

## **Introduction**

1. Who am I?
  - a. Currently a grad student at IUP in SAHE, working for OHRL as the GA for Training and Student Leadership
  - b. Worked at WPU for 1 year, put together social media strategies for over half-a-dozen departments
  - c. Thesis – researching the relationship between Facebook use and student involvement, currently finishing up my lit review (which provided all the sources for today's program)
  - d. NACURH Focus Group – Held a focus group at a national conference of residence hall student leaders, with a national representation of social media power-users and complete newbies who wanted more info; Asked 2 main question, How doe student leaders USE social media, and How does social media impact student leaders?
  - e. Later this summer, I put together a social media campaign for IUP's Welcome Weekend, to increase participation and conduct assessment as to the link between social media & attendance at Welcome Weekend to Social Integration and retention to the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester (FB Success)
2. How will this session work?
  - a. Unsession format, to me, means a completely participant driven conversation (that's you) - and it makes my job a lot easier.
  - b. That being said, here's what I view my role as the facilitator to be:
    - i. Come prepared with research to back up every aspect of the conversation, though you all probably know more about most of this than I do, I'm just the one who knew ahead of time to come prepared
    - ii. Keep the conversation moving in a productive way
    - iii. Ask poignant questions to inspire critical thinking and reflection among you all.
  - c. I've got 4 questions that I hope we can cover, I'll lay them out for you and you'll decide where to begin and what to discuss. I can get the conversation started on each question with some background, but I would prefer you all to start and contribute the background and discussion, with me only filling in the holes that I might notice. Or we can go completely away from those if you want.
  - d. But before I get to those, I'm going to start out with an important point, that I believe every discussion (ever) should start with, which will lead into one of the 4 questions

**Why is this important?** (Here's why I think this is important, but I'm certainly curious to see why you all think this important, too)

1. Topic is of great interest as institutions consider where to place monetary and staff resources.
2. To be effective educators of our students, since we know they spend so much time using it (like sex and alcohol?)

3. As student affairs professionals, our primary role is increasing student learning and development, primarily through providing opportunities for co-curricular involvement which will lead to that growth.
4. Astin said that everything an institution does, from policy creation to campus design, directly impact involvement in meaningful ways; Therefore, since the goal of higher education is to promote student learning and development, everything that every employee at an institution does, at every level, should be evaluated based on their ability to increase involvement.

### **Main Questions for this session:**

1. What is involvement theory, and how does it change or how is it impacted within the context of social media?
2. What is social media, and what are its impact on student development and involvement? Do the benefits outweigh the costs?
3. Based on that cost-benefit analysis, should we find ways to utilize social media more effectively or ways to disconnect our students from social media; What are some best practices for doing that (either disconnecting them or more effectively engaging them)?
4. Why is this important?

### **Involvement:**

1. Astin's 1984 definition (amount of physical and psychological time and energy students invest in the college experience)
2. Kuh's definition of engagement
  - a. "The time and effort students devote to activities that are empirically linked to desired outcomes of college *and* what institutions do to induce students to participate in these activities."

### **Social Media Definitions:**

1. My definition of Social Media: "Websites and applications that individuals can use for social networking, where online communities of users develop interpersonal relationships and share user-generated content through a technological medium".
2. 86% of college students use social networking sites, 97% of those use Facebook; Only 9% of college students use Twitter (based on a recent Noel-Levitz study, published in Leadership Exchange)

### **Social Media Impacts on Development – Negative:**

1. Popcorn (as cited in Strange & Banning, 2001) described the phenomenon of students becoming isolated in high-tech cocoons.
2. Roberts (2003) illustrated the common portrait of residence hall roommates debating a living area disagreement from opposite sides of the room via laptops.
3. Multiple-personality disorder

4. Narcissism (Bergman, Fearington, Davenport, & Bergman, 2010; Ryan & Xenos, 2011)
5. Delusions of grandeur (Aboujaoude, 2011)
6. Viciousness (Aboujaoude, 2011)
7. Lack of privacy (Aboujaoude, 2011)
8. Social media has also been linked to increased stress and pressure perceived by students. One study by Gemill and Peterson (2006) found that of high social media users, almost a quarter were likely to respond that they believed social media was a cause of significant stress in their lives.
9. Depression (O’Keeffe, Clarke-Pearson, & Council on Communications and Media, 2011)
10. Lowery (2004) noted that constant technology use has a “dark side” (p. 90), where the decreasing popularity of face-to-face communication has a negative impact on professionals’ abilities to create community and foster involvement.
11. Braxton (2003) discussed another perspective, that institutions of higher education should intentionally construct opportunities for social interactions among students and with professionals, with a specific emphasis on facilitating face-to-face discussions.

**12. FROM NACURH:**

- a. Increased stress of their expanded network of peers having constant access to them; Fear of living in a fishbowl, constant pressure to maintain their positive image on all fronts

**Social Media Impacts on Development – Positive:**

1. Martinez Aleman and Wartman (2009) noted that many aspects of Facebook mimic the physical campus and environment, so the primary function it serves for students is to increase and expand their reach across campus in much the same way that traditional programming and publicity already does.
2. Putnam, Feldstein, and Cohen (as cited in Lowery, 2004) also stated that there is a potential for online social connections to bolster face-to-face relationships, which would lead one to believe that Facebook has the potential to serve as a conduit for enhancing such involvement.
3. Communicative (commenting on content, creating or RSVP'ing to events, viewing photos) vs. Non-communicative (playing games, checking up on friends, and posting photos) behaviors (Junco, 2011)
4. Research proving social media can be useful for increasing Focus, Grabbing Attention, Engaging individuals, and empowering them to take action (Aaker & Smith, 2011)
5. Ubiquitous publicity opportunities
6. Increased access for students with disabilities (ACTA Press; HHS Center for New Media; PEW Internet & American Life project; Strange & Banning, 2001)
7. Live Streaming of events through Facebook, Twitter, and/or Ustream
8. Opportunities to answer new-student questions before they arrive on campus (can utilize IUP examples)
9. Previous research finding links between student engagement and use of

- social media, where student engagement is also directly linked to increased GPA, stronger connection to the institution and opportunities, and higher rates of persistence (Heiberger, 2007; Higher Education Research Institute, 2007; Junco, in press; Junco, Heiberger, & Loken, 2010)
10. Putnam, Feldstein, and Cohen (as cited in Lowery, 2004), stated that relationships supplemented by technology become even stronger and assist with the facilitation of face-to-face communication.
  11. Virtual and physical communities are not necessarily mutually exclusive by their very nature, but rather could be mutually shaping and reinforcing, depending on how they are utilized
  12. Young (as cited in Lowery, 2004) suggested from the results of the 2003 National Student of Student Engagement that effective use of technology could increase engagement.
- 13. FROM NACURH:**
- a. Increases engagement and democratizes opportunities for involvement, makes publicity easier and more equitable