

Using Facebook to Extend Learning into Students' Digital Lives

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Abstract

This paper reports on the use of Facebook for educational purposes in two different university communication courses. It discusses the decision-making processes concerning what type of Facebook page to use, the design, form and content of the Facebook pages, guidelines for lecturer and student use, as well as the means by which lecturers can encourage students to increase participation in courses using Facebook as an educational tool. Detailed survey feedback from a pilot study of students who used the two courses' Facebook pages is also discussed. Finally, it demonstrates how using the Facebook pages facilitated greater student engagement and understanding of concepts, and encouraged what Adihari (2011) calls "conversations," which were often carried back and forth between cyberspace and the classroom.

Introduction

According to the social media statistics portal [Socialbakers.com](#), Facebook has a market penetration of almost 70% with Singapore's online population. Given that Facebook was designed for college students, it is not surprising that 27% of the Singaporean market is made up of college-age users aged between 18 and 24 years old. This near ubiquitous use of the social networking site by users in this age group has led to educators and students using Facebook in a number of ways. Indeed, Barseghian ([2011](#)) cites 50 reasons for using Facebook in the classroom, including increased collaboration, knowledge sharing and feedback to name just three.

In January 2011, the authors of this paper decided to introduce Facebook pages to two National University of Singapore (NUS) communication courses – Business Communication (ES2002) for business students, and Professional Communication (ES2007S) for science and engineering students - focusing on skills such as effective presentation techniques, interpersonal communication and business writing. We understood the principles and learning theories that support the use of social media in education (see Vygotsky, 1978,

Wenger, 1998, Siemens, [2004](#)), and had had success using blogs to extend the classroom and facilitate learning in students' digital lives (see Blackstone & Harwood, [2011](#)). The Facebook pages were introduced in both ES2002 and ES2007S as a means of encouraging student interaction, further content exploration, and motivation for learning, in and out of the classroom.

This paper reports on a pilot study of the use of Facebook for educational purposes in these two different communication courses. It discusses the decision-making processes concerning what type of Facebook page to use, the design, form and content of the Facebook pages, guidelines for lecturer and student use, as well as the means by which lecturers can encourage students to increase participation in courses using Facebook as an educational tool. Detailed survey feedback from 39 ES2002 and 40 ES2007S students is also discussed.

Setting up a class Facebook page

A major concern for many educators who are considering using Facebook in the classroom is the thought of having to 'friend' every student that they teach. Fortunately, this is not the case. When a class Facebook page is set up, one can create a separate course identity, which does not connect to a personal account. Setting up a basic class Facebook page is straightforward: [this slideshare](#) presentation explains the process. Another decision is whether to set up a Facebook "page" or "group". Burt ([2011](#)) uses a "Groups vs. Pages" chart to clarify the differences between the two (Figure 1):

Groups vs. Pages	Groups	Pages
Publish to users' live streams	✓	✓
Share photos, videos, events	✓	✓
Include discussion forums and comments	✓	✓
Make group private and manage members	✓	✗
Allow/limit messaging between members	✓	✗
Edit group docs wiki style	✓	✗
Group chat all at once	✓	✗
Maintain complete control over what is posted	✗	✓
Use widgets on your website/blog to promote	✗	✓
Choose from thousands of 3rd party apps	✗	✓
Automatically publish blog posts and tweets	✗	✓
Access "insights" or user stats	✗	✓

Figure 1: Functionality of Groups versus Pages

Although these formats are similar in many ways, as educators piloting Facebook in the classroom, we decided on Facebook pages because as the page administrators we would be able to maintain control over what was posted. Previous experience using blogs with students taught us that some students, using social media in an educational context for the first time, needed time to adjust to the subject matter of the course as well as the degree of language formality preferred. Most students use Facebook for purely social reasons, and some transfer the informality (texting abbreviations, for example) they use with their peer groups to the class Facebook page. Whilst the class Facebook page is an informal learning space, it is utilized within a formal learning environment, i.e. the course. It is therefore useful to have the option of maintaining complete control over what is posted at least until students understand what is acceptable. This also enables the instructor to prevent potential problems that students may initiate in posts with extreme political, social or religious bias.

When setting up a class Facebook pages, it is also a good idea to think about a name that is descriptive and memorable. We opted for the names [@ Biz Comm \(ES2002\)](#) and [Blackstone's World Without Walls \(ES2007S\)](#). We also included course codes in brackets to ensure students found the correct course page when they initially looked for it in a Facebook search. This naming process is part of the "branding" of the page. The name an instructor chooses and the accompanying image representing a course Facebook page

shape how students will perceive the class page. This in turn might influence how they (and the instructor) will interact on it.

Another benefit of using Facebook pages is that user statistics are available so the instructor can see which topics, links or posts are popular, what has been viewed the most, "liked" the most and so on. This can be helpful for pedagogic decision-making; for example, a video clip posted on the Facebook page that has been "liked" many times can be a catalyst for classroom discussions, and a highly relevant article might be included in a future course reading list.

Suggested uses for a course Facebook page

The success of the course Facebook page very much depends on how educators manage it and what sorts of assignments are given. It is important to both encourage student participation and to ensure that student posts are focused on acceptable topics. The authors found this a relatively straightforward process to facilitate, and believe that the reason for this is that we were both "present" and "engaged" with our students on the course Facebook page. It seems obvious, but unless an instructor participates by giving clear instructions and regularly commenting on posts that are made by students, she or he will not be part of the learning process and will therefore be unable to encourage and influence student participation.

Instructors can show they are engaged in students' Facebook learning by simply "liking" a link shared by a student, writing an encouraging comment in reply to a post or referring in class to an interesting discussion that has occurred on the page. These acts are the modern-day equivalent of "ticking" a well-reasoned argument in a written essay or writing "well thought out rationale" at the end of a paragraph in a business report assignment. They demonstrate to the students that the class tutor is "present" and interested in what is happening online, and that he/she values their contributions. This kind of reassurance is especially important for less confident learners when they are using social media in this way for the first time. Many students need models of appropriate use before they begin to participate.

To sum up possible uses, instructors should make their purpose for utilizing a course Facebook page clear from the start and convey this via specific directions. They should also upload links and make posts and comments that provide good models for the students.

However, they must be careful not to dominate the platform, giving students ample time and space to contribute.

The use of Facebook in ES2002

For the purpose of Business Communication (ES2002), it was decided that the class page would be used primarily for sharing resources and encouraging student interaction. The “About” section of the page profile reads,

“@ Biz Comm is a place to share ideas. Feel free to upload articles, links and videos you find relevant and interesting”

In class, it was explained that anything that was shared should be accompanied by a short comment about why the sharer thought it was relevant, interesting or useful. An example is given in Figure 2 below.



Figure 2: ES2002 student posting a relevant article link

This post illustrates the appropriate use of comments by a student about a link that was both useful and on topic. It also shows that the lecturer was “present” and “engaged” because he

("You") "liked" the post and gave an encouraging comment about it. It is also a good example of Vygotsky's (1978) social development theory, which advocates learning contexts in which students are active in their own learning. To achieve this, Vygotsky advises that the traditional roles of the instructor and student are altered to enable the instructor to collaborate with students in order to facilitate the construction of meaning.



Figure 3: A former ES2002 student posting a comment

Figure 3 is a good example of a student sharing experience using the class Facebook page. Here, the student who posted is a former one, having joined the Facebook page of his own accord, and in this post he shared his experience using *Prezi*, an alternative presentation software application. It is worth noting the time stamps on the posts in Figure 2 and Figure 3: both were out of class in the late evening. An analysis of the time stamps of all 40 student posts for one semester in ES2002 finds that 70% were made in the evening or early morning and the remaining 30% were made during the day but outside of class times.

Figure 4 below is an example of an instructor post and a follow up student comment that again illustrates Vygotsky's social development theory in action. The post is of a link to a news article about inappropriate business communication. A student commented on the article and also contributed further by posting a link to the initial story mentioned in the article.



Figure 4: ES2002 instructor posting a relevant article link

This post is also an example of what Siemens (2011) refers to as a learner “connecting specialized nodes or information sources.” The instructor engaged the students with news realia from the local Singapore media, and the student processed the initial input then referenced it to the information source, adding depth and understanding to the discussion. The entire Facebook interaction was eventually transferred to the classroom when clarifying issues in the initial post was required. It is also worthwhile noting that this post generated 618 "impressions" (how many times a post has appeared on Facebook users' feeds and on their page itself). This means that the post appeared on average 15 times for each of the 39 students in the course. This shows a high level of engagement by busy students on a (non-compulsory) social media platform being accessed outside of class time. It is clear that using Facebook with ES2002 increased student motivation and investment in their learning as well as facilitated informal learning by extending the classroom into their digital lives.

The use of Facebook in ES2007S

As was the case in ES2002, the main purpose of using Facebook in ES2007S was explained to students as being a way for them to share resources and interact with one another. A secondary, unspoken objective was for the instructor to provide yet another means of

motivating students to be engaged with various communication topics related to the course content. Directions for the use of Facebook, similar to ES2002, specified that any links that were posted on the wall should be accompanied by a comment of two or three sentences about why the sharer thought the linked content was relevant, interesting or useful. Students were told that they should only indicate a "like" if indeed they had read a linked article or viewed a linked video. As with ES2002, the Facebook wall proved to be a well-used platform for extending classroom discussions beyond class. See the screenshots in the figures below for examples:



Figure 5: ES2007S student posting a relevant article link

In Figure 5, the student posted a link to an article that was relevant to one of the main content segments of ES2007S, the position search/application process. He also briefly explained the article's usefulness. What is noteworthy in this post is that it has been "liked" by 13 other students (out of a total of 29 potential ES2007S student commentators from two tutorial groups for the same term) and by the instructor. Seven of these students were the student's classmates, but six were members of the instructor's other tutorial group. In fact, the three students who have posted follow-up comments were all from that other group. This demonstrates another appeal of using Facebook: the fact that interactions, or what Adhahari

(2011) calls “a conversation,” might be facilitated not just with classmates, but with others – such as those in a parallel tutorial group - who share the same interests and values.

The same trend, with students in one tutorial group crossing cyberspace via the Facebook page to interact with students in another group of the same course, is apparent in the posted video link in Figure 6 as well.



Figure 6: ES2007S student posting a relevant video link

This post, a link to a video dramatizing another course topic, intercultural communication/the act of stereotyping, received "likes" from six students, four from the student's own tutorial group and two from students in the other group. It also received comments from the instructor as well as from two members of each tutorial group. In one of those comments, the student commentator makes reference to Gladwell's (2005) book *Blink*, stating that there was a reference made in the book to the notion of stereotypes and how African Americans were routinely charged more than whites when buying cars. Besides the fact that this student

shared information related to the topic under discussion that he remembered from a previous reading experience, he carried the conversation into a direction not discussed in the class itself, but prompted by his classmate's initial video posting. This again illustrates Siemens' idea of "connecting specialized nodes or information sources." Clearly, a value-add of the use of Facebook in ES2007S was that content-relevant topics that had not been discussed thoroughly enough in class—or perhaps not dealt with at all—could be shared within the course community.

To summarize, through the Facebook wall posting process, students were being encouraged first to source for relevant content, and then to share that with coursemates, who could build upon that material in their own manner. Ultimately, through this posting and the commenting process, each student was furthering their knowledge in a socially active manner. Learning in such a way, as Siemens (2004) states, "is no longer an internal, individualistic activity."

The Facebook platform also gave the instructor an enhanced role to play, one for collaborating out of class in these "conversations" on the student-generated themes. This was in addition to the more conventional instructor role of introducing material for student consideration and connecting that to an academic theory, as demonstrated by the post in Figure 7:

Instructor postcomment

In his landmark book, *Understanding Media*, Marshall McLuhan proposed that the medium through which we communicate itself is a powerful aspect of the message. He saw content and any medium as being symbiotic. See these photos taken by youth in Cairo, and imagine how photographic imagery, the Internet and Facebook are all media contributing to the revolution now taking place there.



Young Egyptians Spread Their Message - Photographs - NYTimes.com
www.nytimes.com

Young protesters have turned a downtown Cairo apartment into a secret hiding place, recharging after long days of protesting and uploading homemade documentaries about life in Tahrir Square to a shared Facebook page.

755 Impressions · 2.25% Feedback

Like · Comment · Share · February 9 at 8:42pm · 🌐

3 x student's names and 10 others like this.

Student 1 That's something new to me. Thanks for sharing brad (:
February 10 at 6:46pm · Like

Student 2 A Chinese saying : 得人心者夺天下 = One who captures the hearts of the people will capture the empire. Apparently the new generation of mass media contributed to the breaking of the grip of a government of the 'hearts' of the people.
February 14 at 5:54pm · Like

Student 3 yea I totally agree with you YT. Information (and how you use it) is as effective a weapon as any other I think.
February 14 at 10:46pm · Like

Student 4 I agree with everybody too. I would say information is a double-edged sword.
February 15 at 2:05am · Like

Figure 7: ES2007S instructor posting a relevant article link

Of note in this post is that 13 students – eight from one tutorial group and five from another – ‘liked’ the link, meaning that they had accessed and reviewed the *New York Times* photo essay. Of those 13, four made comments. What is also noteworthy is that two of the student commentators reflected not on the instructor’s original post or on the photo essay but on the accompanying remark made by a fellow student. Once again, these students are utilizing the Facebook page—though non-compulsory—as a place for an explicit “conversation” with their peers.

A final way that the Facebook page was used in ES2007S was for administrative purposes. At the end of the term, the ES2007S instructor reminded students via the Facebook wall of his earlier request for them to do an online survey regarding their course Facebook experience.

Even in this instance, the platform's value-add became apparent, as evidenced through one of the follow up comments made to the instructor's post (see Figure 8):

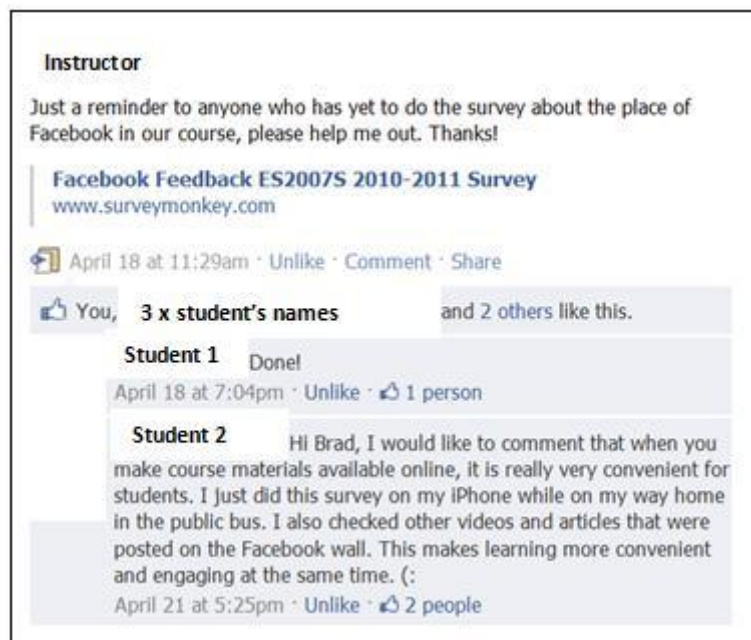


Figure 8: ES2007S instructor request for students to do an online survey

Of obvious merit in the comment by the second student is the assertion that convenience and engagement are enhanced when materials are presented on an easy-to-access social media platform such as Facebook.

Student feedback: ES2002

To gather and record student perceptions and beliefs about using Facebook on the course, the 39 ES2002 students from three tutorial groups in one semester were asked to complete a survey at the end of the semester. The survey used a Likert scale (from strongly agree to strongly disagree) to assess student responses to questions about their use of the class Facebook page in general, as well as their perceptions about the advantages and disadvantages of the course Facebook page. A summary of the survey findings is provided in Appendix 1.

The results of the survey were extremely positive. 97% of the students watched course related materials using links made on the class Facebook page. This is supported by the fact that over 97% of students found the links their peers and the instructor posted useful. 89% of

respondents found searching and sharing information effective for learning whilst 100% thought accessing/viewing video links and articles were effective for learning. In addition, 94% agreed with the statement,

“Having a course FB page helped me better understand communication principles and effective practice”.

This positive feedback is further supported by the qualitative comments the students gave in the survey. When asked what they thought the strengths of having a course Facebook page are (see Appendix 2), students remarked how accessible, convenient and useful it is for sharing information. A number of students stated that it was a more interactive way to communicate. Others mentioned the idea that it extended the curriculum, making it more extensive. Indeed, one student wrote,

“...the curriculum becomes more comprehensive as it exposes us to information we would usually not access”

When asked what they thought the problems of having a course Facebook page were (see Appendix 3), most students responded that they were concerned that a student might miss posts by not accessing the page often enough, or that a student could be disadvantaged by not having a Facebook account. While both of these problems are serious concerns, during the semester when Facebook was used with ES2002 students, neither happened. All students had Facebook accounts, and on many occasions students were overheard talking about or referring one another to recent posts and Facebook updates. Arguably, if the students perceive the class page as a valuable learning resource, they will access it regularly. As one student mentioned in the feedback exercise (see Appendix 2), it is easy to revisit the class page and access links and information that have been posted for some time.

Clearly, the use of a class Facebook page in ES2002 was a success. The extension of learning beyond the classroom had noticeable benefits in the classroom. The fact that most students had watched videos or read articles posted on Facebook outside of class meant that classroom discussion and activities about course related topics started at a deeper level. This not only

saved time when introducing concepts and ideas but also resulted in livelier and more engaged classroom activities.

Student feedback: ES2007S

As with ES2002, ES2007S students were asked to complete a questionnaire regarding their perceptions of the use of the course Facebook page. This survey, like the one in ES2002, was created on and disseminated via an online survey application (surveymonkey.com). Unlike ES2002, however, the 40 student respondents for ES2007S came from a total of 55 students in four tutorial groups, two each in two different semesters.

Three question types were used: "yes/no" questions, Likert-scale statements of agreement (from strongly agree to strongly disagree) and open-ended questions. (A summary of the survey findings is provided in Appendix 4.) The findings support this author's expectation: many students showed great enthusiasm for initiating and participating in course Facebook page discussions of communications topics, even when their involvement is not being assessed.

One way that students could initiate a discussion was through finding course-related articles or videos online and then sharing links to those on the course Facebook page. Indeed, in a Likert-scale statement of agreement, 97.4% of 39 respondents agreed that "Finding/sharing video links and articles" was effective for learning. On a related "yes/no" question, 87.5% of 40 respondents asserted that they had found and uploaded a course-relevant link to the Facebook page wall during the course; 20% (8 out of 40) said that they uploaded a link at least once every two weeks.

In a related, open-ended question asking students to identify any strength of using the course Facebook page, one student wrote about this "intensive and extensive sharing of information." Another suggested "materials can be shared without eating into curriculum time."

On Facebook, another means of posting is by writing on the page wall rather than by uploading links, thereby initiating discussions. Some students would do this when they had an idea related to course content or to some other area of communication that they were contemplating. For the "yes/no" question: "Did you make any wall posts?", 75% of the 40

respondents answered “yes.” Further, 87.5% answered in the affirmative to this question: “Did you leave comments on others’ wall posts and/or links?” This statistic illustrates that active initiation was matched by extensive participation.

A pair of questions explored this further. On the question as to whether or not students had accessed links to and read articles, 97.5% of the 40 respondents answered positively. On the question of whether or not students had accessed and viewed links to posted videos, 95% answered in the affirmative. 56.4% of those who said that they had accessed links to and read articles did so at least once a week; 48.6% of those who said that they had viewed videos stated that they had done so at least once a week. This indicates widespread support for an element of the course that was not evaluated, and it demonstrates a high level of motivation.

Student enthusiasm for using the Facebook page was also illustrated by the fact that 97.5% of 39 respondents agreed that having such a forum for interaction was useful. 92.3% took this a step further, agreeing that “Having a course Facebook page has helped me better understand communication principles and effective practice.”

The following open-ended comments from the student feedback testify to this as well: (See Appendix 5 for all comments.)

“One more way to interact and learn”

“Allows one to learn outside of class and to reflect on what has been taught earlier. Able to write short comments and allows one to share articles and videos easily. Moreover, it is something that we check very often and hence the convenience accorded by it.”

“Provides a platform for students to share what they have learnt or post relevant articles, videos etc, where they can get valuable feedback from their peers. Provide an opportunity for students to learn outside of classroom.”

“Learning outside of class hours, learning on the go, learning from almost anywhere on the planet can take place as long as there is internet connection. Bottom-line: learning is free, uncoerced, all natural and organic.”

Along with this emphasis on added learning, a number of students left comments that demonstrated that they appreciated the Facebook page for the added opportunity that it gave them for interacting with their peers, both those in their own tutorial groups and those from another group. In fact, of 30 comments given in the open-ended question about strengths of having the Facebook page, 18 students made a statement that included one (or more) of the following words to positively describe their experience of using Facebook for learning: share, interact, communicate, bond.

These findings suggest that ES2007 students were highly appreciative of the way that the Facebook page allowed them to take an active role in their learning: by sourcing and uploading relevant article and video links, by accessing and reviewing the links provided by their classmates, by expressing their opinions on information provided and the views of others that they had engaged via the Facebook wall, by interacting with others from the course community, and by having an opportunity to reflect on their learning.

Challenges in Using Facebook

Asking students to participate in a set of tasks based on a social media platform such as Facebook does pose some potential challenges. One of those is that students may feel that this particular requirement of their coursework is overlapping too closely with their private cyberworld, especially since Facebook is such a popular socializing site for so many of them. In fact, one of the respondents from ES2007S did mention this as a possible reason for not wanting to use Facebook. Another challenge for the teacher may be keeping students on task and directing their posts and comments toward course content, or in a related manner, ensuring that their contributions and interactions are not inflammatory, either in tone or in subject matter. One of this paper's authors had a student who made several inappropriate posts, including his/her posting links to opinionated articles related to religious beliefs and sexual orientation (only tangentially related to course content), followed by contentious interpretations and assertions. That same student had a propensity for using a condescending tone when responding to opinions that disagreed with his own.

Recognizing and addressing issues such as those described above requires the teacher to closely monitor the Facebook page and then to swiftly react in much the same way that one does when other activities produce unexpected and unwanted results: with appropriate tact and intervention strategies.

Conclusion

The use of class Facebook pages in ES2002 and ES2007S proved to be a worthwhile activity for a number of reasons. From an educator's perspective, the Facebook pages are easy to set up, administer and maintain. From a student's perspective, they are convenient to access and a non-threatening means of becoming more familiar with classmates. From a pedagogical perspective, the pages are an effective way for students to be motivated to source for their own course content-related materials, to share that content and their ideas on it in a public forum, and just as importantly, to interact and engage each other in an informal way outside of the classroom. As supervising teachers, we have experienced how this process facilitated greater student engagement and understanding of concepts, and we noted how relevant content "conversations" on Facebook were often carried back and forth between cyberspace and the classroom.

Social media platforms such as Facebook are now readily available as teaching tools, ones that language and communications teachers should seriously consider for augmenting their teaching practice, providing students with a greater sense of the learner's community and yet another channel for taking charge of their own knowledge development, and finally, for connecting formal and informal learning.

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Appendix 1: ES2002 Student feedback

ES2002: Sharing Information

- 97% read/watched course related materials using the class Facebook page.
- 72% agreed they found the links the lecturer recommended useful a further 25% strongly agreed

- 87% I agreed the links their classmates posted were useful a further 13% strongly agreed.
- 66.7 % would like to discuss the course topics more on Facebook but 33.3% disagree.
- 100% agreed they liked learning Communication Skills from video explanations/lectures 16% of which strongly agreed.
- 89% believe Finding/Sharing video links and articles was effective for learning.
- 100% believe accessing/viewing video links and articles was effective for learning.
- 94% agreed with the statement “Having a course FB page helped me better understand communication principles and effective practice”.
- 97.2% think a class Facebook page is useful.

Appendix 2: ES2002 Student feedback

ES2002: What are the strengths of having a course Facebook page?

1. It is interactive and is a more relaxed platform for learning.
2. People can just share their thoughts on the page without awkwardness or fear of 'rejection'.
3. Higher accessibility as students tend to use Facebook more often than read their course notes.
4. It's easy to re-visit the useful links that were posted long ago.
5. A good platform for tutors and students to share relevant content such as videos.
6. Helps to extend learning beyond curriculum time in an interesting and interactive manner.
7. It gives students a platform to share articles/links that they come across while working on their projects, so that others can benefit from them as well.
8. It is the social network so people will associate learning as a social activity.
9. Different people from different tutorial classes can come together to share information they know about the topic
10. Instills the 'fun' element
11. Convenient and interactive
12. A convenient way for tutor to share information to students.
13. Allows useful videos and online articles to be shared to help enhance our understanding and increase our interest in the subject.
14. The curriculum becomes more comprehensive as it exposes us to more information we would usually not access. In addition, with the teacher giving comments and

- actively filtering appropriate videos we know we are learning the right things.
15. Feel more connected to the tutor, knowing that you have resources available when you need them.
 16. We can share the video links that we have found out effortlessly

Appendix 3: ES2002 Student feedback

ES2002: What problems might there be in using a Facebook page for this course?

1. It is a new way of learning which may take some time for students to get used to the idea of a social media platform for learning. Ways to promote this new way of learning such as incorporating this in other modules may help students get used to the idea of such.
2. Students might not be interested to log into Facebook. And some might not log into Facebook that often.
3. Some links aren't very "good" - hence i don't like posting links that might be deemed "irrelevant" or have my comments read and scrutinized by everyone out there :/ sorry personal preference.
4. Some people do not have Facebook accounts. There are also those who have it but hardly log in and check.
5. There are people who seldom use Facebook and might miss out on the useful links/articles that are shared by others.
6. It may not be assessed all the time except when we are feeling bored.
7. Materials are not organized.
8. Sometimes the activities in the page are not seen clearly i the front page and people will just forget about the page.
9. Some people might post too many links that are irrelevant and clutter the page.

Appendix 4 ES2007S Student feedback

ES2007S: Sharing Information (20 respondents out of 30 total students)

- 100% accessed then read or watched course-related materials using the class Facebook page.
- 75% made a wall post, either by sharing a link to an article or a video or by making a

statement in the status of the Facebook page.

- 80% made a comment on the wall post that another member of the Facebook page had made.
- 65% accessed and read a shared article at least once a week each week of the term.
- 67% accessed and watched a shared video at least once a week each week of the term.
- 55% posted at least two links to an article or a video during the term; 20% did so at least once every two weeks.
- 95% agreed that they found the links the lecturer had posted as useful; 50% strongly agreed.
- 90% I agreed that they found the links their classmates had posted as useful; 45% strongly agreed.
- 90% enjoyed discussing the course topics on Facebook.
- 95% agreed that they liked learning communication skills from video explanations/lectures/articles posted on the Facebook page; 40% strongly agreed.
- 95% agreed that finding/sharing video links and articles was effective for learning.
- 90% agreed that accessing/viewing video links and articles was effective for learning.
- 95% agreed with the statement “Having a course FB page helped me better understand communication principles and effective practice”.
- 90% agreed that a class Facebook page was useful.

Appendix 5: ES2007S Student feedback

ES2007S: What are the strengths of having a course Facebook page?

1. Sharing of useful articles for the course.
2. Allows one to learn outside of class and to reflect on what has been taught earlier. Able to write short comments. Allows one to share their own articles and videos easily. Moreover, it is something that we check very often and hence the convenience accorded by it.
3. Helps to bind students together.
4. Provides a platform for students to share what they have learnt or post relevant articles, videos etc, where they can get valuable feedback from their peers. Provides an opportunity for students to learn outside of classroom.
5. Convenient sharing of links, ideas etc.
6. Provides a platform for people to air their views on communication.
7. People will be able to interact more;)

8. Coming up on newsfeed would remind us since we probably check Facebook more than our email.
9. Provides a platform for people to express their view.
10. Interactions between friends are encouraged, allowing course mates to know each other better.
11. It's an easy way to learn as I use Facebook quite often.
12. Ease of contribution. It links with what we use on a daily basis and hence we can easily refer to it any time we wish.
13. Learning outside of class hours, learning on the go, learning from almost anywhere on the planet can take place as long as there is Internet connection. Bottomline: learning is free, uncoerced, all natural and organic, the way our neurosystems were meant to be!
14. Materials can be shared easily without eating into curriculum time. Also, many of these videos or insights shared are very very useful, not only in the arena of presentation, but also in other aspects of life. Sharing is done openly, albeit by the same few people who are using this platform frequently. Lastly, using Facebook allows students from different classes to communicate. This not only breaks down certain barriers, it build up bonds and allows students to have interaction even away from class.

Appendix 6 : ES2007S Student feedback

ES2007S: What problems might there be in using a Facebook page for this course?

1. Some may post unrelated content on the Facebook page.
2. People abuse the system by sharing comments that might discourage any further discussions.
3. fluidity of the Internet... it is hard to control the relevance
4. People abusing the Facebook page by posting comments that discourage ongoing discussion.
5. Those who don't use it...
6. Some people might say stuffs that should not be brought up in public. Insensitiveness.
7. Too unorthodox.
8. if one does not have Facebook, it will be a problem.
9. Some people might not use Facebook actively.
10. Other distractions on Facebook.

11. Huh what problems? There ain't no problems at all. Perhaps there might be in getting EVERYBODY to participate equally. Which is the case for students who are intimidated with writing and expressing their opinions and ideas, or shy and embarrassed. The way to overcome this, slap a 5% assessment weightage on the Facebook contribution component. Take this from blog contributions' 20 percent so that you get 15 percent now for blog contributions.
12. People who do not have Facebook accounts, or are not active in using it may find it difficult or troublesome to converse / share in Facebook. This results in them not being able to see some of the very important discussions and videos posted on the page.

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