

Cyber-Stalking Among UW-Whitewater Students



Kate Vance and Kate Ksobiech, Ph.D.
 University of Wisconsin – Whitewater
 Department of Communication



Introduction

Summer, 2014: Focus groups conducted to determine the perception, impact and frequency of cyber-stalking among UW-Whitewater students.

Spring, 2015: Students surveyed on participant awareness/knowledge of cyber-stalking as well as attitudes and personal involvement in cyber-stalking.

Gender:

Male: 48.5% Female: 45.4%

Year in school:

Freshman: 8.7% Sophomore: 44.4%
 Junior: 26% Senior: 14.8%

Primary reasons students use social media:

To stay connected: 85.2%

Entertainment: 84.7%

Ease of accessing information about others:

Facebook: 64.8% Twitter: 44.9%

Instagram: 41.3% Snapchat: 39.8%

Cyber-stalking experiences UWW students:

33.2% report having been stalked in the past

16.8% report having stalked someone in the past

Social media sites and cyberstalking:

Facebook: enables- 54.1%

Twitter: enables- 37.2%

Instagram: enables-37.7%

Snapchat: enables- 26%

Precautions taken by UWW students:

Use blocking feature: 83.2%

Keep accounts private: 80.6%

Are sensitive to material/ pictures you post: 88.3

Limit personal info you post: 86.2

UW-W student cyber-stalking definitions:

Going out of your way to follow other: 61.8%

Any unwanted repeated contact: 68.9%

Unhealthy fascination that does not end when you log off: 67.9%

Being obsessed with someone and attempting to find them in real life: 68.9%

Cyber-stalking vs. “creeping”:

“Creeping” and cyber-stalking are interchangeable: 21.5%

“Creeping” is harmless and only online: 54.6%

Cyber-stalking is malicious and continues after logging off: 79.1%

Conclusions:

UW-Whitewater students experience and partake in cyber-stalking.

Education on what actions constitute as cyber-stalking and how to safeguard against it would be beneficial.

