University of Wyoming’s Judicial Philosophy

The University of Wyoming does not generally search online social networking or blog sites. However, the University will pursue judicial cases through the University of Wyoming Student Code of Conduct involving electronic medias brought forward by students, faculty, and staff as it would any verbal or written situations. These include, but are not limiting to, incidents of:

- Underage consumption of alcohol;
- Alcohol usage on campus where it is not allowed;
- Use of illegal drugs;
- Posted comments of harassment or intimidation;
- Conduct that has an adverse impact on the university community.

The University of Wyoming recognizes that students at UW and elsewhere are using such online social networks and blogs in positive ways. They allow people to connect and interact with other students who may have similar interests. At the same time, however, users should be aware of the potential problems of such online sites and how to maintain a healthy and safe representation on the Internet.

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“It is crucial to understand the power of using social networking sites. Like all tools they offer positive results as well as possible dangers. It is important to be an informed and prudent consumer of these systems and products. Handle with care.”
- David S. Cozzens, Ph.D., UW Associate Vice President for Student Affairs
Welcome
There are 9,000+ students, faculty, and staff at the University of Wyoming using Facebook, and an additional 5,000+ more listing the school on MySpace. With numerous personal blogs by UW individuals, the campus community is connected beyond the classroom. The following topics are meant to educate and inform students, faculty, and staff about various online social networking topics to ensure a healthy and safe university community.

Facebook, MySpace, and Blogs
Online social networking sites were developed to connect current friends and find long-lost ones. They are not intended to be an exclusive, private network forum. The statements of use for Facebook and MySpace are as follows:

Facebook is a social network that connects you with the people around you. Facebook is made up of many networks, each based around a workplace, region, high school, or college. You can use Facebook to:
- Share information with people you know;
- See what’s going on with your friends;
- Look up people around you.

MySpace is an online community that lets you meet your friends’ friends. Create a private community on MySpace and you can share photos, journals and interests with your growing network of mutual friends! MySpace is for everyone, including:
- Friends who want to talk online;
- Single people who want to meet other singles;
- Matchmakers who want to connect their friends with other friends;
- Families who want to keep in touch—map your family tree;
- Business people and co-workers interested in networking;
- Classmates and study partners;
- Anyone looking for long lost friends.

Safety & Security
Online social networks can be entertaining and a great way to keep tabs on friends elsewhere in the world. They also are accessible by anyone willing to register with that network, but minimal restrictions do not necessarily limit access. Identity thieves, sexual predators, and other individuals will take advantage of this personal information for their own benefit. Please avoid listing the following pieces of information on your page or blog:
- Fraternity/sorority chapter, residence hall room, apartment number, or home address;
- Social Security Numbers or UW WyoOne Card Number;
- Cell phone numbers or home phone numbers;
- Other key pieces of personal information;
- Age or date of birth;
- Class schedule and location.

There are ways to ensure stronger privacy and security on your page or blog:
- Know the privacy settings of the site and set them according to your desire of privacy;
- Only accept friends you know;
- Avoid instant messaging or sending messages to those you do not know.

If you do suspect someone taking advantage of your personal information, please contact the University of Wyoming Police Department (766-5179) and the Dean of Students Office (766-3296) immediately.

Impact on Future Career Plans
Businesses and other schools are using these networks to do background checks on potential employees and students. Even by limiting access to your profile or blog, friends could link pictures and comments to you. Make your job or graduate school search more successful by understanding the impact your profile, pictures, groups you have joined, and comments by you will look to potential employers, supervisors, and professors.

“Athletic training is a competitive major where you have to apply and be accepted into the last two years of the program. The professors warned us well before the application date that they would be searching Facebook and MySpace to find anything that might sway their decision as to who gets accepted into the program.”
- Brian Powell, Senior, Athletic Training and Physical Education

“These sites are great for networking to find summer jobs, internships, or full-time employment, but don’t lose the job before you even get it because of the content on your page.”
- Jo Chytka, Director, UW Center for Advising and Career Services