

2. What Is Social Media?

Social media consists of web-based tools and platforms that enable users to create, share and exchange content, information and ideas. Social media technologies are also called “Web 2.0” technologies. Examples of social media technologies include blogs, wikis, discussion boards, media sharing sites and virtual worlds. Popular social media sites include Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Skype and Flickr.

3. Identifying Yourself O

4.2 Terms of s ervice

Observe the Terms of Service of all social media platforms. Questions about terms can be directed to Dalhousie'Q

- ” Instructors can create a more student-centred learning environment in their courses.
- ” Students can create their own content and build their own meaning (constructivist pedagogy).
- ” Students and instructors can create communities of learning and practice to enhance

- social media tools in your learning activities. If you have concerns about using social media for a course, speak to your instructor.
- ” Engage in meaningful and substantive interaction that contributes to the learning activity.
- ” Take advantage of the user-generated aspect of social media to create your own content, personalize learning and build your own understanding of course material.
- ” Use existing online and social media resources (e.g. online video and image sharing sites) to understand the real-life applications of your studies.
- ” Take advantage of social media to engage in lifelong learning that will stretch across your academic and professional careers.

6. Social Media Use for Researchers

Research into social media indicates an increasing acceptance of these sites as legitimate communication tools among scholars. Some popular social media tools among scholars are:

- x Non-academic social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter)
- x Blogs
- x Online document management sites (e.g. Google Docs)
- x Media repositories (e.g. Flickr and YouTube)
- x Wikis (including Wikipedia)

Scholars are also exploring the use of academic social networking sites such as [Academia.edu](https://www.academia.edu/) and [ResearchGate.net](https://www.researchgate.net/). This could be due to challenges associated with managing personal and professional identities on non-academic social networking sites.

6.1 Benefits, Concerns and Considerations of Social Media Use

Frequently cited benefits of social media among scholarly users are:

- x Keeping up-to-date with research topics
- x Following other researchers' work
- x Discovering new ideas or publications
- x Promoting current research
- x Making new research contacts
- x Collaborating with other researchers
- x Soliciting advice from peers
- x Maintaining professional image
- x Recruiting highly qualified personnel like graduate students
- x Scheduling and managing access to equipment and resources

Some concerns associated with social media use include:

- x Time required to maintain accounts
- x Privacy and the persistence of digital records in social media

Some considerations when using social media to conduct research:

- x Recruitment of participants via social media can result in the participants unwittingly broadcasting sensitive information
- x Data collection using social media can result in sensitive information residing with third parties with whom no data protection or data ownership agreements have been arranged
- x Consult with [Dalhousie Research Services](#) and [Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans \(TCPS\)](#) to learn about ethical considerations when conducting research using social media.

6.2 Additional Resources for Researchers

In addition to the guidelines in this document, the following are recommended resources for academics who are interested in using social media in their work:

- x Cann, A., Dimitriou, & K., Hooley, T. (2011, Feb). *Social Media Guide for Researchers*. Research Information Network. Available at <http://www.rin.ac.uk/our-work/communicating-and-disseminating-research/social-media-guide-researchers>
- x Neal, D.R. (2012). *Social Media for Academics: A practical guide*. Chandos Publishing. ISBN: 1843346818

These guidelines are to be reviewed every two years.