

# Make Facebook Your Friend

## Expanding the Classroom with Social Media

### Why use social media?

- [More than half of all Internet users](#) log-on to a social networking site daily.
- Social media can be used to waste time, but so can television, email, and the telephone.
- [Study shows](#) that Facebook use is not a negative influence on grades, but how it is used makes a big difference.
- Social media is just another communication tool, to be used for good or ill.

### What are the major platforms?

- **Facebook:** very familiar with short learning curve, but not very flexible.
- **Twitter:** expands connections to transcend, not just replicate, your face-to-face network with a wide range of expert commentaries and perspectives.
- **YouTube:** only does one thing, but does it well. Integrate its videos with other social networking platforms.
- **WordPress:** a blogging platform at its core, but incredibly versatile with enough plug-ins to create an interactive class website without knowing any code.
- **Google+:** offers the most privacy controls for sharing content and also has powerful video-chat feature, but can be tricky to learn at first.

### How can it be deployed?

- A Facebook group looks, feels, and functions the same as normal Facebook, but all sharing is done in a private space.
- A Twitter hashtag (#topic) categorizes posts, making it easy to search the platform for specific topics, filter out noise, and stream student submissions.
- A WordPress blog allows for discussion threads that incorporate multimedia, custom designs, and pages of static content.
- A Google+ page allows for selective sharing, hiding content from one group while making it visible to others. Google+ Hangouts allow for live video chats between students and the instructor with minimal tech setup.
- YouTube offers a number of ways to embed videos directly onto each social media platforms without having to send visitors directly to YouTube's site.

### When can it enhance learning?

- Through social media, [a large class can have a real-time discussion](#) where everyone can contribute before, after or during a lecture.
- Twitter and Google+ make it easy to find and subscribe to sources of knowledge on specific topics, linking the subject matter to current events.
- Historical characters or academic concepts [can be personified and brought to life](#) with their own social media accounts, encouraging student creativity.
- A shared space on social media creates a sense of community among a class, which facilitates collaboration and engagement for group projects.

### Questions?

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