

## Using social media to link theory and practice

This exemplar is relevant to Digital Student challenge:

### ***Deliver a relevant digital curriculum***

A Master's course in Global Governance and Diplomacy at the University of Oxford includes a foundational module on International Diplomacy. To succeed in this module, students need to immerse themselves in current international affairs and the kind of decisions taken in contemporary diplomatic settings. They also need to translate insights from their research into outcomes of practical relevance. The course tutor considered that Facebook could support the first of these objectives, and Storify the second.

Facebook was used to post daily news on diplomatic affairs. The fact that most students already used Facebook for social communication meant this was a medium through which they could be reached effectively and in real-time. Students quickly embraced the comment facility, and of 150 news items posted during the term, 30 originated with the students. In seminars, students made extensive reference to evidence and discussions from the Facebook group.

Storify, on the other hand, allowed students to present their research projects in the form of timelines, importing content from media such as YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, and Google. This meant they could quickly understand, visualise and peer review each other's work.

The social media were popular with students. One wrote of Facebook that: *'the media-sharing platform made the course much more interactive, stimulated curiosity about the material covered, and last but not least – made the student body more cohesive.'* Another said of the Storify platform: *'Storify was a fantastic way of visually presenting [my research] with relevant media, which supported and strengthened my points and arguments... As presentation and multimedia skills become increasingly important nowadays, [Storify] enhanced my knowledge and ability to use another platform for generating and presenting information'.*

### **How does this meet the challenge?**

- Social media are easy for students to adopt and relatively easy for staff to introduce into the curriculum.
- Contemporary issues and decision-making processes could be explored in real time using Facebook.
- Storify helped students to construct arguments and introduce a range of evidence and media in support of their points.
- Storify also helped students to be more aware of audience when communicating their research.

### **Find out more**

- [Full case study](#)
- [Storify](#)

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