants with a user account and in a given course, during a specific time, typically a semester.

It is recommended that because learning can occur anywhere, regardless of time of day or location, the faculty should be trained to use the discussion board and blog feature within the D2L learning management system or receive training on a social networking site such as Facebook®, Twitter® or blog site.

Another conclusion is some faculty are not using any social networking due to departmental policy. There are issues or concerns with state employees being on social networking sites during duty hours, even during your personal lunch hour. Some participants indicated they have been instructed by his or her Dean not to be “friends” with students. Some participants indicated they complied with that request or instruction from the Dean, while others indicated they did not care and were still friends with students. The recommendation is to increase training and awareness on the use of social networking and on school policies regarding use of social networking. Further research could be useful in determining social networking guidelines, policies and procedures for faculty.

Research Question 3

3. How do faculty use social networking to communicate with students?

The conclusion is the majority of faculty use email through D2L to communicate with students and believe that emailing constitutes social networking. Another conclusion is most faculty expressed concern for privacy, both the instructors’ and students’ privacy. Some instructors do not want it to appear that he or she is lurking and spying on a student. As a result some faculty indicated they did not read postings by students in D2L. It is recommended that faculty be trained on setting up special “chatting” areas online in D2L. It is also recommended that faculty receive training on how to “set” his or her online privacy settings. Increasing the level of privacy may give instructors the comfort level he or she desires. It should be noted again that some faculty are using D2L to supplement his or her classroom based course.

Research Question 4

4. What are faculty's recommendations for use of social networking?

The conclusion with regard to Research Question 4 is that most faculty have serious concerns for privacy of information and personal safety and thus recommended using the strictest privacy settings, stating personal safety on the Internet and identity theft were serious concerns. Another conclusion is some faculty are concerned with “crossing the line” with students between personal and professional relationships. Some faculty members recommend caution in being a social networking “friend” to students. Some faculty recommended that students and faculty members not be social networking “friends” during times that the student was an active student in the faculty members course. Some faculty members felt that keeping his or her personal business private is a big issue. Some of the faculty did recommend using social networking to keep up with distant family and friends along with colleagues at different colleges and universities. The recommendation to faculty is to limit the people you are friends with on social networking sites or set-up multiple accounts or “user profiles” for different purposes, such as social and professional.

Research Question 5

5. What do faculty members cite as advantages and disadvantages to using social networking as an instructional aide?

The main conclusion on this research question is faculty like the 24/7 capability to communicate with students online. Additionally, there is the conclusion that regardless of

the question asked about social networking, the majority of faculty members still consider D2L a social network. Other advantages dealt with using components of D2L including discussion boards, grade book, attendance tracking, dropbox and plagiarism checking. Another conclusion is faculty like not having to print handouts and requiring the students to download and print any required documents.

The researcher also concluded that many faculty like the ability to continually update material on D2L and not have to wait until the next class period. It is recommended that Rose State College set up a faculty to faculty peer group to share knowledge among faculty members regarding social networking.

Conclusions drawn from the faculty cited disadvantages of social networking and online courses, include faculty's concern about students cheating on exams, academic rigor, privacy, inaccurate information and impersonal communication. It is recommended that faculty receive training in additional methods of assessment for online and distance learning courses.

Social Networking Training Requested

The researcher concluded that most faculty were open to the idea of training with regards to social networking, keeping in mind that the majority of faculty considered the learning management system (D2L) as a social network. Some faculty suggested basic computer training, some want basic Facebook® and Twitter® training, and others wanted more D2L training at all levels. Another common suggestion for a training course was on the topic of privacy and safety. It is the researcher's recommendation that a full training program be continually offered on D2L and social networking.

Summary Conclusion

The results of this study will help the college determine a course of action on the implementation, if any, of social networking as an instructional aide. It is recommended that other two year colleges in Oklahoma are surveyed and results compared. Upon completion researchers could compare the demographic differences and usage and see if there is any variation by academic division, department, discipline, or subject area.

In summary, social networking is everywhere today and is being used by people of all ages and for the widest variety of purposes. People have many different ideas on what social networking is and how to best harness the connectivity it provides while keeping in check privacy and safety issues. It appears that some educators are using social networking as an instructional aide. An instructor putting up a social networking page for a course to provide information to students is neither a bad thing nor good thing. The researcher concludes that it is not practical to force faculty or students to join social networks in part due to privacy and safety concerns.

Social networking and sites such as Facebook® are constantly growing and evolving and may someday meet the expectations of educators; until that time, sites such as Facebook® and Twitter® can be used as an instructional aide with limited capabilities. The use of blogs for building an online learning repository for text, images and video is much better use of social networking. Educators could create a blog on his or her topic or subject matter and then to use social networking sites such as Facebook® and Twitter® pages that allow them to reach their target audience and promote the blog page

The final suggestion and recommendation is train faculty on the different purposes and usages of the D2L LMS and social networking sites. Future studies could examine strategies for best accomplishing this recommendation.

REFERENCES

- Alexander, B. (2008). Social Networking and higher education. In R.N. Katz (Ed.), *The tower and the cloud, higher education in the age of cloud computing*,(p. 198)
Retrieved on Jan. 15, 2010 from
<http://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/PUB7202.pdf>.
- Allen, M. (2006). *Creating successful e-learning, a rapid system for getting it right first time, every time*. San Francisco: Pfeiffer Publishing
- Armstrong, J. & Franklin, T. (2008). *A review of current and developing international practice in the use of social networking (Web 2.0) in higher education*. Retrieved on May 15, 2010 from <http://franklin-consulting.co.uk/LinkedDocuments/the%20use%20of%20social%20networking%20in%20HE.pdf>
- Aronowitz, S. (11/13/09). Educator use of social networking lags behind interest. *T.H.E. Journal*. Retrieved on 4/25/10 from
<http://thejournal.com/articles/2009/11/13/educator-use-of-social-networking-lags-behind-interest.aspx>
- Aspden, E.J. & Thorpe, L.P. (2009). Where do you learn?": Tweeting to inform learning space development. *EDUCAUSE Quarterly* v.32 n.1 2009 Retrieved on 4/25/10 from

<http://www.educause.edu/EDUCAUSE+Quarterly/EDUCAUSEQuarterlyMagazineVolum/WhereDoYouLearnTweetingtoInfor/163852>

- Begin Baker, M. & Favata, C. (2006). Point/CounterPoint, Do social networking applications have a place in the classroom? *Learning & Leading with Technology / December/January 2006–07*. ISTE (International Society for Technology in Education), (p.9) [Electronic Version].
- Batson, T. (2010) Learning against the riches: Students in the cloud. *Campus Technology* [Electronic Version]. Retrieved on September 1, 2010, from <http://campustechnology.com/articles/2010/09/01/learning-amongst-the-riches-students-in-the-cloud.aspx>
- Berg, J., Berquam, L., & Christoph, K. (2007). Social networking technologies: A "poke" for campus services. *EDUCAUSE Review*, vol. 42, no. 2 (March/April 2007) [Electronic Version] p.32–44 Retrieved on 4/25/10 from <http://www.educause.edu/EDUCAUSE+Review/EDUCAUSEReviewMagazineVolume42/SocialNetworkingTechnologiesAP/158119>
- Bettis, P.J. & Mills, M.R. (2006). Liminality and the study of the changing academic landscape [Chapter 4]. In Anfara Jr., V.A. & Mertz, N.T. (Ed.), *Theoretical frameworks in qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Bingham, T. (2009). Learning gets social. *Training and Development Magazine*, August 2009, volume 63, #8, Page 61.
- Bonk, C.J. (2009). *The world is open, how web technology is revolutionizing education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

- Bonk, C.J., & Zhang, K. (2008). *Empowering online learning, 100+ activities for reading, reflecting, displaying, & doing*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Bowers-Campbell, J. (2008). Cyber “pokes”: motivational antidote for developmental college readers. *Journal of College Reading and Learning*, 39 (1), Fall 2008 (p.74). [Electronic Version]. Retrieved on 4/25/10 from <http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/EJ816621.pdf>
- Bozarth, J. (2005). *E-Learning solutions on a shoestring, Help for the chronically underfunded trainer*. San Francisco: Pfeiffer Publishing
- Brown, G. & Yule, G. (1983). *Discourse analysis*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press
- Celente, G. (1997). *Trends 2000, how to prepare for and profit from changes in the 21st century*. Hachette Book Group: NY, NY.
- Chapnick, S. and Meloy, J. (2005). *Renaissance elearning, creating dramatic and unconventional learning experiences*. San Francisco: Pfeiffer Publishing
- Choy, D. (2008). *What exactly Is touchpoint?* Retrieved online on October 1, 2010 from http://www.customerthink.com/blog/what_exactly_touchpoint
- Clay, C. (2010). Five best practices to harness social media in learning, *Net Speed Learning Solutions*, July 2010, email newsletter, Page 2.
- Compete.com (2011a). Compete rank. Retrieved on March 15, 2011 from <http://siteanalytics.compete.com/yahoo.com+google.com+Facebook.com+Twitter.com+myspace.com/?metric=rank&months=12>
- Compete.com. (2011b). Methodology. Retrieved on March 15, 2011 from (<http://www.compete.com/resources/methodology/>)

Compete.com. (2011c). Unique visitors. Retrieved on March 15, 2011 from

<http://siteanalytics.compete.com/yahoo.com+google.com+Facebook.com+Twitter.com+myspace.com/?metric=uv&months=12>

Compete.com. (2011d). Visits. Retrieved on March 15, 2011 from

<http://siteanalytics.compete.com/yahoo.com+google.com+Facebook.com+Twitter.com+myspace.com/?metric=sess&months=12>

Comscore.com. (2008a). Comscore world metrix. Retrieved on March 15, 2011

http://www.comscore.com/Press_Events/Press_Releases/2008/08/Social_Networking_World_Wide/%28language%29/eng-US

ComScore.com (August 12, 2008b). *Social networking explodes worldwide as sites*

increase their focus on cultural relevance, Facebook® and Hi5® more than

double global visitor bases during past year. Retrieved on May 30, 2010 from

[http://www.comscore.com/Press_Events/Press_Releases/2008/08/Social_Networking_World_Wide/\(language\)/eng-US](http://www.comscore.com/Press_Events/Press_Releases/2008/08/Social_Networking_World_Wide/(language)/eng-US)

Consumer Reports. (2010). *Seven things you should stop doing now on Facebook®*,

Retrieved on September 1, 2010 from

<http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/magazine-archive/2010/june/electronics-computers/social-insecurity/7-things-to-stop-doing-on-Facebook®/index.htm>.

Conti, G.J. (2004). Chapter 4, Identifying your teaching style. In M.W. Galbraith (Ed.)

Adult learning methods, a guide for effective instruction, 3rd ed. Malabar, FL:

Krieger Publishing

- Corbin, J.M. & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research: techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*, (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Crotty, M. (2003). *The foundations of social research: meaning and perspective in the research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage:
- Davies, D., & Dodd, J. (2002). Qualitative research and the question of rigor. *Qualitative Health research*, 12(2), 279-289. [Electronic Version].
- Demski, J. (4/1/09). Web 2.0 Facebook® Training Wheels. *T.H.E. Journal*. Retrieved on 4/25/09 from <http://thejournal.com/articles/2009/04/01/Facebook®-training-wheels.aspx>
- Dippold, D. (2009). Peer Feedback Through Blogs: Student and teacher perceptions in an advanced German class. *ReCALL* vol. (21), issue (1): p.18–36. 2009 r European Association for Computer Assisted Language Learning 18
doi:10.1017/S095834400900010X Printed in the United Kingdom [online Abstract] Retrieved on 4/25/10 from
http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_ERICEExtSearch_SearchValue_0=EJ827515&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&acno=EJ827515
- Draves, W.A. (2007). *Advanced teaching online*, (3rd ed.). LERN Books: River Falls, WI.
- Dunlap, J. C. & Lowenthal, P. R. (2009a). Tweeting the night away: Using Twitter® to enhance social presence. *Journal of Information Systems Education*, 20(2). p.129 [Electronic Version] Retrieved on September 1, 2010 from

http://www.patricklowenthal.com/publications/Using_Twitter®_to_Enhance_Social_Presence.pdf

Dunlap, J.C. & Lowenthal, P.R. (2009b). Horton hears a tweet. *EDUCAUSE Quarterly* v.32 n.1 2009. Retrieved on 4/25/10 from

<http://www.educause.edu/EDUCAUSE+Quarterly/EDUCAUSEQuarterlyMagazineVolum/HortonHearsaTweet/192955>

Ebizmba.com. (2011). *Top 15 Most Popular Social Networking Websites*. Retrieved on March 15, 2011 from <http://www.ebizmba.com/articles/social-networking-websites>

The Eighth Floor. (2009). *The eighth Floor. 2009 course catalog*. Tulsa, OK: Tulsa Tech & Tulsa Community College Partnership. [Print Version] website:

www.eighthfloor.tulsatech.edu

Eisner, E. W. (1991). *The enlightened eye: Qualitative inquiry and the enhancement of educational practice*. New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing Company.

Ellison, N. (Dec. 7, 2007). *Facebook® use on campus: a social capital perspective on social networking sites*. [PowerPoint® Presentation] Retrieved on January 30, 2010 from <http://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/ECR0713.pdf>

Facebook. (2011). Applications directory. Retrieved on March 1, 2011 from <http://www.Facebook®.com/?ref=logo#!/apps/directory.php>

Foulger, T.S., Ewbank, A.D., Kay, A., Popp, S.O. & Carter, H.L. (2009). Moral spaces in myspace: Preservice teachers' perspectives about ethical issues in social networking. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education, JRTE, 42(1)*, 1–28
ISTE (International Society for Technology in Education), [online Abstract]
Retrieved on 4/25/10 from <http://www.mendeley.com/research/moral-spaces-in->

[myspace-preservice-teachers-perspectives-about-ethical-issues-in-social-networking/](#)

Futurelab. (2006)., Social software and learning. *Opening Education*. Bristol, U.K.:

Futurelab. Retrieved on 1/30/10 from

http://www2.futurelab.org.uk/resources/documents/opening_education/Social_Software_report.pdf.

Ganster, L. & Schumacher, B. (2009). Expanding beyond our library walls: Building an active online Community through Facebook®. *Journal of Web Librarianship*, v3 n2 p111-128 2009. 18 pp. (Peer Reviewed Journal). [Abstract].

Gay, (1992). *Educational Research, competencies for analysis and application*, (4th ed.). New York: Macmillan.

Golafshani, N. (2003). Understanding reliability and validity in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report* Volume 8 Number 4 December 2003 597-607

<http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR8-4/golafshani.pdf>

Guba, E.G. & Lincoln, Y.S. (1981) *Effective Evaluation*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 105-117). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

<http://www.uncg.edu/hdf/facultystaff/Tudge/Guba & Lincoln 1994.pdf>

Hoepfl, M.C., (Fall, 1997) Choosing qualitative research: A primer for technology education researchers. *Journal of Technology Education* v.9 n.1.

<http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JTE/v9n1/hoepfl.html>

- Higher Learning Commission. (2003) *Handbook of accreditation*, (3rd ed.) Retrieved on April 30, 2010 from <https://content.springcm.com/content/DownloadDocuments.ashx?Selection=Document%2C10611003%3B&accountId=5968>
- Higher Learning Commission. (2010). *Directory of HLC Institutions*. Rose State College. Retrieved on April 30, 2010 from http://www.ncahlc.org/component/option,com_directory/Action,ShowBasic/Itemid,184/instid,1635/lang,en/
- Jamrozik, A. & Nocella, L (2000). *The sociology of social problems: theoretical perspectives and methods of intervention*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Press
- Johnson, B. R. (1997). Examining the validity structure of qualitative research. *Education*, 118(3), 282-292. [Electronic Version].
- Kapuler, D. (2010). Tech learning, *top 10 social networks for education*, Retrieved on September 1, 2010, from www.techlearning.com/article32392.
- Knowles, M.S., Holton III, E.F., & Swanson, R.A..(2005). *The adult learner, the definitive classic in adult education and human resource development*. Burlington, MA: Elsevier.
- Kristof, K. (2010). *Six things you should never reveal on Facebook®*. Retrieved on, September 14, 2010, from www.finance.yahoo.com/family-home/article/110674/sixthingsyoushouldneverrevealonFacebook®.
- Ladika, S. (2010). Socially evolved. *Workforce Management Magazine*, September 2010, volume 89, #9. [Electronic Version]. p. 20.

- Lincoln, Y.S. & Guba, E.G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Lodico, M.G., Spaulding, D.T., & Voegtle, K.H.. (2010). *Methods in educational research: From theory to practice (Research methods for the social sciences)* San Fransico, CA: Jossey-Bass
- Lupton, D. (1992). Discourse analysis: a new methodology for understanding the ideologies of health and illness. *Australian Journal of Public Health*, 16 (2), pp. 145-150. [Abstract] Retrieved on April 25, 2010 from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/1391155>
- Majchrzak, A. (1984). *Methods for policy research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications
- Mansfield, H. (2009). 10 Twitter® tips for higher education; Making a home in the Twitter®verse, one tweet at a time. Retrieved on March 15, 2011 from <http://www.universitybusiness.com/viewarticle.aspx?articleid=1285>
- Martin, M. (1/29/09). A text message from the President?. *National Public Radio*. [Radio Broadcast Transcript]. Retrieved on 4/22/10 from www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyID=99999976 (p. 1)
- Masoni, M. (2010). *Why on-line education ngeeds to get social*. Retrieved on August 13, 2010 from www.mashable.com/2010/08/06/online-education-social.
- Meier, D. (2000). *The accelerated learning handbook*. New York:McGraw-Hill
- Meister, J. & Willyerd,K. (2010a). Looking ahead at social learning: 10 Predictions. *Learning Circuits*. Retreived on 7/26/2010 from www.astd.org

- Meister, J.C. & Willyerd, K. (2010b). Social learning unleashed. *Chief Learning Officer Magazine* [online version]. Retrieved on April 12, 2010 from www.clomedia.com/includes/printcontent.php?aid=2905
- Merriam, S.B. (2009). *Qualitative research: a guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco: John Wiley & Co.
- Miller-Merrell, J. (2009). *Tweet this, Twitter® for business*. Dallas, TX: The P3 Press
- Morse, J.M., Barrett, M., Mayan, M., Olson, K., & Spiers, J. (2002). Verification Strategies for Establishing Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* (1) (2) Spring 2002. p. 5. Retrieved on April 25, 2010 from http://www.ualberta.ca/~iiqm/backissues/1_2Final/pdf/morseetal.pdf
- Nielsen, L. (2011). Ten ways Facebook® strengthens the student-teacher connection. *TechLearning*. Retrieved on February 3, 2011, from www.techlearning.com/article/36512. (p.1).
- Oklahoma Association of Community Colleges (2009.). OACC. Flyer. Oklahoma City, OK: OACC
- O'Hanlon, C. (2007). If you can't beat 'em, join 'em. *T.H.E. Journal*, Vol. 34, Issue 8. Retrieved on 4/15/10 from <http://thejournal.com/articles/2007/08/01/if-you-cant-beat-em-join-em.aspx>
- Ovadia, S. (2009). Exploring the potential of Twitter® as a research tool. *Behavioral & Social Sciences Librarian*. v28 n4 p202-205 2009. 4 pp. (Peer Reviewed Journal) [online Abstract]. Retrieved on 4/25/10 from http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_ER

ICExtSearch SearchValue 0=EJ870451&ERICExtSearch SearchType 0=no&ac
cno=EJ870451

Oxford Pocket Dictionary of Current English, The. (2009). Touchpoint. Retrieved
September 20, 2010 from Encyclopedia.com:

<http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1O999-touchpoint.html>

Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (2nd. ed.). Thousand
Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Patton, M.Q. (2008). *Utilization-focused evaluation* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage
Publications, Inc.

Pempek, T.A., Yermolayeva, Y.A., & Calvert, S.L. (2009). College students' social
networking experiences on Facebook®. *Journal of Applied Developmental
Psychology*, v30 n3 p227-238 May-Jun 2009. 12 pp. (Peer Reviewed Journal)
EBSCOHOST [Abstract]

PING.FM (2011). Supported social networks. Retrieved on March 15, 2011 from
<https://ping.fm/networks/?new>

Powers, P. (2001). *The methodology of discourse analysis*. Sudbury, MA: Jones &
Bartlett Publishers

Ramirez, A., Hine, M.J., Ji.S., & Ulbrich F. & Riordon, R. (2009). Learning to succeed in
a flat world: information and communication technologies for a new generation of
business students. *Learning Inquiry* v3 n3 p157-175. New York: Springer

- Reynard, R. (7/15/090). Collaboration, beyond social networking: building toward learning communities. *T.H.E. Journal*. Retrieved on 4/25/10 from <http://thejournal.com/articles/2009/07/15/beyond-social-networking-building-toward-learning-communities.aspx>
- Rhoades, E.B., Irani, T., Telg, R., Meyers, B.E., (2008). Internet as an information source: Attitudes and usage of students enrolled in a college agriculture course. *Journal of Agricultural Education*, Volume 49, Number 2, 2008.
- Rudestam, K.E. and Schoenholtz-Read, J. (2002). *Handbook of online learning, innovations in higher education and corporate training*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications
- Russ-Eft, D.F. & Preskill H.S. (2001) *Evaluation in Organizations: A Systematic Approach to Enhancing Learning, Performance and Change*. New York, NY: Perseus Books.
- Schaffhauser, D. (2008). Suspended teacher in Facebook® incident ignites debate: should online privacy for educators exist?. *T.H.E. Journal*. Retrieved on 4/25/10 from <http://thejournal.com/articles/2008/11/19/suspended-teacher-in-Facebook-incident-ignites-debate-should-online-privacy-for-educators-exist.aspx>
- Schaffhauser, D. (2009). Florida and Texas districts sign onto Twitter®. *T.H.E. Journal*. Retrieved on 4/25/10 from <http://thejournal.com/articles/2009/03/18/florida-and-texas-districts-sign-onto-Twitter.aspx>
- Schank, R.C. (2002). *Designing world class e-learning*. New York: McGraw-Hill
- Schroeder, J. & Greenbowe, T.J. (2009). The chemistry of Facebook®: using social Networking to create an online community for the organic chemistry laboratory.

- Innovate, The Journal of Online Education*. Retrieved on 4/25/2010 from <http://www.innovateonline.info/index.php?view=article&id=625>
- Seale, C. (1999). Quality in qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 5(4), 465-478.
- Selwyn, N. (2009). Faceworking: exploring students' Education-related use of "Facebook®". *Learning, Media and Technology*, v34 n2 p157-174 Jun 2009. 18 pp. (Peer Reviewed Journal) Retrieved on 4/25/10 from www.EBSCOhost.com[Abstract].
- Shah, R. (2010). *Social networking for business, choosing the right tools and resources to fit your needs*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Wharton School Publishing
- Shenton, A.K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for Information* 22 (2004) 63–75 63.
- Spengler, C. & Wert, W. (2009) Maximising the impact of marketing and sales activities. *IO Management*. no. 3, 2009 [Center for Enterprise Sciences (BWI), Department Management, Technology, and Economics (D-MTEC) of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETH) and Axel Springer Switzerland]. Retrieved online on October 1, 2010 from http://www.accelerom.com/fileadmin/pdf/Accelerom_Maximising-impact-marketing-sales_io-new-management_2009.pdf
- State of Oklahoma. (n.d. a). State Statutes §21-1172. Retrieved on March 1, 2011 from http://oklegal.onenet.net/oklegal-cgi/get_statute?99/Title.21/21-1172.html .
- State of Oklahoma. (n.d. b). State Statutes §21-1173. Retrieved on March 1, 2011 from http://oklegal.onenet.net/oklegal-cgi/get_statute?99/Title.21/21-1173.html

- Stenbacka, C. (2001). Qualitative research requires quality concepts of its own. *Management Decision*, 39(7), 551-555
- Stevens-Long, J. and Crowell, C. (2002). Chapter 6, The design and delivery of interactive online graduate education. In K.E. Rudestam & J. Schoenholtz-Read (Eds), *Handbook of online learning, innovations in higher education and corporate training*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications
- Strauss, A. and Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury, Park, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Stroud, S. (2009). Cyberbullying, fight fire with fire. *T.H.E. Journal*. Retrieved on 4/25/10 from <http://thejournal.com/articles/2009/10/01/cyberbullying.aspx>
- Thomas, J. (2009). List of all Top Social Networking websites as on 2010 Posted Dec 27, 2009 on <http://orangecopper.com/blog/list-of-all-top-social-networking-websites-as-on-2010>
- TopTenReviews.com. (2011). Social networking websites review. Retrieved March 15, 2011 from <http://social-networking-websites-review.toptenreviews.com>
- Vallack, J. (2010). Subtextual phenomenology: A methodology for valid, first-person research. *The Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods. Volume 8 Issue 2 2010 (pp.109-122)*. Retrieved on Dec. 15, 2010 from <http://www.ejbrm.com/volume8/issue2/p106>. Reading, U.K.: Academic Publishing Ltd.
- Violino, B. (2009). The buzz on campus: social networking takes hold. *Community College Journal*. Vol. 79, Iss. 6; pg. 28, Retrieved on 4/25/2010 from <http://eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/recordDetail?accno=EJ779203>

- Waters, J.K. (11/09/2009). E-Learning, E-Portfolios Come of Age. *T.H.E. Journal*.
Retrieved on 4/25/10 from
<http://thejournal.com/articles/2009/11/09/elearning.aspx> [Online Version]
- Watkins, R. (2005). *75 e-learning activities, making online learning interactive*. San Francisco: Pfeiffer Publishing
- Willis, J.W. (2007). *Foundations of qualitative research: interpretive and critical approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Winter, G. (2000). A comparative discussion of the notion of validity in qualitative and quantitative research. *The Qualitative Report*, 4(3&4). Retrieved February 25, 2010 from <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR4-3/winter.html>
- Wise, A.F., Padmanabhana, P., Duffy, T.M. (2009). Connecting online learners with diverse local practices: the design of effective common reference points for conversation. *Distance Education*. Vol. 30, No. 3, November 2009, 317–338
- Zuckerberg, M. (September 15, 2009) *300 million and on*. Retrieved on January 15, 2010 from <http://blog.Facebook.com/blog.php?post=136782277130>

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Demographic Survey Research Instrument

Section 1 Demographics

1. Gender
2. Age
3. Primary Teaching Responsibility: Full-Time Faculty or Adjunct Faculty
4. Division: Business, Humanities, Social Science, Health, Engineering, or Workforce

Section 2 Technology Familiarization and Use

1. Do you teach online?
2. Do you have an official RSC faculty webpage?
3. Do you have a personal webpage?
4. Do you have personal account or page on any of the following? check all that apply:
Facebook®, Twitter®, MySpace®, LinkedIn®, Friendster®, Blogspot.com®,
Blogger®, or other (if so.. the name)
5. Do you have professional or business home page on any of the following? check all that
apply:
Facebook®, Twitter®, MySpace®, LinkedIn®, Friendster®, Blogspot.com®,
Blogger®, or other (if so.. the name)
6. Do you email students directly?
7. Have you ever sent one email addressed to more than one student at the same time?
No, 1 or 2 times, 3 to 10 times, or over 10 times
8. Which if any of the following have you used to communicate with students?
Phone Calls, Paging, Text messaging, email, Facebook®, Twitter®, MySpace®,
LinkedIn®, Friendster®, Blogspot.com®, Blogger®, other (if so.. the name), or
NONE

APPENDIX B

Personal Interview Guide and Research Instrument

Phase 2 – Interview Guide with volunteers from Phase 1.

Participants in this phase will be all self nominated volunteers from phase one. The participants will again be informed and required to acknowledge the appropriate IRB requirements and policies regard his or her participation in the interviews including the right to stop at any time. The following questions will be used during the interview process and may require restating based upon participants' ability to understand the question in order to illicit a clear response to the question.

Phase 2 – Interview Questions with volunteers from Phase 1.

- 1 . Which social networking site(s) or tool(s) do you use and why?
- 2 . How do you think social networking helps you as an instructor?
- 3 . How does your social networking benefit your students?
- 4 . How has social networking changed how you approach teaching?
- 5 . What one thing would you tell a new instructor about the benefits of using social networking to instruct a class?
- 6 . What one thing would you warn a new instructor about when using social networking to instruct a class?
- 7 . What are the advantages of the site(s) or tool(s) you are using?
- 8 . What are the dis-advantages or drawbacks of the same site(s)?
- 9 . If training on social networking were offered what topics would you like to see covered?

APPENDIX C

WWW.COMPETE.COM

The following information was taken directly from the www.compete.com website page that gives the details on the methodology used. It is presented here to help the reader understand how Compete.com derives the numbers used to report on websites.

Compete's clickstream data are collected from a 2,000,000 member panel of US Internet users (about a 1% sample), using diverse sources. Using a rigorous statistical normalization methodology, Compete creates precise projections of the behavior of the entire US Internet browser population on monthly and weekly basis. In addition, Compete provides daily estimates of share of consumer attention garnered by the top Internet sites and the velocity of change of this attention. Compete is the only commercial web analytics provider to make its data freely available online for all Internet users.

Compete's experts in the fields of mathematics, statistics and the data sciences have developed a proprietary methodology to aggregate, normalize and project the data to estimate US Internet activity. Based on the daily web usage of more than 2,000,000 members in the Compete community, Compete estimates total traffic, rank and other statistics for the top 1,000,000 sites on the web for use by consumers.

Compete uses a scientific normalization and prediction process to make precise estimates of US Internet activity. Without precise estimates of total activity, share and ranking publications raise questions about the

representativeness of the sample and exactly what marketplace is being represented. Compete's precise estimates answer these questions clearly.

Compete's site profiles estimate how many people visit your site from a diverse sample of people that is statistically normalized and projected to represent the size and demographic composition of the total active U.S. Internet population. Compete does not rely on cookies which are often used by log files and web metrics firms. Because of cookie deletion, return visits by the same person (with deleted cookies) wrongly appear to be a new unique visitor.

SOURCE: (<http://www.compete.com/resources/methodology/>)

APPENDIX D

IRB Approval

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date: Thursday, August 05, 2010
IRB Application No ED10101
Proposal Title: The Use of Facebook® and Twitter® as Instructional Aides at Rose State College
Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved Protocol Expires: 8/4/2011

Principal Investigator(s):

Brian E. Perryman Mary Kutz
7933 Michael Ct. 6108 Winfield Dr.
Okla. City, OK 73132 Okla. City, OK 73162

The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Beth McTernan in 219 Cordell North (phone: 405-744-5700, beth.mcternan@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,



Shelia Kennison, Chair
Institutional Review Board

VITA

Brian Edward Perryman

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING AS AN INSTRUCTIONAL AIDE IN
HIGHER EDUCATION

Major Field: Aviation and Space Education

Biographical:

Education:

Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Education in your major at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May, 2011.

Completed the requirements for the Master of Business Administration at Oklahoma City University, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 1989

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Business Administration in Finance at University of Oklahoma in 1984

Experience:

Rose State College. (2000 – Present) Dir. Professional Training Center

University of Phoenix. (2000 – 2006) Associate Instructor

Oklahoma Baptist University. (2000 – 2006). Adjunct Instructor

St. Gregory's University. (2000 – 2006). Adjunct Instructor

Professional Memberships:

American Society for Training and Development, Central Oklahoma

American Society for Training and Development, National

Oklahoma Distance Learning Association

Delta Sigma Pi – Life Member

Name: Brian Edward Perryman

Date of Degree: May, 2011*

Institution: Oklahoma State University

Location: Stillwater, Oklahoma

Title of Study: THE USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING AS AN INSTRUCTIONAL
AIDE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Pages in Study: 167

Candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Major Field: Aviation and Space Education

Scope and Method of Study:

The widespread usage and phenomenal growth rate of social networking has brought up the question of how can we harness this tool. Businesses and non-profit organizations saw the growth of social networking as an almost ideal way to reach customers and users. Educators for the most part are “for” or “against” social networking. The educators who believe that social networking is just another tool to reach students are doing just that, they are reaching students using a medium that students already use and are comfortable with using.

This study used a mixed method approach to examine and gather data. The rich thick descriptive responses to the personal interviews add tremendous insight to the thoughts of faculty as it relates to social networking.

Findings and Conclusions:

The results of this research indicate that the majority of faculty who feel they are using social networking to connect with students are in reality connecting with students using the D2L learning management system. The growth and functionality of social networking sites continues to change and evolve, as do the number of companies making software applications to enhance those same social networks.

More research should be conducted at other two year colleges to ascertain to what extent faculty are using social networking to reach students both for communication purposes and as an instructional aide. Until a suitable application is developed for Facebook® and for Twitter®, it is my recommendation that faculty interested in promoting their field of study and increasing student awareness about the same should build a blog page to house content. The blog page could then be promoted using social networking sites such as Facebook® and Twitter®.

ADVISER’S APPROVAL: Dr. Mary Kutz
