

## What this is

*The Innovative Instructor* is a forum that publishes articles related to teaching excellence at Johns Hopkins

## About the CER

The Center for Educational Resources partners with faculty and graduate students to extend instructional impact by connecting innovative teaching strategies and instructional technologies

For information on how to contribute to *The Innovative Instructor* or to access archived articles,

please visit our website

- [www.cer.jhu.edu/ii](http://www.cer.jhu.edu/ii)
- or call Cheryl Wagner
- (410) 516-7181

## Forum categories

### Pedagogy Forum

Hopkins professors share successful strategies for teaching excellence

### Technology Forum

Information about emerging technologies, who is using them, and why you should know

### Best Practice Forum

"How To" workshops on using technologies and applying innovative instructional methods

## Facebook

Macie Hall, Instructional Designer, CER

### What it is

Facebook ([www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)) is an online social networking service, designed to enable users to build communities of people who share interests. Social networking services provide different ways for users to interact online through tools such as virtual bulletin boards, blogs, wikis, e-mail, and instant messaging. Users can also share content, such as photos and videos. The name "Facebook" comes from the term for printed directories of student pictures and information distributed each year to incoming college freshmen so that they can identify each other.



### Why it was made

Facebook was started by a group of students at Harvard in 2004 in response to a need for an online space where students could share information and pictures, comment on each other's posts, and otherwise communicate in flexible ways. It was initially limited to use by college students. In September of 2006, it was opened to anyone over age 13 with a valid e-mail address. It now boasts over 500 million users.

### Why it matters

Everyone from your grandmother to your co-workers to your teenage son is using Facebook to stay in contact with friends, relatives, former classmates, and colleagues. It is an easy way to get introduced to the Web 2.0 phenomenon. Web 2.0 is the term used to describe web applications that facilitate interactive information sharing and collaboration. For faculty members and academic departments, it offers a means of creating Groups and Pages (more below) for communicating with students and colleagues, providing information updates, and sharing announcements of events and news.



### Who's using it

Over 1 billion people worldwide are using Facebook. There are nearly 50,000 fans of Johns Hopkins University Page and over 5,600 fans of the JHU Alumni Page.

Around JHU, the Johns Hopkins University, Johns Hopkins Alumni Association, Sheridan Libraries, Admissions, School of Engineering, and School of Medicine are using Facebook Pages and Groups to keep alumni, faculty, students, and staff updated on events and news.

Groups and Pages serve different purposes on Facebook. Pages are created to represent a real organization, business, celebrity, or band, and may be created only by an official representative of that entity. Pages are a promotional tool intended to foster public communication. Groups, on the other hand, can be created by any user on any topic, as a space for fellow users to share their opinions and interest in that subject.

Groups can be closed to the public through the use of Facebook's controlled membership settings. For example, *Johns Hopkins University* and the *Sheridan Libraries* have Pages. So does Omar Little, a character from the HBO series *The Wire*. Anyone may become a fan of these pages, regardless of his or her connection to JHU, the libraries, or HBO. They are open to the public to read, but not to modify. Each of the current JHU undergraduate

facebook

Sign Up Omar Little is on Facebook  
Sign up for Facebook to connect with Omar Little.

Omar Little Like

Wall Info Photos Boxes Discussions Links

Anthony Outler "If you come at the king, you best not miss"  
13 minutes ago · Comment · Like · Flag

Whispering Audrey Mitchell "you must have me confused w  
repeats himself" Ownage!  
about an hour ago · Comment · Like · Flag

Mario Trevino Real talk fam, u a beast on the screen.

No Spoilers, Omar Listening. "I keeps one in the chamber, in case you pondering."

Information

Affiliation:  
The Wire

Location:

From *The Wire*,  
Omar Little's  
Facebook Page

facebook

Sign Up Johns Hopkins University is on Facebook  
Sign up for Facebook to connect with Johns Hopkins University.

Johns Hopkins University Like

Wall Info Photos YouTube Boxes Twitter

Johns Hopkins University + Others Johns Hopkins University Just

Johns Hopkins University A message from President Ron  
university community on the resolution of the incident at The  
Hospital.

Statement on the resolution of an incident at Johns Hopkins  
from The Johns Hopkins.  
releases.jhu.edu  
Johns Hopkins University

Yesterday at 12:17pm · Comment · Like

View all 5 comments

Shannon Morgan Jarvis < sigh > so sad  
7 hours ago · Flag

Johns Hopkins University Information relevant to the univ  
the situation at Johns Hopkins Hospital is being posted at htt  
/emergencynotices

<http://web.jhu.edu/emergencynotices>  
web.jhu.edu

Yesterday at 10:13am · Comment · Like

Welcome to the Facebook home of  
Johns Hopkins, a leader in teaching  
and research, with schools in arts  
and music, engineering, humanities,

Johns Hopkins University Facebook Page

classes has a Group, as do the JHU Band and a number of other student organizations. These Groups are open only to the members of the class or the organization, and all members may share information within the group.

## Where it is going

Although technology pundits have been predicting for several years that Facebook's popularity has peaked and will begin waning, particularly among the cohort for whom it was created (college-age students), the evidence suggests otherwise. Faculty and staff are finding that creating Facebook Pages for programs, majors and minors, and departments is a great way to connect and communicate with students through a medium they are already using. Facebook Groups with access limited to students in the course are another way to facilitate collaboration communication in a class.

## How to get started

<http://www.facebook.com>

Fill out the information under Sign Up. You will be asked to provide your name, date of birth, a valid email address, and to state whether you are male or female.

## Additional Resources

- Facebook's Help Center, found under **Account** → **Help Center**, has very good instructions on all aspects of Facebook use, applications and features.
- Keeping your information secure and sharing only with Friends is a concern for most Facebook users. Check **Account** → **Help Center** → **Security** → **Protecting Account Security** for information on Editing Your Privacy Settings to keep your information between you and your friends.
- You can make use of Friend Lists to determine which of your contacts can view pictures, posts, and other information. In the Help Center, do a search for "lists" to get instructions on how to do this.

## Author's Background

### Macie Hall

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Virginia (Macie) Hall has provided instructional technology support to faculty since 1987, first as Curator of the JHU History of Art Visual Resources Collection, then as a Senior Information Technology Specialist in the Krieger School of Arts and Sciences, and more recently as a Senior Instructional Designer in the Center for Educational Resources (CER). Macie investigates the application and implementation of technology to the faculty scholarly and pedagogical issues in a wide variety of academic disciplines. She is interested in visual literacy, effective presentation techniques, and Web 2.0 technologies. ([vhall2@jhu.edu](mailto:vhall2@jhu.edu))