

# Navigating Student Privacy while Teaching with and on Social Media

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Presentation at TCC 2023



# What is social media?

- Narrow definition: popular social networking platforms
- Broad definition: any mediated environment that facilitates social interactions
  - Social interactions: communicating, sharing, liking, etc.



# Why teach with social media?



Promote active learning



Access to current events



Access to resources



Access to experts



Archived interactions



Sharing culture

# Why NOT teach with social media?

- Distracting
- Misinformation
- Potential for negative behaviors
- Privacy (and other safety) concerns



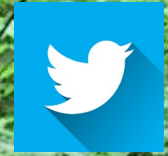


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teaching WITH  
social media:

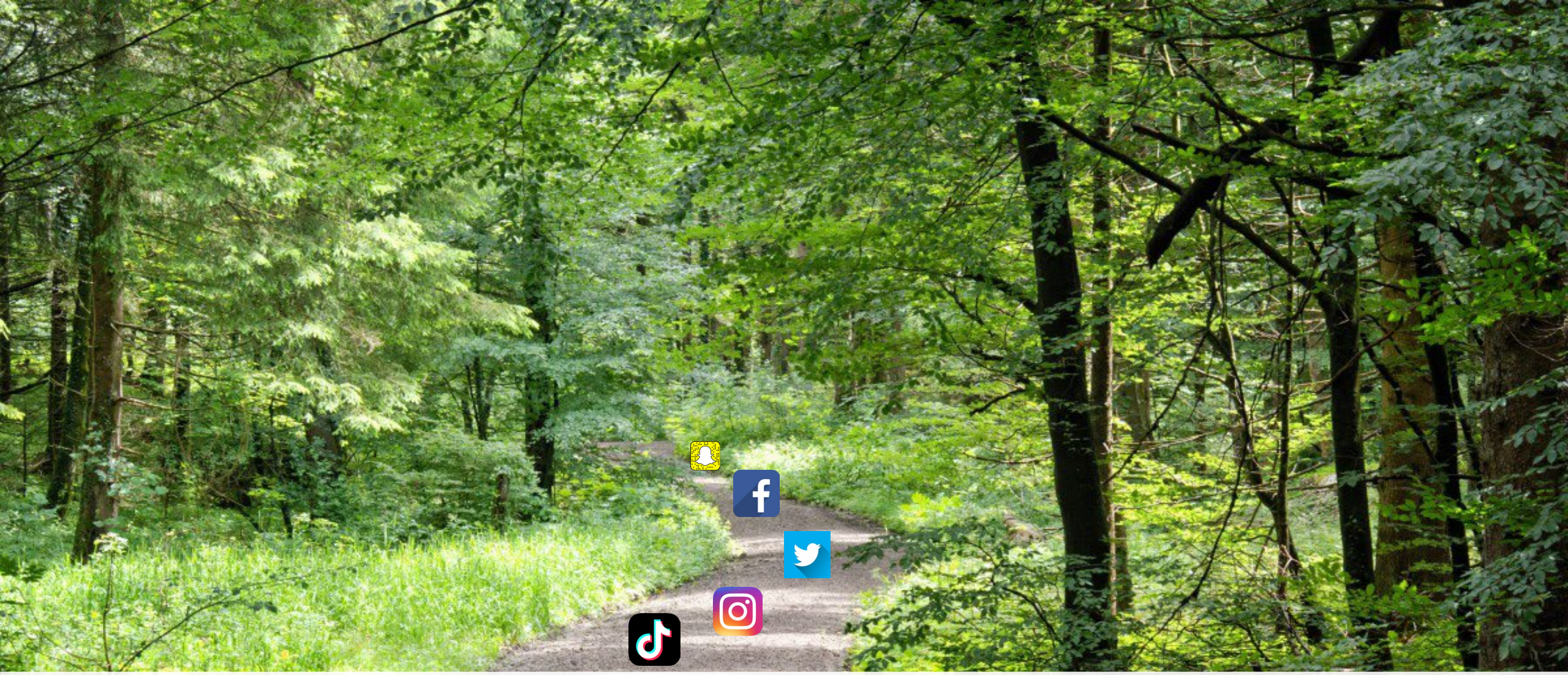
*Teaching ABOUT social media*



How do we help  
students find the path?



How do we help students find the path?



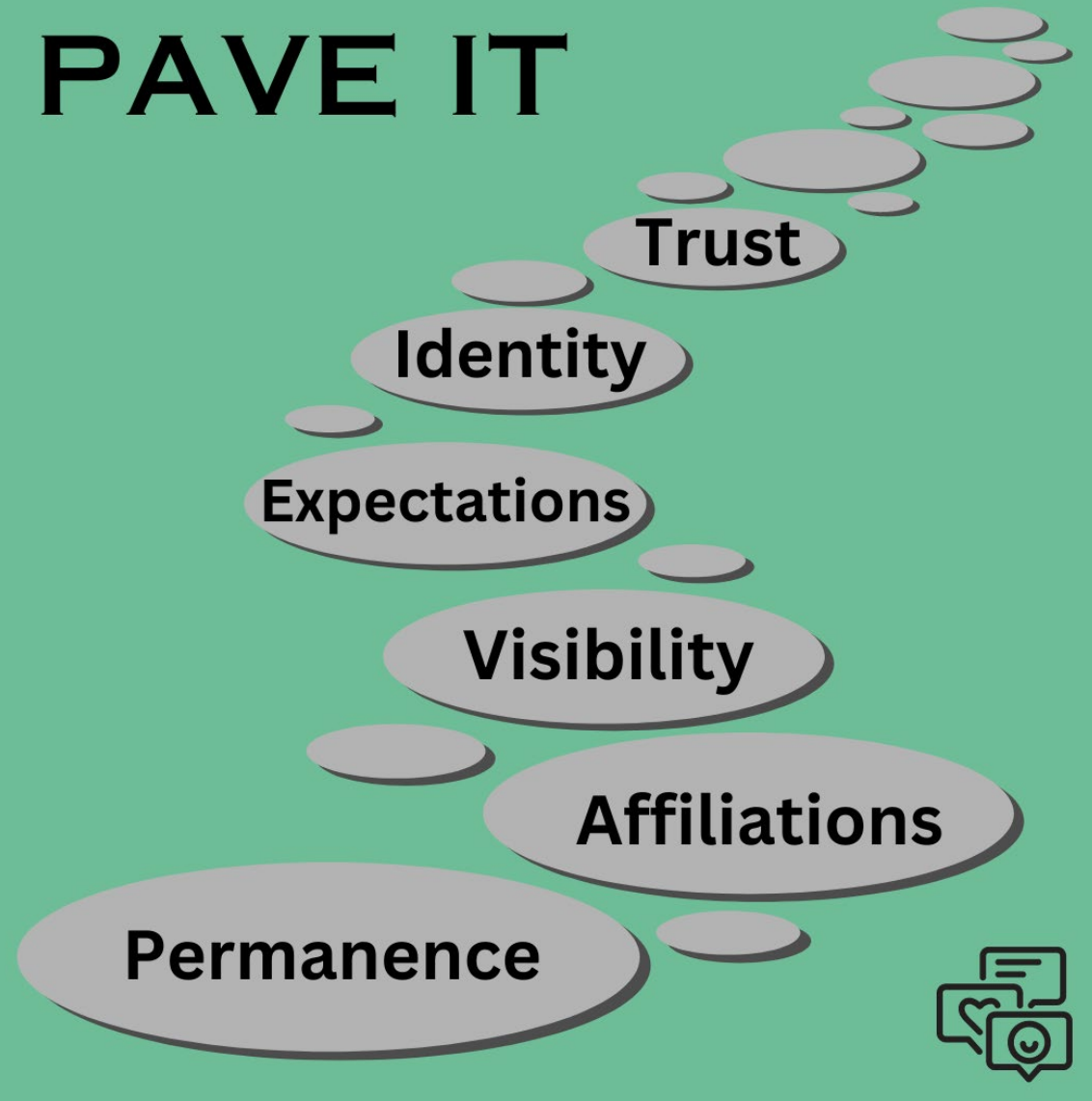
We PAVE IT





An acronym to guide us through the complex process of using social media for learning

# PAVE IT



# The Goal



**MITIGATE HARM**



**MAXIMIZE LEARNING**

# Permanence

## Key points:

- The Internet only grows, it does not contract
- Nothing ever really goes away
- Sharing in the digital era is easy

## Actions:

- Assume everything is archived somewhere
- Before posting, ask yourself: How will I feel if {anyone} sees this? How will I feel about this surfacing in {XX} years?

# Affiliations

## Key points:

- You represent the institution
- “You are the company you keep”
- Worlds collide online (context collapse)

## Actions:

- Consider yourself an institutional ambassador
- Separate identities / accounts as desired and desirable

# Visibility

## Key points:

- The less you post / share / like, the less you are seen
- Even passive travelers create footprints

## Actions:

# Expectations

## Key points:

- Expecting privacy in the digital era is unreasonable
- *Reasonable expectations of privacy* are subjective

## Actions:

- Explore your expectations and your corresponding online actions. If they don't match, adjust them.

# Identity

## Key points:

- Sometimes we are different people in different spaces

## Actions:

- Pseudonyms
- Separate accounts
- “Burner” email accounts

# Trust

## Key points:

- Trust among class members is important, but never guaranteed.
- Reciprocity and respect help develop trust.

## Actions:

- Share your privacy expectations and concerns.
- Respect others' privacy actions and concerns.



## Instructor Actions

- **Permanence:** Develop a copying policy and a deletion policy.
- **Affiliations:** Discuss representing the institution. Introduce concept of context collapse.
- **Visibility:** Consider using social spaces that are (semi)private when students are asked to share. Provide passive options.
- **Expectations:** Communicate yours, and develop class expectations.
- **Identity:** Suggest various options for identity management.
- **Trust:** Discuss what it means in YOUR classroom. Build it.

# Model the Behavior // Provide Concrete Examples

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- Usernames
- Profiles
- Posts
- Interactions



## Social Media Guidelines

Dr. Vanessa Dennen  
Instructional Systems & Learning Technologies  
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In this class, we will use a variety of social media tools. To fully participate in the class, you will need to create and use accounts on many of these tools.

Before you begin using these tools, I want to make sure you are aware of a few things:

1. Many of these tools by default leave behind public trails (part of your digital footprint) that may be found by others, including people outside of our class, and may be searchable on Google.
2. Any online activity by default leaves behind trace data that you cannot usually see (another part of your digital footprint)
3. Many of these tools also have settings that can be adjusted to protect your privacy to varying degrees and to keep your contributions from being public and/or searchable.
4. As much as we try to control our privacy online, no method is absolute. Even when we abstain from online life, data about us exists online in various forms.

In this class, the purpose of our online activities is to enhance our learning experience. If you do not feel safe, your learning experience will not be enhanced.

**Here are general guidelines or advice for everyone to follow:**

1. **If you're uncomfortable with using these tools, come talk to me.** I do not want you to do anything in this class that makes you feel uncomfortable or unsafe. I can probably help mitigate any discomfort or safety concerns and still find a way for you to fully participate in the activity.
2. **Before you create your accounts, consider your identity and the context.** If you interact online under your real name, anyone searching for you may find what you've shared. You may not want other people to find your coursework online. You may not want to leave behind any digital footprints at all. For this reason, I do not require – or necessarily suggest – that you create these accounts using your real name. You may call yourself Mickey Mouse or RunningFan or whatever else you desire. I simply need to know the connection between your real name and your username(s).
3. **Creating a separate identity for class is not difficult.** You may need to create a new email account, which tends to be the starting point for most social media accounts, as the first step. *Hint: Use gmail, and don't include your*



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# A sample policy

- Available at:
- [vanessadennen.com/2023/04/18/social-media-guidelines-for-teaching-at-the-college-level/](https://vanessadennen.com/2023/04/18/social-media-guidelines-for-teaching-at-the-college-level/)

Show  
students the  
way. PAVE IT.

# PAVE IT



Discussion? Questions?  
Thanks for coming!

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