

EDITORS' NOTES

Today's college students have never known a time when personal computers did not exist. Most of their classrooms in their K–12 schools were equipped with computers, and the odds are that they also had a computer at home with access to the Internet. Technology has always been a part of their learning process, not to mention the impact it has had on their development of friendships, research and writing skills, shopping, and choice of college or university to attend. These college students expect that institutions of higher education will respond to their inquiries without delay, much in the same way that customer service is handled on the Web. Student expectations are driving the creation of live Web chats, in-house social networking sites, university wiki, and shared virtual spaces like Second Life.

Unfortunately, higher education faculty and staff in general, and student affairs professionals in particular, are behind the curve in their use of technology. Student affairs professionals are only starting to become aware that they should learn about the technologies that students have integrated into their lives. It is imperative that they understand these technologies and learn how to implement them to contribute to student learning, build a sense of community, increase student engagement, and facilitate communication. This volume examines current research on how technology is affecting college student development and explores ways in which institutions are responding to increased demands for using emerging technology in supporting students.

In Chapter One, Reynol Junco and Gail Cole-Avent discuss how today's college students use technologies at higher rates than ever before and describe the technologies they use. They examine how student affairs professionals are starting to use technology in ways that will increase student engagement and contribute to better educational outcomes.

Greg Heiberger and Ruth Harper discuss the social networking Web site Facebook in Chapter Two. They describe the history of Facebook and review students' use of Facebook and how it can be used to increase student engagement. They also discuss Astin's theory of student involvement and draw parallels between students' online Facebook world and real-world engagement.

In Chapter Three, Jenna Mastrodicasa explores how media and technology have been used to respond to crises on college campuses. She reviews campus responses to various crises and examines the role of technology in these responses and students' use of technology to help each other cope in the aftermath of crises.

Shelia Cotten explores the link between technology use and psychological well-being in Chapter Four. She reviews the most recent research on communication technology and its impact on psychological health. The chapter concludes with implications for practitioners and areas for future research.

The academic uses of blogging are explored in Chapter Five. Shane Nackerud and Kurtis Scaletta review the history of blogging and how blogging as a classroom tool is helpful in reaching students who are familiar with expressing themselves online. Specific blogging technologies, including the UThink system at the University of Minnesota, are discussed.

In Chapter Six, Dianne Timm and Carolyn Duven explain the issue of online privacy in an increasingly connected world. They describe how college students share intimate details of their lives online with little regard to who is accessing their information and how institutions and private companies are viewing and using that information. They also review legal issues, and cases related to online privacy are discussed.

In Chapter Seven, Grace Salas and Julie Alexander discuss technologies that student affairs professionals can use in order to help advise, support, and retain students. They explore how institutions are using technologies like wikis, real-time chat, and portals to enhance student success and meet their expectations of the college experience. They also review a technology platform that helps institutions assess, plan, and support retention efforts in the first year of college.

Finally, in Chapter Eight, we review this volume in the context of the adoption of technologies in higher education. We discuss challenges for student affairs professionals and call for continued professional development in order to meet our students where they are today and will be in the future.

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