

New media aim to engage

Truman State's social media are looking to pique potential students' interest

BY KASIE GARCIA
Staff Reporter

Social media at Truman State is looking past 140 characters with the addition of new social media sites. Because of the noticed lack of student engagement by the Admissions Office and the Career Center, these services are looking toward social media for a change.

Admissions Counselor Jeremy Brinning currently operates the Truman Facebook and Twitter pages. While both pages are effective tools of mass communication, Brinning said he would also like to use social media as a way to promote Truman from the student perspective.

Enter Instacampus. Created by Inigral, a technology company that helps colleges with enrollment by using social media, Instacampus is a new way to use Instagram specifically for higher education. The Truman Instacampus page compiles three student Instagram accounts and the University Instagram account into one website. Brinning said one goal is for Instacampus to give prospective students a look into the life of current Truman students.

Brinning also is considering starting a Social Ambassadors program as way to get students more involved with social media. The only issue with students being more active with Truman's social

media is the lack of firm commitment, Brinning said.

Brinning is still investigating what exactly the Social Ambassadors program would entail.

The Admissions Office is not the only department on campus looking to explore other social media outlets. Career Coordinator Brandi Wriedt oversees social media in the Career Center and said she already has begun trying to get students more involved with social media. Wriedt said the addition of a social media intern has helped increase the effectiveness of the Career Center's social media pages because there was not enough time for her to focus on social media last year.

Wriedt said she has plans to launch a few campaigns to spark student engagement about the Career Center's social media. She mentioned the campaign "#hiretruman" that would accompany Career Week. Through this campaign, students can pick up free t-shirts at the Career Center during scheduled times of Career Week, Wriedt said. Through this campaign, Wriedt said she hopes students will be encouraged to pick up other resources the Career Center offers.

Outside the world of Facebook and Twitter, Wriedt said she has started exploring the social media outlet CampusQuad, an app in the Apple market. According to its website, campusquad.co, CampusQuad is a community-sourced photo-sharing app that makes campus communication visual and location-based. Wriedt said the centralized location of event information will be one of the positive results of the app.



Social Media at Truman State University

T ruman Main Sites _____ T ruman Today

    

Music Department _____ School of Business

     

Career Center _____ Registrar's Office

    

Residence Life _____ University Press

    

Main Athletics _____ T ruman Alumni Association

      

*according to social.truman.edu

"Students could get event info from one place instead of many," Wriedt said.

She said the motivation for the changes in the Career Center's social media is connected with a lack of student engagement with the current social media pages.

"We make sure all student workers 'like' the Career Center's page on Facebook and are sharing information," Wriedt said.

The lack of student engagement also is seen at the Center for Student Involvement. Social media intern senior Jeanette Harris-Courts said when the CSI began using social media, people were not 'liking' the pages on Facebook.

The CSI is working to increase student engagement through Facebook and Twitter rather than pursuing other social media outlets. Harris-Courts said this summer, the incoming freshman class was able to pick a class song through Facebook, which required a level of engagement.

Wriedt said the engagement is one of the most important aspects of social media because it broadens the audience past what the Career Center alone reaches.

"When you share messages, you help expand the reach," Wriedt said.

Visit social.truman.edu to see where you can find Truman on social media.

Enjoy living life in the slow lane



Staff Reporter Lacy Murphy reflects on the lessons studying abroad in France has taught her

BY LACY MURPHY
Staff Reporter

I had never flown on a plane. I had never been on a train. I had never navigated a foreign city's metro system by myself using a foreign language. But during the last two weeks of my time studying abroad in France, I have done all of those things.

As a French major, one thing I have looked forward to during my entire academic career is the opportunity to study abroad. As I open this new chapter in my life, I'm learning more about myself and other people faster and more intensely than I had ever imagined. Of course, there are a lot of cultural differences between the U.S. and France. One such difference that will require the most personal work is how convenience takes second place to frugality.

Every time I told anyone I was going to France, they would advise me to watch my



Submitted photo While abroad, junior Lacy Murphy took a trip Besançon, a town in eastern France.

belongings carefully and not to take any risks abroad. The better advice would have been to prepare for a life in the slow lane.

Most people in France use a combination of public transportation and walking. As Americans, it is not uncommon to use our cars to run an errand less than a 10-minute walk away. Everything in the U.S. is faster in that sense. We work longer days to accomplish more during a day, and therefore we want everything to work as quickly and efficiently as possible.

For the first week, it really irritated me that I had to wait 10 minutes for the next bus and then pack myself into the rickety old machine with 30 other sweaty bodies for a 20-minute ride to campus. It is true, by the way, that the French don't shower as much, and yes, body odor is usually present. I hated the fact that going to the store meant a 20-minute walk and pit stains. And if that's not bad enough, I spend the majority of my time completely parched, since water fountains are a rare sight.

But guess what, my fellow Americans? There is a bright side to all the tired feet and cracked lips. I've learned to pick my head up as I trek to the market or wait at the bus stop. Yes, I am in France, so there is a lot of beauty to witness everywhere I go. I'm talking about experiencing all life has to offer. It's allowing every sense to be flooded with information and letting those experiences teach you about the world. I finally realized it was time to stop focusing on all the little inconveniences that bothered me and time to start focusing on what really mattered.

Americans don't take enough time to stop and smell the roses. It's always sleepless nights and sweatpants. When was the last time you took a walk just to people watch? When was the last time you savored the sweet juices of a fresh peach and admired its vibrant color?

One of my fondest memories so far was spending a day at the river Doubs, which runs through Besançon. It took an hour by bus to get to a little gravel beach, but once we were there, the sensations of the cool, cheerful water and the laughter of my friends made the entire trip worth it. I distinctly remember floating on my back in the water, which blocked out all noise except the muffled sound of friends laughing. I watched the clouds move past me and let the sound of flowing water and the view of majestic rolling hills overwhelm my senses. Something really amazing happens when you let go of your worries and just exist in the moment.

Now before I start to sound like I went to study in a hippie commune and not France, I want to leave you with a thought — something a new friend here in France shared with me. To know people is to know life. People of all ages have wisdom to offer, even if it is offered indirectly. Take the sage advice of your elders to heart, but do not lose that childlike innocence either. Speak less and observe more. Engage with someone you would normally ignore. Try to open your mind and heart to a new way of life. Believe me, you will experience the purest form of bliss imaginable.



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