

Facebooking at Nicholls State University

Some Thoughts for You to Consider

The Facebook.com is one of the most widely used forms of communication on the Nicholls State University (NSU) campus. Over 6000 NSU students, alumni, faculty, and staff have profiles listed on the Facebook, and nearly 3000 of them login every day!

For those of you who are not familiar with the online service, Facebook.com allows anyone with an email address ending in “.edu” to create a profile online – this means you can post pictures, join groups, become “friends” with others, provide contact information, list your class schedule, and discuss your favorite books, movies, and music. This new technology has connected NSU students and stakeholders in unprecedented ways, and the limits on how we can communicate and interact continue to be stretched.

While the information NSU students post on the Facebook can only be seen by others who have an “its.nicholls.edu” email address (or people from other schools and communities you’ve “friended”), that can include lots of people – alumni, faculty, staff, parents, strangers and even potential future employers. It is recommended that you become sensitive to the information and pictures you post (or others post about you).

There are many other services like Facebook.com (i.e., MySpace.com, Blogspot.com, etc.), and the same discretion and care you are now using for Facebook after reading this should be used for any online community or communication network. We have listed a few thoughts to consider:

Posting Photographs:

- Avoid posting pictures that might cast you in a negative light. If you would not want the photo on the front page of a local newspaper, you probably shouldn’t have it on Facebook.com.
- Pictures of illegal or irresponsible acts could open you up to criminal or judicial investigations. Others may “tag” a photo to your site that may not present you in the best light. Check your Profile often.
- Photos on Facebook (or anywhere else on the web) can be easily copied and shared with others. Digital photos can have a way of embarrassing you many years into the future.

Privacy:

- You may want all of your friends to have your contact information, but there may be many others who you do not want to know how to reach you. Some information should remain confidential.
- Take the time to explore the privacy settings built into Facebook. There are ways to control the amount of information you release and to whom you release it.
- If you post your class schedule and address anyone who can log on to Facebook knows where you are during the day and you are more vulnerable to crime.

Impact on Your Future:

- “Partying” and “boozing” probably don’t qualify as hobbies or interests. Be careful what you name your “groups” and which ones you join.

- Threatening language directed at an individual is a crime.
- Employer representatives who you meet at the Career Fair might be an alum and will likely look you up on Facebook. Your chances of being hired by a company may be impacted by your Facebook account.

General Usage:

- Use of derogatory or offensive language may not reflect you at your best. If you wouldn't speak that way in an interview or in a meeting with a faculty member, don't put it on the web.
- Be conscious of how much time you spend on internet sites like Facebook and blogs. It is easy to waste a lot of time that could be spent being more productive.
- Use good common sense when publishing anything on the internet or visiting other web sites.