Social networking at NSU
Sept. 8, 2009
Journalism Conference Room, Kyser Hall

Those present were Dr. Darlene Williams, Vice President for Technology, Research and Economic Development, Dr. Paula Furr, head of the Department of Journalism, Mary Brocato and Michael Loftin of the Department of Journalism, Jana Lucky, director of the Office of University Recruiting, Phillip Gillis and Shawn Parr of the Office of Academic Services, Jeff Mathews of the School of Creative and Performing Arts and David West of the News Bureau.

Current available social networking resources were discussed. Northwestern has an official Facebook page with more than 2,700 fans, an official Twitter feed with more than 130 followers and an official YouTube page.

At the present time, students are placing performances by the Spirit of Northwestern Marching Band and the NSU Jazz Orchestra on You Tube.

They are posted by students and are not on the official University site. Jeff Mathews indicated some ensemble directors had concerns about placing all concerts online and would like to be sure that anything placed online was representative of the ensemble’s skills. He said there could be copyright issues involved.

Jeff said he would talk with ensemble directors to gauge their interest in placing performances on You Tube.

The Department of Journalism was also enthusiastic about placing student work online, but also wants to be sure posted newscasts are representative of the quality of work done.

The possibility of creating channels within the official Northwestern site was also discussed. Phillip and Shawn said that would not be difficult for users to do. David will share the site password with a limited number of people in each area.

There was agreement within the committee that social networking should aid with student recruiting. Jana asked how many prospective students were fans of Northwestern on Facebook and David said it was about 10 percent, but that figure was not precise.

Phillip pointed out there was no representation of student life on Northwestern’s website and nothing on the site to tell a prospective student why they should attend NSU. He said one effective way to tell students why they should attend Northwestern is to use student testimonials. According to Phillip, those testimonials could take many forms including slide presentations, photos with text and video.
Another possibility that was suggested was utilizing student talent to let them tell others why they chose Northwestern and what they like about the University. These student submissions would be subject to University approval before being posted.

The committee agreed that could be quite effective. It was decided to invite Dean of Students and Assistant Provost for Student Success Dr. Chris Maggio and Assistant Director of Student Organizations Kirk Lee to the next meeting to get their input on engaging students.

The committee will also discuss guidelines that will be issued to students regarding video submissions.

The next meeting will be held Thursday, Sept. 24 at 3 p.m. in the Department of Journalism Conference Room.