

Teaching & Learning Update

Online Behaviour, Facebook & SCD Teaching

5 March 2010

Over the past couple of weeks you may have heard about some high profile cases of Facebook sites being defiled or defaced, or used for bullying purposes. This has led to questions in the media, in online discussions, and even at State and Federal government level about what might be appropriate or inappropriate online behavior.



Why is this relevant to SCD faculty?

A large proportion of our students, (and probably our faculty too), are Facebook users. An article in the Sydney Morning Herald Technology News this week points out how widely used online social networks are in Australia:

“The latest figures from Nielsen Online bear this out, showing Australians are leading the world in time spent on social media websites. Out of 10 countries surveyed, Australia led in average time per person spent using social media sites, such as Facebook and Twitter.

Social media use grew 82 per cent globally between December 2008 and the same month last year. In January, Australians averaged nearly 8½ hours on social media sites and Facebook topped the list with more than 8.6 million unique users in the same month.”

<http://www.smh.com.au/technology/technology-news/when-connection-becomes-an-obsession-20100301-pdn5.html>

This is a significant number of users which indicates that Facebook is becoming a noteworthy social phenomenon in the lives of many Australians. How do we respond to this as thinking Christians? What impact are social media sites like Facebook having on our students? On our culture? Some of the negative potential of Facebook has been demonstrated recently, what might be the positive potential of Facebook and other Social media?

Dave Bourgeois, who teaches and blogs about online ministry offers an interesting insight into online behavior in a recent blog post:

“We must be intentional about our online lives. And this starts by being intentional about our “offline” lives as well! We must understand that everything we do online is recorded and kept...forever. We can use our online selves as a way to demonstrate Christ to a lost world.”

Dave Bourgeois, in a review of *The Church of Facebook* by Jesse Rice, on his “Lessons from Babel” blog:

<http://genesys11.com/lessonsfrombabel/2010/02/15/being-intentional-about-online-lives/>

I like Dave’s approach of being intentional about the way we live, including our online lives. As teachers, if we have our own online life, are we intentional about how we use this to demonstrate Christ to a lost world? Many of our students have online lives, how can we encourage them to think and act for Christ in the online world?

This item was originally posted by Diane Hockridge on the [Online Outlook Blog](#)

Internet Ministry Course Available Online

An online subject at graduate level looking at “Internet Ministry” will be offered by Dave Bourgeois in June 2010. There is currently no similar unit available within the SCD. If any faculty members or students are interested in this subject area, it may be possible to arrange to cross credit this subject into SCD programs, or to audit the online course.



Here’s an introduction to the course from Dave:



David Bourgeois

Here's an introduction to the course from Dave:

“My name is Dr. David Bourgeois and I am an Associate Professor at Biola University. For the past three and a half years, I have been doing research on the use of the Internet by churches and ministries. Last spring, I taught a class here at Biola called "Internet Ministry", in which I combined my research with reading, case studies, and hands-on work to help students understand the role in which these technologies play in ministry.

This coming summer, I hope to offer this course again, this time as an online course. I have put together a preliminary syllabus, which you can find here: <http://tinyurl.com/onlineimcourse>

... I would like to open this course up to a few students who are part of programs at other schools. Specifically, I am looking for students who are already part of a graduate ministry/seminary program and would benefit from a course on the use of the Internet and social media for ministry. While I should be able to find some interested students right here at Biola, I am also hoping to make this course a resource for any student training for Christian ministry anywhere.

If you would like to know more about me or my work (even if you are not interested in the course!), you can follow my blog:
[Lessons From Babel: http://lessonsfrombabel.com.](http://lessonsfrombabel.com)”

If you, or any of your students may be interested in this online course please contact Diane Hockridge, at the Office of the Dean: dianeh@scd.edu.au.

Questions or comments? Email us at neilh@scd.edu.au or dianeh@scd.edu.au or call us at the Office of the Dean: 02 9889 1969
