

From: mvoltz@asu.edu
To: Andrew.f.mara@asu.edu
CC: bdangelo@asu.edu
Subject: Ning Engagement

Dr. Mara,

I wanted to contact you after joining the ASU TCP Ning site. After joining the community on Ning, I was quite surprised and grateful to find a new source to engage with current and former students of the TWC program. As a non-resident student, I had been craving more access to virtual gatherings and community forums that could assist me with networking and creating a professional support system.

A feature that might encourage more engagement would be a calendar section on the site where forum leaders or all forum members could post virtual or physical gatherings related to the TWC field. This feature could allow easy access to Zoom meetups or guest lectures that students could engage with and gain the opportunity to network.

Another feature that could be added to the site is a "Current Projects" section where currently enrolled students can engage with each other with questions or suggestions on developing concepts or projects for their classes. This feature could allow students to use Ning similarly to how they use the Eli Review experience but opens the arena for feedback to a wider audience with varying levels of understanding within the TWC field. This feature could be as simple as a discussion format where students explain their attempts, and others help them develop ideas. Alternatively, it could be more like Eli Review, where students can upload content that needs critiquing. This could also be useful to students who are looking for more critical feedback on a project and need direction for improvements. Since Ning is already monitored for appropriate content, the feature should not require too many more resources. If the feature becomes popular, a student could be assigned to monitor the discussions for explicit or implicit plagiarized content.

There is a tremendous opportunity to assist students in their development with the Ning site. I appreciate the opportunity to be a part of this community and create my network with academic and professional ties. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Regards,
Melissa Voltz
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6 April 2022

Ms. Angela Harleaux, President
Society for Technical Communication Arizona Chapter
123 STC Road
Phoenix, AZ 85202

Dear Ms. Harleaux,

While researching an assignment with my technical communications master's program, I started engaging in the technical communications community in Arizona. I have joined the ASU Technical Communication Program community on the social media site Ning, and I am grateful for the engagement and community that has developed there.

If you are unfamiliar with the Ning website, it is easy to navigate. It provides a place to showcase capstone projects, browse internship opportunities, and contact any members who have joined the community. I feel there is an opportunity to develop the Ning site and incorporate the ASU technical communications community with the STC Arizona chapter. A few edits to the Ning site could assist ASU and the STC in forming a mutually beneficial network. The goal for the suggestions on the Ning site is to expand the technical communications network in Arizona.

The Ning website currently has a space for internship and job opportunities. However, by having STC members join the Ning website, the network could expand before technical communications students graduate and become a part of the professional community. If STC members were active on the Ning site, their activity would allow for updates on job/internship opportunities as they would be aware of opportunities arising in their current companies and ultimately directly affect the caliber of professionals that would be entering the field.

I want to suggest a space be created for "Current Projects" on the Ning site in which students could present their current concepts and projects (depending on the stage of development) and request feedback, critiques, and suggestions on development. This space could be exponentially more beneficial with STC members engaging on the site and adding their professional perspective to the feedback. With professional input on academic projects, technical communications students can enter the workforce with a clear understanding and practical knowledge of what the field expects of them.

By adding the "Current Projects" space and having STC members engage within that space, there will also be a direct effect on students' understanding of the importance of the STC, its purpose, and its benefits which will increase memberships. This collaboration between the ASU community and the STC will expand the perspective and knowledge of both communities and ultimately create a professional support network.

Another feature I would like to see on the Ning website is a calendar that displays all virtual and physical gatherings and lectures. This could be an easy way to create face-to-face opportunities

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between students and professionals. This could be an opportunity for the STC to have informal recruiting events to increase membership and create a sustainable network.

I truly appreciate your time and consideration. I hope to see more activity with the STC on the Ning site. I look forward to more community engagement and opportunities we can share. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Regards,
Melissa Voltz

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