

# NEWS & OPINION

## Survey: Students Admit Overuse of Social Media, Facebook Still Tops

By Jessica Brown  
Senior Staff Writer

The results are in and Facebook is the social media platform of choice for many Wesleyan students.

Out of 100 surveys, Facebook came out on top with 37 votes. In second place was Snapchat with 22 and in third was Twitter with 20. Another popular site was Instagram with 13 votes, while others finished far behind: Tumblr (2), YouTube (2), Pinterest (1), and Club Penguin (1). Two students indicated "no social media" on their surveys.

Facebook is popular for a variety of reasons. Audrey Flemings and Joshua Campbell voted for Facebook. "I can keep up with friends and see everyone's opinions and reactions to issues," Campbell said. Flemings also uses Facebook to keep in touch with friends and family around the world, a common reason cited by international students. Other students use Facebook to share pictures, video chat, or take advantage of the messenger feature.

Snapchat is another good way to keep in touch with friends and family, but for a different reason. Students say that it not only lets users send pictures and short videos; it allows them to add filters that can change the user's voice or appearance.

Some students favor Snapchat because it's not as public as other social media sites. When asked why Snapchat was preferred, an anonymous student said, "Because it's a glimpse at people's lives. It's only a couple of seconds long so your attention doesn't lapse." The student added that it's faster to keep in touch with Snapchat than Facebook.

The third most popular medium, Twitter, became famous for the use of hashtags. Many celebrities, big businesses, and fictional movie and TV characters are on Twitter. Trey Russell and Casey Young voted for Twitter as their favorite social media platform. "It has the most to see," said Young. "It gives news as well as my friends' current posts and funny videos." As for why he likes Twitter, Russell said, "It offers strong community without lengthy posts. It's my main news source because you see news and interact as it's happening. And it's fast, and I don't need to spend lots of time on social media."

Instagram is a site for sharing pictures and Caitlin Brabble is a regular user. "I can follow a wide variety of accounts that cater to my interests, like makeup and food and squirrels, all while getting to see cute pictures of my friends," she said. Richard Harrell likes Instagram as well. "It's mainly

cat pictures with little words," he said.

An overwhelming majority--74 students--admitted that they would like to spend less time on social media. For many, social media are a constant distraction as well as a source of anxiety.

"I'd rather spend less time on social media," Russell said. "I'd like to be less connected. It's a main trigger of anxiety to be constantly consuming information." Other findings indicated that:

- 13 students were happy with their current amount of time using social media
- 8 said it didn't matter
- 5 wanted to spend more time

The Decree survey touched on other issues beyond social media. Asking for estimates of time spent on their phones, the survey found that:

- 46 students spend 1-3 hours per day
- 28 said 3 to 5 hours
- 26 said 5 to as many as 12 hours

When it comes to texting, students reported a wide range of usage habits. Some students send about 50 to 100 texts per day, while one student admitted to sending more than 4,000. Unable to put an exact number on his texting, Harrell figures he sends between 1,000 and 2,000 messages per day, many to his teammates

on the baseball team and his girlfriend.

The most common topics include "day-to-day activities," meetings with friends, gossip and "keeping in touch."

In-class texting was the final question on the survey. This is a practice permitted by some Wesleyan professors but forbidden by others.

Brabble acknowledged the habit. "I text in class every day in, usually, every class," she said. "It depends on the class. I'll text through my religion class, but reply to only one or two messages in chemistry or biology."



Photo by J. Brown

The survey revealed that:

- 48 students text in class occasionally
- 22 students text in class every day
- 15 students text in every class
- 15 students never text during class.

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people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

**Q.** As an undergrad, you had tattoos and piercings. When you entered the business world, what kind of reactions did you get from supervisors and colleagues? And what advice would you give Wesleyan students?

**A.** I had one full-back tattoo and multiple piercings. My hair color was essentially every color of the rainbow, and it was easy to spot me from across campus. It's fair to say that I looked like a kid from a punk rock video. I grew up surrounded by blue-collar family and friends, and tattoos weren't as taboo as they are in the business world. That being said, I knew I wanted to pursue a business career and that I'd need to cover up the tattoos while at work.

I think tattoos will become less and less taboo as the years progress, but there's now a generational gap that still limits them in the workplace. It's important for people to keep this in mind when deciding on any permanent body modification. For our students, my recommendation is to keep tattoo placement in mind. Like it or not, many employers do not allow tattoos. An equally important consideration is what you're getting. Does it have meaning to you? Would you still be happy with it 5, 10, 50, 70 years from now? All of my tattoos have personal meaning to me, and I put a lot of consideration into each of them. I don't recommend being impulsive with something that's essentially permanent.

**Q.** Let's talk about your life outside of work. What do you and your husband, Manoli, like to do in your free time?

**A.** We have two spoiled rotten pit bulls that are both rescues. They're our children, and they get treated accordingly. Their names are Monday and Tuesday. We rescued Tuesday first. She was about a year old when we adopted her and she was already named (after the Lynyrd Skynyrd song "Tuesday's Gone"). Tuesday is queen bee (or so she thinks). Monday appeared one New Year's Eve (which happened to be a Monday) and she was emaciated and timid. He was only supposed to be a foster, but we fell in love with him. He's a big baby that's just happy to be loved. Outside of "the Days," we love roller coasters. We even went to Ohio for a week just to go to Cedar Point. I like going to King's Dominion during Halloween. The night is filled with scary sights, and you get to ride coasters in the dark. The adrenaline rush is astounding. I love it.

**Q.** You've been a volunteer for a local veterans organization. Describe those experiences.

**A.** I used to be a very active volunteer for the VFW Post in Rocky Mount. My father, a Vietnam veteran, is the commander. They used to have a weekly bingo night to raise money, and my mom and I would work in the kitchen selling food. She would cook and I would take and serve orders. Unfortunately, the cost of bingo night eventually outweighed the benefit and we had to cancel it. Veterans, particularly Vietnam vets, hold a special place in my heart and always will. A lot of my dad's friends were and are Vietnam veterans. I still remember them watching movies like "Platoon," "Full Metal Jacket," and "Hamburger Hill," all of which are excellent movies, by the way.

**Q.** You could have gotten a banking or public accounting job in Charlotte, or worked at a tech firm in the Research Triangle, but you chose to work at Wesleyan. Why?

**A.** Because I've always felt at home here. Regardless of what a 'punk' I may have looked like when I was a student, my professors and the staff always treated me with respect and appreciated me for me. I never felt judged. College is where you're able to start exploring who you really are and who you want to be. It's the time when it's okay to go through some rebellious and awkward phases (within reason). I was encouraged and supported to succeed when I was a student, and I feel encouraged and supported to succeed now that I work here. I love the diversity and the characters at Wesleyan. I couldn't ask for a better group of coworkers.

I'm excited that my new role will allow me to help provide students with the opportunity to receive the wonderful experience of being a Wesleyan graduate. Financial aid is definitely a large determining factor as to if and/or where a student attends college. I know in my new role I can have a large impact on our students, and I want that impact to be a positive one.

## The Election of Donald Trump—The View from Sweden

By John Kostet ('12)



Photo courtesy of J. Kostet

Editor's Note:

Wesleyan alum John Kostet was asked to offer an international perspective on the U.S. Presidential election. A 2012 graduate, Kostet majored in political science,

minored in journalism,

wrote about politics and sports as a senior staff writer for *The Decree*, and played guard on the Bishops basketball team.

He now works as a senior advisor in international affairs at the Department for Regional Development at the County Council of Norrbotten in Sweden. "I'm responsible for coordinating and supporting our political engagement toward the European Union, our neighboring regions surrounding the Baltic Seas as well as the European Arctic," he noted. Kostet lives about two hours south of the Arctic Circle in the town of Lulea, where one can ski, in sunlight, at 11 p.m. during the summer. On December 1, he reported temperatures of 20 degrees F and a few inches of snow on the ground.

He was interviewed in the days following the election.

**Q.** How closely did you—and your friends and fellow Swedes—follow the U.S. presidential campaign?

**A.** It's been difficult to not follow the campaign, as Swedish media has been all over the trail since January. On election night, I had to set the alarm for 4 a.m. due to the time difference. I stayed up until around the time Trump got Wisconsin and then I went back to bed for an hour. I think a lot of

Swedes got up early that morning to see the final results being announced. No one has been talking about anything else and probably won't in the upcoming few days. In Sweden, interest is huge in U.S. politics. It's a bit bizarre actually. Personally, I'd rather see more reporters on the streets of Brussels as the EU affects us more. But I guess EU policy isn't as much of a reality show.

**Q.** What were your general impressions of the two leading candidates and the campaign itself?

## Issue In-Focus: What's Your Primary Source for News?

Codan Breckenridge

I don't spend a lot of time watching the news. If I do watch, I'll check what Channel 4 News back home (in Jacksonville, Florida) posts on Instagram. I like that station because it's unbiased and centered around a beach lifestyle. If I'm at home, it's often on while I'm eating breakfast so I'd watch, on average, about 30 minutes a day. On my phone, I look at posts for about 5-15 minutes per day.

Carolynn Davern

I don't typically spend much time each day consuming the news, which is probably a bad thing if I want to be a well-informed individual. I mostly hear things from others, or on the radio. If it's something that catches my interest, I'll do more research and look for news sites. I'll usually click links for local newspapers or news sites like CNN, if it's something major. I used to watch local news a lot at night, but I don't really watch cable TV anymore since I started using Netflix. I followed news more closely before the presidential election, but probably still not as much as I should have.

KreShaun Davis

I get my news from every news channel there is on TV, but mainly from CNN. From a personal standpoint, I think CNN explains news more deeply and in a more detailed way than other news stations. There's more variety on CNN. I spend about four hours a day watching the news. I haven't been watching so much lately because of school, but on a regular day I watch a lot.

Johnathan Pickler

I get my news from multiple sources. The main one is Twitter, which updates a section called "Moments." The Moments tab follows important events around the world. It ranges from sports to national politics to world news. My other primary source is Snapchat and its daily updates of world news. I spend about 30 minutes a day on the news; Twitter and Snapchat provide easy access.

Melvin Pitts

I receive my news from social media. Social media has become a tool for news because nearly everyone uses it. I also feel social media is a good tool because you receive feedback and the views of others about an event that's occurred. Most news networks

are included in social media so it's easy to access them. I can honestly say that I spend half a normal day on social media just to stay on top of what's going on.

Nella Scoggins

On a typical day, I consume about 20 minutes of news. I have an app that notifies me of breaking news happening within the area. The app is for ABC 11, a channel I've been watching since I was old enough to read. ABC 11 is the most popular station back home.

Quinn Tobias

I spend around an hour a day reading or watching the news. Since most news media is biased one way or the other, I try to get information from both sides. If watching TV, I'll look at Fox News for one perspective and then tune into CNN for the other. If a topic catches my interest, I'll Google it and read multiple articles from different sources in an attempt to get the full picture of the issue. Learning both sides helps me see through the bias and allows me to think for myself.

## Blue Recycling Bins Reappear on Campus

By Jessica Brown  
Senior Staff Writer

Blue bins have appeared all over campus as part of the Wesleyan Science Club's new and improved recycling program.

The recycling program is beneficial for several reasons. "Recycling is important because it reduces the amount of waste in landfills and it reduces the need for raw materials, which puts a strain on our resources," said Science Club President Carolynn Davern.

The college partnered with the Science Club and purchased blue plastic bins. In a previous recycling initiative, items were placed in blue cardboard boxes situated around campus, but there were issues with bottles and drink cups. Leftover liquids would soak into the cardboard, staining and damaging the boxes.

Davern explained that the 12-member club is responsible for going around once a week and emptying the recycling bins. Club members take turns collecting recyclables and transporting them to the big green receptacle located in the Bradley Hall parking lot.

The bins are located across campus, making recycling easy. The locations are the first floor of each classroom building

(Gravelly, Braswell, and Pearsall), the Gateway Technology Center, the Taylor Center, and the first floor of each residence hall. Sodexo empties the bins found in the library and Hartness Center.

To help make recycling easier, the Science Club has placed a sign on the wall above each bin. The sign lists what is considered recyclable and what's not. Food is not recyclable. It's also important to note that while Starbucks cups are recyclable, the straws are not, because of their waxy coating.

Davern said that the bins are typically full at the end of each week. But she noted that the club has encountered several recent problems. One is that members of the Wesleyan community often will use the bins as trash cans, disposing of food and unfinished drinks. This makes it difficult, and messy, for the club members during the collection process.

Davern also said that the club has removed the bins and suspended collection of recyclables in the residence halls. There was a problem, she said, with club members emptying the bins in a timely fashion. The club hopes to resume collections after revamping its schedule.

## THE DECREE

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### Submission Policy

The Decree encourages students, faculty and staff to submit letters to the editor and opinion pieces that focus on campus news and events. Note: Such submissions will be edited for conciseness and grammar and checked for accuracy.

To make a submission or suggest a story idea, email the faculty advisor at [WJGrattan@ncwc.edu](mailto:WJGrattan@ncwc.edu).

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