

## Social Networking – Peer Review Exercise

For our second peer-review exercise, you will use the same method you used on the Interrogating the Interface workshop, but since this assignment is a documented essay, you will focus on different features as you review your peers' papers.

### Preparing Your Document for Review

Open your document in Microsoft Word and save it to the desktop with the following title: "Full Name Social Networking – Review 1.doc". Then, repeat that process, changing the "1" at the end of the file name to a "2." When you're done, you should have two files on your desktop, waiting to be reviewed.

### Reviewing Your Classmates' Essays

We will rotate around the room to your right, so you will end up sitting at two different computers to complete your reviews. When we rotate for the first time, open your classmate's document with the "1" at the end; you are now reviewer #1 for this document. (At the following computer, open the files with "2" at the end.) Spend approximately twenty minutes reviewing each essay. Follow these steps to complete the peer review exercise:

1. In Word, go to View > Toolbars > Reviewing and make sure "Reviewing" has a check mark next to it. You will see the Reviewing toolbar near the top of the screen. Click the "Track Changes" button. From this point on, anything you type or change in the document will be "tracked" so the original author can "accept" or "reject" your suggestions. Because you are the only reviewer of this version of the document, feel free to delete words or sentences, add new text, and rearrange words, sentences, or paragraphs. In other words, think of this document as if it were your own essay and you were being asked to turn it in at the end of class.
2. Read your classmate's entire document carefully *before* making any comments. It is important to be specific when you comment or ask questions about perceived strengths or weaknesses about someone else's document; the writer needs to have that information in order to know what to work on and what to carry over to future drafts. To make comments on a particular sentence or paragraph, highlight the text you want to comment on, then click the "New Comment" button and type your comment in the bubble that appears in the margin.
3. After you have read through the document, go back to the beginning and answer the following questions, making corrections and comments as you go:
  - Does the essay have a clear thesis statement? In other words, you should be able to state the main point of the essay by filling in the blank in this sentence: "When using social networking websites, ISU students should \_\_\_\_\_."
  - Does the essay feature a logical structure (three main points, pro/con, timeline, etc.)?
  - Does the essay contain practical suggestions/recommendations/tips that ISU students a) don't already know, and b) might actually follow?
  - Does the author use outside sources to support his or her argument? Are the quotes and/or statistics properly cited? Does the paper contain a "works cited" or "reference" section at the end? Most importantly, when the author incorporates someone else's ideas, has the author given credit where credit is due?

- Does the essay contain any screenshots of social networking sites or other visual elements? If not, suggest at least two places where an image would help the reader better understand the text.
  - What areas of the essay are the strongest right now? Which areas need the greatest amount of work? Mark these areas using the “comment” feature in Word.
4. If time permits, read through the proposal again and comment on any sentence that “sounds funny.” You don’t have to take the time to revise these sentences (or even know exactly what is wrong with them); just call them to the writer’s attention.

### **Revising Your Document for Submission**

At the end of the exercise, save both review files to your flash drive or network space. Outside of class, take the time to carefully read through your classmates’ suggestions. (You may want to print out both files so you can look at all three of them at once.) If you find one review particularly helpful, you can “accept” the changes made by that reviewer and then begin using that file as your new “master document,” incorporating the suggestions from the other file along the way.

Before you upload your final essay to the class website, make sure you have “cleared” all of the comments and edits in your document. To do this, turn on the Track Changes toolbar and either “accept” or “reject” all of changes in the document. Delete any “comments” in the margin by clicking on the “X” in the corner of the comment bubble.

### **A Final Note of Advice**

Before you submit your Social Networking assignment, *please* review the evaluation criteria at the bottom of the original assignment sheet. As you have probably noticed by now, I use these criteria to grade your assignments, and I do my best to stick to the criteria I have outlined in advance. (In other words, you shouldn’t be surprised that I expect to see screenshots, charts, graphs, or other visuals included in your essay.) If you feel that one or more of these criteria are restricting your creativity or otherwise weakening your essay, please talk to me *before* you submit the final assignment. I am willing to make exceptions in my grading policies if you have good reasons for ignoring some of the criteria.