

## FACEBOOK USE IN MAINTAINING CLOSE FRIENDSHIPS AND ACQUAINTANCES

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*Social media has become ubiquitous in American life. The purpose of the present study was to understand the extent to which college student relationships can be maintained using social media, as well as how close and casual friendships may differ in online maintenance strategies. A sample of 232 college student participants between the ages of 18 – 26 thought about four different types of relationships (on/off-campus and acquaintances/close friendships) in an online survey. Students were asked to think about each type of relationship and then answer a series of questions based on relationship maintenance behaviors. We used independent samples t-tests in order to assess differences within each of the four types of friendship types. The results suggested that the five relationship maintenance tasks (positivity, openness, assurances, social networks, shared tasks) were used significantly more often to maintain on- and off-campus relationships with acquaintances. Participants also reported using significantly more relational maintenance strategies with off-campus close friends and with off-campus acquaintances as compared to on-campus close friends or on-campus acquaintances. The findings suggest that Facebook can benefit college students' acquaintance friend networks and those relationships with off-campus friends. Implications are discussed.*