# OLTD 506- Social Media

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| **Before OLTD 506** | **After OLTD 506** |
| * **Knowledge**
* I had quite a lot of experience using social media prior to OLTD 506. I was quick to embrace Facebook and I got more and more involved in Social Media during last year’s teacher strike.
 | The course made me aware of many, many, many social networking sites that I was previously unfamiliar with. It also broadened my understanding of the issues surrounding the use of social networking and social media in the classroom. |
| **Skills & Training**As I said, I had a lot of experience with social media due to the teachers’ strike. However, the final exercise in the course- researching policy and interpreting- this was a relatively new experience for me.  | This course has gotten me thinking a lot more about the process of teaching social media skills. I have been thinking about a framework for introducing technology to elementary students in an appropriate way and OLTD 506 has really made me aware of a lot of considerations that need to be addressed in this process. |
| **Practice & Experience**I really hadn’t considering using Social Media with my students before this course.  | I feel like I now have the skills to incorporate social media into my teaching. I am also aware of the challenges this poses and the risks and rewards of doing so. |
| **Guidelines & Policy**This is where the bulk of my learning took place. I literally had absolutely no idea about the restrictions of FIPPA or the best practices regarding the use of Social Media in the classroom. | Thanks to OLTD 506, I feel quite confident that I can incorporate Social Media into my teaching in a responsible and safe way. I also have a good idea of some of the best practices currently in use and where to go looking for more guidance if I need some. |
| **Confidence**If you had asked me at the outset of this course why I wasn’t using social media with my students, I probably wouldn’t have said it was due to a lack of confidence. However, a big part of my reservations had to do with my feeling that taking students online wasn’t safe. | A big take away from this course is that teaching Social Media INCREASES student safety in the long term. I find the online environment less threatening. I have a more solid grasp on the rationale for taking students online and much better understanding of the protocols and procedures needed to address student safety. All of these things, give me increased confidence to work online. |
| **Attitudes**My attitude towards the teaching of Social Media has undergone a complete 180 degree turn around. As I think I said in my introductory journal, my attitude prior to taking OLTD 506 was that my students (10 and 11 year olds) shouldn’t be using social media. | I think I had an overly cautious and naïve point of view. Ultimately, I was won over by the argument that teaching social media skills was part of a “harm reduction” strategy.  |
| **Perceptions**Truthfully, I really wasn’t convinced that there were pedagogically sound reasons to incorporate social media in my classroom. It struck me as an educational fad that wasn’t really worth investing much time in. | I now feel like I dramatically under-estimated the popularity and appeal of social media and its influence on our students. Given its’ prominence, responsible instruction is vital to prepare students for their futures. |

**Where To Go from Here**

As I went to some lengths to prove in my academic paper, I am quite convinced now that teaching Social Media and the associated digital citizenship must become part of the new curriculum. Where it all fits remains to be seen, but I am encouraged that there is an opportunity right now to be part of developing lessons and materials once an instructional model has been settled upon. This may be the challenge that I take up for my Master’s project in at the end of the year.