Social Media
for
Academic Programs & Departments

‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾

Alan A. Lew* & Cadi Fung
Department of Geography, Planning & Recreation
Northern Arizona University

Social media for organizations, such as an academic department or a degree program, consist of a range of web-based applications that allow anyone to disseminate information to online communities. The principle reasons for creating a social media presence for an academic department or program include:

(1) Create an online social community for current students;

(2) Create an extended community of alumni and friends; and

(3) Create an awareness of the department or program among potential students.

The benefits of this sense of community and awareness extends not only to the academic department or program, but also to individual faculty and students who actively participate in the social media opportunities. Social media is already very popular among many of our students, and the proper presence of NAU programs in this virtual space provides an important new opportunity to expand the educational mission of the university.

While social media applications may be created from scratch, it is much easier to use existing online applications that are already being used by current and prospective students. For example, a degree program or academic department can create a Facebook Page which anyone in Facebook can then become a "fan" of. (This is also referred to as "liking" a Page.) Fans of your department Page will then receive all of the announcements (including photos) posted by the department and can comment and discuss those announcements. Because any Facebook user can become a 'fan', it is possible to use the Page to engage prospective students, as well.

----

* Alan A. Lew is a Professor in the Department of Geography, Planning and Recreation at Northern Arizona University. Homepage: http://alanlew.com; Social Media: http://twitter.com/alew, http://www.facebook.com/alanalew and http://alanalew.com

Social media is quickly becoming one of the most popular ways for people to form communities and network with others. Most of the people who participate on social media websites do so for personal reasons. They find it a convenient and fun place to express themselves, to interact with friends and family, to make new friends and acquaintances, and to explore interests and issues. As such, the experience of an individual is more spontaneous and organic in nature, and in the process they are building a personal identity. This applies to both students and faculty who are actively involved in social media.

Organizations, such as academic department and programs, also use social media to build an identity and brand image.   And they should have a degree of spontaneity, to discuss issue and celebrate accomplishments as they arise. However, because their identity is broader, and not usually associated with a single individual, it is more important to have guidelines that help direct the organization's social media presence. The goal of this document is to provide such a guide. It is initially being written for the NAU Department of Geography , Planning and Recreation, but is also written with the larger Northern Arizona University and academic community, as well. This document provides general guidelines, tips, and examples of ways for academic departments to reach out to current and potential students through social media.

Though many media platforms exist, here we focus on Facebook and Twitter, two of the most widely discussed online social media services today. Other major social media sites that have the potential to enhance the social media presence of academic programs include LinkedIn, Myspace and Youtube. It is assumed that the reader has some familiarity with these programs. For instructions on how to get started with Facebook and Twitter, visit:

Twitter guide – http://mashable.com/guidebook/twitter/
Facebook guide – http://mashable.com/guidebook/facebook/

Organizing Your Social Media

If more than one person is involved in your department's social media presence plan, it may be useful to designate a *community manager*. This individual will oversee the entire social media operation, including all social media accounts (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Myspace, etc.), websites, community calendars, blogs, etc.

The community manager may choose to delegate tasks to others if the operation is too large for one person to handle. For instance, someone can be placed in charge of the department website, another assigned to Twitter or Facebook, another to YouTube, and so forth. This would effectively lessen the workload on the community manager. Additionally, having different individuals in charge of different platforms increases the diversity of your social media operation. It may be appealing to potential students to find a department that has a variety of content on its sites.

An alternative option is to allow access to the community's social media platforms to a few individuals. This means each individual would have access to the department's Facebook account, Twitter account, website, community calendar, etc. (i.e. they have the username and password for each.) In this case, the community manager should develop rules, regulations, and guidelines regarding what can and cannot be shared and posted on the Internet. It may also be useful to create a schedule that designates specific time periods for each person involved. For example:

Access Day	OR	Access Time
Person 1 – Mondays through Wednesdays	|	Person 1 – 8 am-noon
Person 2 – Thursdays and Fridays	|	Person 2 – Noon-4 pm
Person 3 – Weekends	|	Person 3 – 4 pm-8 pm

Appendix B lists several online several online applications that can schedule posts to social media sites, including Twitter and Facebook. Appendix C shows how this can be done using SocialOomph.com, one of these tools.

Alternatively, users may be cautioned to look for recent posts and updates in advance. One should take caution not to bombard a platform with information from many users at one time. This could result in numerous postings in a short period of time, some of which may be duplicative, and which may produce a cluttered, unorganized, or confusing appearance. The community manager may enforce a time buffer to prevent multiple posts within a specified amount of time (e.g. minimum of 30 minutes between posts).

Mission

The community manager, in conjunction with other faculty and staff members of the department, should decide on a fitting mission statement on which to base all social media interactions and updates. This statement should include the goals/purpose of the department, the image they want to convey, and the type of following they want to acquire. The community manager should enforce consistency among all platforms with regards to what the department is trying to accomplish. The mission statement should assist in that enforcement.

Twitter

Twitter is an easy way to connect with your audience, though it is also easy to fall into the trap of tweeting (posting) too frequently or not enough. On one hand, you want to engage your followers by tweeting frequently enough that they stay interested. However, you do not want to tweet for the sake of tweeting. A potential student probably is not interested in how you burned your eggs this morning while preparing breakfast. On the other hand, you do not want to neglect your Twitter account. Your followers need something to follow along with, and it should be engaging enough for them to continue reading your content.

The easiest way to avoid these problems is to develop a *tweet plan*. A tweet plan will help you plan, organize, and implement interesting and effective tweets.

Step 1: *Decide who your preferred audience is.*
For an academic program, this step is simple – you should cater your tweets to students potentially interested in your department. However, you do not want to neglect your current students. Potential students are often looking for a sense of community within a department, so

it is helpful to provide them with an on-line sample of what it is like to be in your department. Keeping your current students in mind will help accomplish this task.

Step 2: *How many tweets per day?*
In this step, you want to decide how many tweets will be scheduled ahead of time and how many posted in real-time. You should base this decision on how much time you want to spend tweeting in real-time. For example, let's say you wanted a total of 10 tweets per day with 3 of them scheduled. That means the other 7 will be in real-time, and you should (1) remember to do these tweets, and (2) consider spacing out these tweets throughout the day. While scheduling is easy and efficient, you need to also post information in real-time to better engage your audience.

Step 3: *Create time frame for publishing scheduled tweets.*
As mentioned in Step 2, it is important to spread out your tweets to minimize the "planned" appearance. Publishing times for each tweet should vary. For example, you should try to avoid scheduling every tweet to be published exactly on the hour or half-hour. Ideally, the spacing of your scheduled tweets should serve as a temporal structure for posting real-time tweets.

Example:

Scheduled Tweets	Real-time Tweets
#1 – 7:03 am	
	#1 – 7:45 am
	#2 – 9:07 am
	#3 – 11:18 am
#2 – 12:58 pm	
	#4 – 1:35 pm
	#5 – 2:40 pm
#3 – 3:21 pm	
	#6 – 4:01 pm

Step 4: *Choose a length of plan.*
Decide how long you want to run your tweet plan. How far into the future will it extend? Days? Weeks? The longer the plan, the more careful you will need to be in choosing what you tweet. Something that seems interesting now may be outdated by the time it gets published. On the other hand, having too short of a plan may require more maintenance.

In an academic setting, scheduled tweets may be items that will not be changed, such as administrative deadlines, holiday closure announcements, events/ceremonies, etc. This may make it easier to schedule longer plans.

Step 5: *Use keywords.*

Keywords are a great way to let your audience know what your tweets are about, to connect with your followers, and to take advantage of currently popular terms to funnel people to your site. In general, the number of keywords you use should correspond with your number of daily scheduled tweets. Tailor them to your intended audience. Use the keywords they use, and utilize "hashtags" (in the form of #keyword) to place your tweet into that keyword category.

Step 6: *Vary your tweets.*

A good way to keep your audience engaged is to provide a variety of information. Develop categories for your tweets and choose a different one each time you tweet. (For a more comprehensive list of categories, see Appendix A)

Rules To Tweet By

1. *Stick to Twitter's 140 character limit*. Longer tweets may cause your audience to lose interest; keep your content concise and succinct. Your 140 characters includes keywords and links to websites. Website links can be shortened with URL shortening tools, such as http://Bit.ly.

2. *Provide information your audience would find interesting*. Put yourself in your audience's shoes. Is the information you are tweeting something another person would want to read? Is it interesting enough to share with many others?

3. *Do not use "filler" material* for the sake of reaching your pre-determined tweet quota. Do not "overshare" – think twice before posting a new tweet. Remember that your department's Twitter account is not your personal account.

4. *Engage your followers*. Respond to replies in a timely manner. Reply and retweet when it is convenient and useful to do so. Ask questions.

Facebook

Like Twitter, Facebook is a popular social media platform used by a vastly ranging demographic. Unlike Twitter's limitation to status updates, though, Facebook has a variety of options on its site, including an extensive profile section and the ability to create on-line photo albums, discussion forums, events, and much more. It is like a website with a built-in ability to engage in dialogue with others.

Sharing on Facebook

Most of the guidelines for Twitter also apply to Facebook. When posting on Facebook, keep your audience in mind, cater to them, and vary your posts. However, the character limit is larger on Facebook (420 as opposed to Twitter's 140). This 420-character limit applies to your own status updates or posts

(similar to a Twitter post). When posting on someone else's Facebook page, the character limit increases to 1000 (including links). Though this allows for plentiful text, you still want to keep it clear and concise.

For organizations, such as academic departments, the preferred approach to use in Facebook is for a regular member of Facebook to create either a Page or a Group for the organization. Groups are generally better for short-term event discussion groups, whereas Pages are considered better for longer term relationships and are more flexible. The creator of the Page can also allow others to be page managers, to share the effort. Third party programs (or "applications") can also be installed on the Page. The top of the Facebook Page for the Department of Geography, Planning and Recreation is shown in Appendix E.

Once a Page has been created, Facebook provides the creator or manager of the Page with the ability to post announcement, videos, pictures, links, and events. All of these posts will be shown as being made by the organization, not the individual manager. The posts are added to the Page's "wall", where you (and others) can also see posts made by all of the people who "like" your page. (In Facebook, "like" is used the same as "follow" is used on Twitter.) All of your "likes" will also see the organization's posts on their personal "walls".

These features are great ways to vary the types of information that you posts. You can create events to advertise a thesis defense, department picnic, speaker series, conference, etc. Videos that may interest your audience include talks given by pioneering researchers in your field; footage of department field trips, graduation, and other events; or applicable how-to videos.

Photos are also a great way to introduce your department to potential and incoming students. You can create a photo album of faculty and staff members, current students, and your location on campus. This will help create a feel of the department for those unfamiliar with the people and area.

Ideally, creating varied and interesting posts will incite comments from others. You also want to comment on relevant pages, as people are likely to respond to someone who has left them a comment first. Always remember to reply in a timely manner to messages and comments.

Advertising on Facebook

Because Facebook is a closed environment (only registered members can view posts), people tend to trust it more than the completely open Internet. Advertisements appear on the right side bar of all Facebook pages and are quite small.

Facebook users tend to provide a lot of personal information in their profiles, which they can then limit so that only their friends can view. Facebook uses this profile information as the basis of its advertising options. This allows you to target your advertising very precisely. For example, an advertising campaign can be targeted based on the country where the viewer lives, the age, gender, education and language of the viewer, and most importantly, what the viewer "likes". For a recent advertising for the Community Planning Emphasis area of the Master of Administration degree program, some of the "likes" included:

arizona state university, california state university [various campuses], city planner, city planning, community development, community service, graduate school, new mexico state university, northern arizona university, urban planner, urban regional planning, and utah state university

Pricing for the advertising can be based on either the number of times the advertisement is clicked on (CPC, cost per click) or the number of times the advertising appears on a page (CPM, cost per thousand impressions), and you can designate the maximum amount your willing to spend per click/view and per day. You do need to monitor the amount being charged and either pause or delete the advertisement when your maximum budget has been reached. (In the case of the advertisement above, the average price paid per "click" was $0.53, which resulted in an average $0.08 per thousand page views.

Linking Facebook and Twitter

If one person is controlling Facebook and Twitter, s/he may find it more efficient to synchronize both platforms. This way, when an item is posted on one site, it will simultaneously be posted on all others that are synced. However, you may not want to rely completely on this method for all tweets and Facebook posts. It is likely that if both accounts contain the exact same information, one will be visited and the other forgotten, depending on your audience's site preference.

There are several ways to link your accounts:

- Ping.fm is a free service that allows you to update multiple platforms at one time (http://ping.fm/). People can also be given access to post from the Ping.fm site without being given full access to the Facebook Page.
- Facebook has an application (http://www.facebook.com/twitter/) that allows you to link Facebook to Twitter. This is a one way linkage, so everything that you post on your organization's wall will automatically be reposted in Twitter, with a link back to Facebook for the full entry. Only Facebook users can access the full entry.
- You can also selectively choose which tweets will be posted on Facebook with Selective Tweets (http://apps.facebook.com/selectivetwitter/). This application will pull posts made to Twitter that include the hashtag #fb and only post those on Facebook. Many users post a lot more to Twitter and only selective items to Facebook.
- Other applications include TweetDeck (http://www.tweetdeck.com/beta/) and Tweet3 (http://www.tweet3.com/), which allow you to manage several social media accounts from one computer interface. These can also be used to plan a full year of posts to Twitter and Facebook, such as those provided in Appendix A.

The options are numerous and continuously evolving. A simple search for applications will return many results.

Additional Social Media Considerations

Web Design

One important factor to consider when creating an online organizational personality is the design and layout of the department's website, Twitter account, or blog. It is important to maintain the physical

attractiveness of the layout. Page layouts are a major opportunity to make a good first impression. They should be aesthetically pleasing to draw interest from visitors, and to keep them clicking through the site.

1) *Eliminate clutter*. Too much text in too little space makes it difficult to read. Users do not want to have to scroll excessively to reach the information they want. It is best to categorize your content and make it easily accessible.

2) *Use a pleasing color palette*. Harsh color combinations may cause a viewer to instantaneously lose interest. Bland and low contrast pages can have a similar impact. Choose colors that are easy on the eyes, but have enough contrast so that text is easily read.

3) *Text should be clear, concise, and easy to read*. Cater your content to a variety of education levels. Potential undergraduates will likely have a different knowledge base than a potential graduate who has several years experience in academia.

4) *Create a personality*. Give your page a life. Something as simple as a faculty page with photos and a biography blurb that contains an interesting, non-academic fact about the individual will make your department seem more "real" to an incoming or potential student.

Other Social Media Platforms

Other social media platforms that should be considered in creating an organizational identity and online social community include the writing of Blogs, the creation of videos that are posted on YouTube.com, the distribution of audio podcasts, and having a virtual presence in SecondLife.com. MySpace.com offers an alternative to Facebook. Google Calendar offers a convenient addition to a department website that shares department or program events.

Blogs require a commitment by faculty to write short commentaries, like editorials, on topics related to the academic disciplines. This can be a considerable commitment of time and effort and may not be suited to the working style of the individuals who would need to contribute. A variety of free blog platforms exist (blogger.com and wordpress.com being the most popular), and all blog posts should be announced on Facebook and Twitter.

Podcasts are similar to blogs, but are audio files, which can be edited then posted online. Listeners can listen to the audio either online or downloaded to an mp3 player. Apple iTunes is the most popular podcast distribution channel, though many others also exist. Videos can be created, edited and similarly distributed. YouTube is the most popular site to post videos on and allows posters, including organizations, to create channels where all their videos can be posted together. Audio podcasts require more effort than blogs, and videos require more effort than audio podcasts. However, videos can be extremely effective in marketing departments, degree programs, classes, and individual faculty. And they do not need to be highly sophisticated to still be authentic, effective and popular (if not actually "viral").

Many universities have created a presence in the virtual world of Second Life. They build virtual buildings, teach virtual classes, hold virtual conferences, and have virtual events in Second Life. The popularity of Second Life, however, has waned in recent years due in part to the steep learning curve required to become adept at using this online application. MySpace.com, which is somewhat similar to

Facebook, was once the most popular online social network, but has also been declining in use in recent years.

Calendars can be easily created by anyone who has a Google account (http://google.com/ calendar). Calendars can be shared so that several people in a department can add, edit and delete events on the calendar. The Google Calendar can then be linked to the department's webpage for all viewers to see.

Another online social media that university departments and faculty might want to consider joining is Academia.edu, a relatively new site specifically for higher education. Faculty and graduate students can add themselves to their university and department on Academia.edu, as well as share and read research articles, and follow journals and other people on the site. Their profile has options to list teaching and research specialties, which allow their work to be found by other academics.

Finally, one of the most useful websites for advice on using online social media tools is the Social Media Examiner, which bills itself as "your guide to the social media jungle". This is a daily blog with multiple contributors. It currently tends to focus on Twitter and Facebook, but that would probably change as the online social media landscape evolves.

Social media tools can also be used in online or hybrid teaching environments. There are numerous examples of this one the internet. This presentation (http://www.slideshare.net/kalmakoff/ web2micr337) shows how an online social media program (not a free one, though) was recently used in a virology class at the University of Otago.

Manpower Considerations

How many online social media sites should you use? This choice depends on the manpower available to tend to each one. You do not want to take on more than you can handle. What you choose to use also depends on how comfortable you are with each platform. It is better to have a small number of well-managed platforms than a large number of mismanaged or neglected platforms. Additionally, you want to monitor your level of visitation (or effectiveness) for each. If a particular platform appears to be receiving very little visitation, you may want to get rid of it.

Participation from faculty, staff, and students is necessary for a social media presence to be especially effective. To get the word out about your department's Facebook, Twitter, website, on-line calendar and other sites, faculty should include links to these pages in syllabi. Department email signatures can also include Facebook Page, Twitter, and calendar URLs.

Student participation in your social media efforts will depend on your student population and its varying personalities. The best way to appeal to them is to provide useful and interesting information, pose questions they would want to answer, and keep everything current.

It is also useful to occasionally include alumni information so students can gain insight about post-graduation opportunities, but keep the majority of news and event postings recent and relevant. Be sure to monitor your website for broken links, outdated information, and other issues that may deter students and other visitors.

A review of social media activities by academic departments at Northern Arizona University in Spring 2010 found only two departments that were making a comprehensive effort in this area: the Department of Politics and International Affairs, and the Department of Geography, Planning and Recreation. We further determined that the social media efforts of these two departments was due solely to the efforts of a single faculty member in each.

Two other departments were involved in social media to a more narrow degree. Forestry has a Facebook page, but it is not actively maintained and has little activity. Anthropology has a YouTube video about the department. Several non-department areas at NAU have Facebook Pages (including Alumni Relations, the Graduate College, Microbiology and Genomics Lab, and Distance Learning, among others), and several student clubs were also active to varying degrees on Facebook (the Anthropology Club, Geology Club, Geology Alumni).

An unsystematic review of geography departments in the US and Canada, however, found much more social media activity. A summary of these activities are shown in Appendix D.

Conclusions

Social media is a powerful new tool if used resourcefully. In a time when budget cuts may prevent academic departments from using more traditional outreach and marketing methods, social media can be an appealing approach to program development. The ever growing on-line population of students adds to the potential power of building a social media presence. Coupled with these factors, this document should assist your department in reaching out to your desired audience and generating interest in your programs.

==

Social Media Presence Plan
----- for -----
Department of Geography, Planning and Recreation
Graduate Degree & Certificate Programs

The Department of Geography, Planning and Recreation at Northern Arizona University offers the following graduate degree and certificate programs, all of which can be taken fully online:

- MS Applied Geospatial Sciences
- Master of Administration - Land Use Planning Emphasis
- Graduate Certificate in Geographic Information Systems
- Graduate Certificate in Community Planning

The following are major elements of the social media plan for these graduate programs that have already been implemented over this past year.

1. Facebook is the core of the department's online social media marketing effort, because that is where current and potential students are most actively engaged.

2. Created a "NAU Geography, Planning and Recreation" Organization Page on Facebook
   a. http://www.facebook.com/pages/NAU-Geography-Planning-and-Recreation/314686782488

3. Created a NAUGPR Twitter account
   a. http://twitter.com/NAUGPR
   b. Posts made to the Facebook Page are reposted on Twitter.
   c. Separate Twitter posts can also be made that are not posted to Facebook.

4. Linked the Facebook Page and Twitter account to the GPR Department Homepage.
   a. http://nau.edu/GPR

5. Advertising of the Master of Administration emphasis area on Facebook, using funds provided by that program.
   a. Three campaigns were run between October 2009 and April 2010. These resulted in:
      i. 8,262,902 web page impressions
      ii. 1,293 clicks that brought viewers to a GPR landing page for the M. Admin. - Community Planning Emphasis
      iii. The total cost was $768 ($0.59 per click)
      iv. The conversion rate will not be assessed until the Fall 2010 semester

6. A Google Calendar for the department was created and linked to the department homepage.
   a. Can be viewed at: http://geog.nau.edu/gprcalendar.html
   b. Maintained through events announce by the department chair through emails and at department meetings.

7. The entire department website was moved to the NAU Active Campus application, which gave it more consistency with the design themes of NAU overall.
   a. Several "shortcuts" were created to make it easier to identify quick links to key pages on the new department website.
      i. http://nau.edu/gpr = goes to the homepage: http://home.nau.edu/sbs/gpr/
      ii. http://nau.edu/gprweb = goes to a list of online programs: http://home.nau.edu/sbs/gpr/online.asp
      iii. http://nau.edu/gprgrad = goes to a list of graduate programs: http://home.nau.edu/sbs/gpr/grad.asp

The following are areas for further development of the social media presence plan for the GPR graduate programs that are <u>planned to be implemented in the coming year</u>.

1. A consistent series of scheduled postings to the Facebook Page will be built around Appendix A, B and C, starting over the Summer 2010.
   a. These will be supplemented with postings of news and events that are more spontaneous.

2. The addition of Faculty Profiles to the department homepage.
   a. need to determine how to fund this work

3. The creation of a YouTube channel for the department.
   a. The creation of videos to inform and promote the department's: programs, faculty and initiatives.
      i. need to determine how to fund this work

4. The inclusion of the department's Facebook, Twitter and Calendar links in all of the syllabi of department classes; and in the signature of department email.
   a. need solicit faculty buy in

5. Further improvements to the GPR website as issues are identified.
   a. need to determine how to fund this work

6. Involvement of more staff and faculty in participating and building the department's social media presence.
   a. need solicit staff and faculty buy in

Appendix A: Monthly Tweet and Facebook Suggestions for Geography, Planning and Recreation at NAU

FALL SEMESTER	
August/September	**October**
Welcome new and returning students	ASK: Best Fall activities/places to see in Flagstaff and elsewhere in Arizona • Lockett Meadow, Riordan Mansion Ghost Story Tours
Reminders of available web resources • Link to Web Resources for students • Link to Google Calendar	Halloween-related Geography • Cultural differences in celebrations, geographic history • ASK: GPR-theme Halloween costumes
ASK: Share interesting summer experiences – internships, jobs, travel, research • Students • Faculty/Staff	Ski Swap reminder – Parents Day Weekend (early October)
Announce any start-of-term events • BBQs, picnics, department and NAU events	Add/drop deadlines
Holiday reminders (Labor Day – University closed)	Midterm exams – "good luck" announcement
Add/drop deadlines	
Link to list of Winter and Spring courses	
November	**December**
Holiday reminders (Veterans Day, Thanksgiving break – University closed)	ASK: Best winter activities/places to see in Flagstaff and elsewhere in Arizona • Northern Lights Holiday Parade (downtown) • Grand Canyon Railway's Polar Express
Geography Awareness Week	Final exams schedule link
GIS Day	Final exams – "good luck" announcement
Snowbowl Job Fair announcement	Snow tips: driving safely, being snowed in, school closures, etc. • Appropriate N. AZ links – NAU? Daily Sun? Other?
Reading Week announcement/reminder	Winter Break reminders (University closed)
	Snowbowl season opening (depending on season)

SPRING SEMESTER	

January	February
"Welcome back" message	Scholarship announcement
Reminders of available web resources	Geography of Valentine's Day
Holiday reminders (MLK Day – University Closed)	Add/drop deadlines
Snow tips – driving safely, being snowed in, school closures, etc.	Link to list of Summer courses
Weather facts/trivia	Application for Fall grad admission/GA positions

March	April
ASK: Spring activities/places to see in Flagstaff and elsewhere in Arizona	Honors week events
Add/drop deadlines	Geography of Easter (celebrations in different cultures/countries)
Geography of Mardis Gras/Carnival	Natural allergy remedies
Midterm exams – "good luck" announcement	ASK: Ever take a 3-week Summer Session? Experience?
Spring Break reminders (University closed)	Link to list of Summer & Fall courses
Spring Break safety tips • Article link: NAU, Daily Sun, AZ Republic, national/international news sources	Available summer internships (create a webpage to list?)
Link to list of Fall courses	ASK: Best summer activities/places to see in Flagstaff and elsewhere in Arizona
	Earth Day – April 22 (http://green.nau.edu/events.html)

May
Final exam schedule (course catalog?)
Final exams – "good luck" announcement
End-of-year salutations
Summer Session courses
Holiday reminders (Memorial Day – University closed)

SUMMER SESSION	
May/June	**July/August**
Link to list of Fall courses	Holiday reminders (Fourth of July – University closed)
Reminder of available web resources	Fall Orientation announcements • Undergraduate • Graduate
	Climate info • Climate change, especially as it pertains to our region – local newspaper/media sources, NOAA, other weather and climate sources
	Available internships for Fall/Spring (create a webpage to list?)

ANYTIME ANNOUNCEMENT CATEGORIES		
Event Resources	**Humor**	**Interesting Facts/Misc.**
http://green.nau.edu/events	Cleaning the inside of your monitor – http://www.raincitystory.com/flash/screenclean.swf	Little known/interesting facts about the faculty
http://events.nau.edu/	PhD comics – http://www.phdcomics.com/comics.php	Geography trivia/Did-you-know questions
	The Onion – http://www.theonion.com/features/statshot	Discounted/cheap things • Textbooks • Travel • outdoor gear • Snowbowl discounts
		Fun things to do in Flagstaff and surrounding area

Scholarship/Funding Opportunities	**Job/Internship Opportunities**
Essay scholarships (through NAU)	e.g. APA, GIS, NRPA notifications sent through GPR email
Hooper Sustainability Awards	NAU-specific
	Types of jobs that can be obtained with GPR degrees (1x/year)

Interactive	Quotes
GIS – playing with map applications (e.g. http://www.personal.psu.edu/cab38/ColorBrewer/ColorBrewer.html)	From GP&R people (past and present)
National Geographic interactive: http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/more/interactives	From GPR faculty
	From politicians/others as related to GP&R matters
	From GPR students (regarding programs, classes, disciplines, etc.) • ASK: Define G, P & R in one sentence? Cite quote from someone famous (1x/2 years)

Related News/Events	Department Accomplishments/Announcements	Administrative
Department social events	New hires	Other holidays
Thesis defense announcements	New publications/media exposure	Add/drop deadlines
Current events in the news	Student awards/accomplishments	Application deadlines
GPR/SBS/NAU speakers, events, forums – from Newsletters	Funding awards	Withdrawal deadlines
	Clubs	
	Forthcoming items in GPR's Google Calendar	

FACEBOOK-SPECIFIC	
Videos	**Pictures**
Interesting talks • e.g. Geo-medicine: http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/bill_davenhall_your_health_depends_on_where_you_live.html • e.g. Fish sustainability: http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/dan_barber_how_i_fell_in_love_with_a_fish.html	National Geographic (randomized?)
NAU-related	Department events
Department-specific • Leisure/social events • Guest speakers • Promotional video • Interviews with faculty/students	Graduation
	Faculty/student profiles
	Humor (comics, funny geography-related signs, "geography fail" pictures - http://leftake.com/diary/427/fox-news-georgaphy-fail

Discussion Forum
"Your experience in/with…" topics • e.g. From your experience, what qualities and skills do GIS employers look for? • e.g. What is your most memorable experience as an undergraduate/graduate at NAU?
Opinions on policy changes/NAU ballot initiatives

Appendix B: Social Media Tools

Facebook Scheduling Programs	
Sendible	http://sendible.wordpress.com/2008/09/25/schedule-facebook-wall-posts-using-sendible/ http://www.mydigitallife.info/2009/10/15/pre-schedule-status-update-on-facebook-with-sendible/
SocialOomph (formerly TweetLater)	https://www.socialoomph.com
Status Scheduler	http://forum.developers.facebook.com/viewtopic.php?id=43591
6 Status Updates Schedulers	http://www.wchingya.com/2010/02/status-updates-scheduler-twitter-facebook-linkedin.html

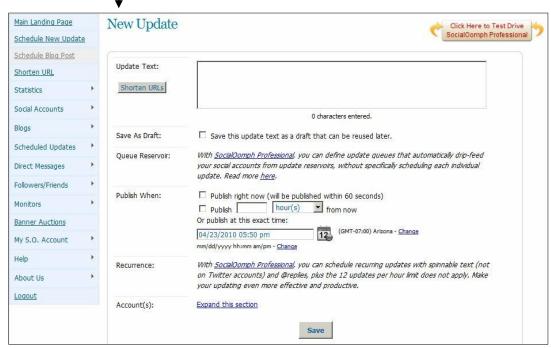| Twitter Tools	Description
Twitter Grader - http://twitter.grader.com/	Provides you with a Twitter ranking/grading
Friend or Follow - http://friendorfollow.com/	Helps you figure out who your friends, followers, and fans are
Tweet Cloud - http://tweetcloud.com/	Gives you an idea of what types of things a specified user tweets about
Nest Unclutterer - http://nest.unclutterer.com/	Keeps your Twitter account tidy by providing multiple settings to keep/remove followers
Tweet Deck - https://www.tweetdeck.com/	Organization system; also allows you to update Facebook, Myspace, and LinkedIn

Appendix C: Using SocialOomph.com to Schedule Tweets

SocialOomph is a free program that requires sign-up. Once logged in, click "**Schedule New Update**" in the left-hand side frame to schedule a new Tweet:
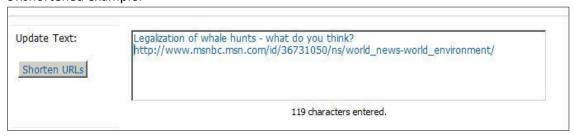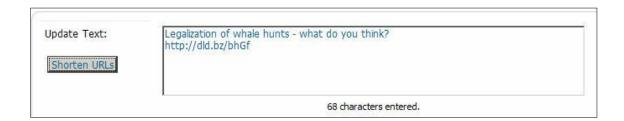

The page that appears will look like this:

In this window, type your tweet in the "**Update Text**" box. The tracker underneath will let you know how many characters you have entered. Remember the 140-character limit for Twitter. If you are including a link, you can click "**Shorten URLs**" to minimize the number of characters entered.
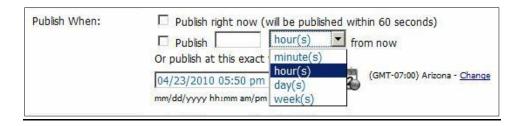
Unshortened example:

Shortened example:

Next, you want to decide when to publish your tweet. You have three options:
1. Publish right now (will be published within 60 seconds)
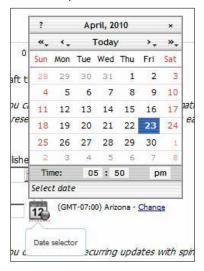2. Publish X minutes/hours/days/weeks from now

3. Publish at this exact time.

If you choose the second option, you can specify an exact amount of time for when you want your tweet published. With the third option, you can manually type in the time/day, as shown below:

Alternatively, you may click on the "**Date selector**" to choose a day. Clicking on the "**Time**" boxes increases the number by one interval.

Once you have chosen a publishing day/time, click "**Expand this section**" in the "Account(s)" row to select where you want to publish your tweet. Click Save.

To view your scheduled updates, click on "**Scheduled Updates**" in the left-hand frame:

When you select "**View All Updates**", you will be shown a list of all your scheduled tweets:

Here you can add, edit, and delete any updates. There are many other tools on SocialOomph to explore and utilize; this appendix went over the very basics.

APPENDIX D: Social Media Activities by Geography Departments in the US and Canada

(The numbers refer to the number of "members" of the Group or Page or Twitter account.)

Facebook Groups and Pages:

- **West Point (138)**
    o Posters/fliers to advertise geography program; videos, etc.
- **University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) (57)**
    o New, but good
    o Grad students photo album – includes advisor, thesis topic, grad date, degree
    o Graduation photos, road trip photos
    o Events and news, publications
- **Penn State University (468)**
    o Lots of updates: ESRI on-campus interviews, student's semester-at-sea blog, student news, faculty highlights (e.g., Copenhagen talk)
- **Kansas University (124)**
    o Student talks (research; speaker series)
    o GIS day, Globe-O-Mania, 5k/8k run
    o KU news
    o Photos by fans; visiting alumni, events, graduation
    o Quite a few events, all or mostly geography-related
    o Commencement videos
- **University of Oklahoma (74)**
    o Humor (comics), interesting tidbits (related to geography)
    o 6 events, all geography (Geography bowl, Geography awareness week, department picnic, senior send-off, AAG meeting)
    o Bus advertisement
- **Ohio State University (172)**
    o Posts by alumni – link to company he currently works for; relevant events/articles
    o Routed to Twitter
    o Course announcements
    o

Twitter:
- **University of Wisconsin, Madison (136)**
    o Lots of retweets, interesting links (e.g. Google's Geographies of Religion)
    o PhD comics
    o Interesting articles – info ranges widely (upcoming relevant movies/documentaries, Roger Ebert's article, pictures, book reviews)
- **Ohio State University (119)**
    o Events, congratulations, questions to followers, happy holidays (greetings)
    o Asked followers to upload photos to album
- **University of Kansas (24)**
    o All routed from Facebook

*Department Websites***:**

West Point
- Main website:
    - o Program brochures for each major
        - ▪ Geography's brochure
            - • Marketing strategy: "Are You A Geographer?" asks, "Are you interested in multidisciplinary studies? Do you prefer window seats on airplanes? Do you like to travel?"
            - • Almost everyone would answer "yes"; trying to coerce people into thinking they should choose geography by appealing to common interests
            - • Enrichment programs – Phi Kappa Phi, Geography club, field trips, honors program, research, technology, culture
            - • Course offerings, description of human and environmental geography
    - o Course catalogs, recent publications, department newsletters
    - o Weather
    - o Awards (students)
- Geography website:
    - o Class of 2010, 2011 photos (individual)
    - o Faculty photos
    - o Gamma Theta Upsilon – national geography honors society
    - o Faculty publications, student papers
    - o Links to careers: AAG

University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC)
- Where alumni are now and what they are doing
- Homepage has way too much stuff; too time-consuming to read through it all
- Awards, financial aid, fees/tuition
- Employment and Graduate studies opportunities (should have "last updated" date)
- Grad student bios and pictures
- Layout is poor

Penn State University
- Coffee hour: every Friday before weekly speaker
- Has updated weekly listing of departmental events
- Graduate student resources
    - o Admissions/academics: grad brochure, handbook, grad guide written by grad students (all sorts of graduate student committees, lots of advice)
    - o Research resources (thesis information, research centers, conferences and exhibitions)
    - o Awards and funding (lots; also outside sources like AAG, research grants, fellowships, travel/conference support)
    - o Careers and outreach: internships, jobs, organizations, outreach
    - o Calendars of events; equipment available within department

- Grad and undergrad bios
- Updated course listings
- General info about department (how many students, how many faculty, year founded, etc.)

University of Kansas
- Outdated front page
- What alumni are doing now, what jobs they have (especially professorships)
- Current research
- Career opportunities (internships and career sites, specific job postings, professional network – graduates of KU who work in various industries to provide advice etc. to students)
- Cost of attendance

University of Oklahoma
- Video on main page: opening is not great, but has interviews with students, professors, undergraduate advisor, graduate liason; international studies, fieldwork – student speaks about abroad experience
  - o What can be done with degree? –answer from students and advisors
  - o Too long of a video
- Job posting on main page (job within department)
- Affiliated research

Ohio State University
- Links to Twitter, Facebook, Linkedin, Myspace
- Great organization and layout
  - o Front page: student/faculty spotlight, News & Events
- Grad studies broken down into 4 foci
  - o Nice pdf for applicants, but not organized well
  - o Deadlines are well-outlined
- List of department specialization with links to faculty
- Great directory of faculty and graduate students, including bios and photos for both
- Easy to navigate
- Great "jobs" page: divided up for internships, undergrads, grads
- Tons of resources