

**ABSTRACT**

**DISSERTATION:** Seeking Student Voices in Collaborative Spaces: A Case Study of Basic Writers Interacting in Blackboard, Facebook, and the Classroom

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This dissertation addresses three distinct spaces where interaction occurs between students and teachers engaged in the first year writing program at Ball State University: a face-to-face classroom, the Blackboard Course Management System (CMS), and Facebook. While the latter two of these spaces are online, they are vastly different from one another in functionality and usage. For this study, data was collected through surveys, interviews, and by observing students and teachers in face-to-face classrooms and online in Blackboard and Facebook. The results revealed students and teachers felt a distinct separation between Blackboard and Facebook – Blackboard is Academic and Facebook is Social. However, over the course of the two semesters there was a mixture of the Academic within the Social: Facebook was slightly used for academic purposes and Blackboard for social purposes. The findings suggest more research is needed to better understand how students and teachers are using online spaces to supplement their face-to-face classrooms and vice versa. Students are willing to use online spaces required by the instructor as well as their own social spaces to learn, but as digital technologies increase in usage within Composition classrooms, a better understanding of how these spaces impact one another and the students who use them can offer insight into creating a better knowledge-making environment.