

Academic Twitter: Information & Resources to Get You Started

Why Use Twitter?

Liz Covart. "How to Use Twitter Part 2: 5 Reasons Why You Should Use Twitter."

<http://www.elizabethcovart.com/how-to-twitter-part-2/>

Stewart, Bonnie. "In Abundance: Networked Participatory Practices As Scholarship". ProfHacker. *The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning* 16.3 (2015): Web. 23 Aug. 2016. <http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/2158/3343>

Ryan Cordell. "How to Start Tweeting (And Why You Might Want To)." ProfHacker. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. 11 Aug 2010. Blog. <http://chronicle.com/blogs/profhacker/how-to-start-tweeting-and-why-you-might-want-to/26065>

Mark Reed and Ana Attlee. "Top Twitter Tips for Research Impact." *Project Maya*. Blog. <http://www.mayaproject.org/blog/2015/10/4/top-twitter-tips-for-academics>

Using Twitter as an Academic

Now that you've decided you want to try Twitter, how do you get started? How do you be an academic on Twitter? Twitter, like the rest of social media, is organic and learning to use it is an experiment. Since there is no one way to use social media, we've compiled some great blog posts and articles of how other academics are using Twitter.

Liz Covart and Joseph Adelman. "Perfectly Practical Tips for Using Twitter." *Elizabeth M. Covart: Historian of Early America*. Blog. <http://www.elizabethcovart.com/perfectly-practical-tips-for-using-twitter/>

If you're completely new to Twitter, or want a refresher on the basics, this is the place to start. Covart and Adelman provide an explanation of how Twitter works and how to create a Tweet. Follow Covart on twitter @lizcovart.

Liz Covart. "How to Twitter." *Elizabeth M. Covart: Historian of Early America*. Blog. <http://www.elizabethcovart.com/how-to-twitter/>

Author Liz Covart explains how she understands and uses Twitter as an academic in this three-part blog series. Follow Covart on Twitter @lizcovart.

Part One: 4 Myths and Realities addresses some common misconceptions of Twitter.

Part Two: 5 Reasons Why You Should Use Twitter discusses the advantages to Twitter: network with link-minded people, use it as a research tool, find up-to-date knowledge, enhance your conference or virtual experience, and "sell" your publications and ideas.

Part Three: 5 Points to Consider Before Creating Your Twitter Identity poses five questions you will want to reflect on before embarking on your Twitter adventure. Why do you want to Tweet? What do

you want your Twitter persona to be? What are your boundaries? What will your handle be? And will you adhere to good Twitter etiquette practices?

Andrea Eidinger. "The Canadian Historian's Guide to Twitter." *Unwritten Histories: The Unwritten Rules of History*. 19 July 2016. Blog. http://www.unwrittenhistories.com/the-canadian-historians-guide-to-twitter/?utm_content=bufferfb062&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer

Eidinger assumes you have a Twitter account and are familiar with how the platform works. This article gives a good overview of what hashtags are and how to use them and provides a list of hashtags specific to Canadian history. She also covers creating and using lists and how to follow people and build your network.

Josephine Scoble. "Twitter for Academics: A Five Part Guide to Using Twitter as an Academic." *The Online Academic*. Blog. <https://onlineacademic.wordpress.com/social-media-for-academics/twitter-for-academics/>

The author is an academic and an early adopter of Twitter. Her brief five-part series is well worth the read, and you can follow her on Twitter @online_academic.

Part One covers the "Nuts & Bolts" of Twitter: an introduction to the lingo and some useful hashtags.

Part Two discusses the advantages to academic tweeting and using your Twitter account as a "talking business card." It includes tips on choosing your profile photo, picking a Twitter handle, and writing your Twitter bio.

Part Three explains how to write a good tweet and how to use Twitter lists to manage your follows.

Part Four is Scoble's twelve rules of tweeting. These tips will help you get started as you find your way Twitter.

Part Five discusses how to grow your network: finding and following people, using conference hashtags, and useful apps.

Natalie Houston. "From the Archives: Using Twitter." ProfHacker. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. 24 Feb 2014. Blog. <http://chronicle.com/blogs/profhacker/from-the-archives-using-twitter/55775>

Find links to articles about hashtags, Twitter lists, archiving Tweets, integrating Tweets into WordPress blogs, teaching with Twitter, and integrating Twitter into your conference experience.

There are lots of academics using Twitter to network with other academics and share their research with the public. We've compiled a list of those that have caught our eye at <https://twitter.com/InnesAlison/lists/good-academic-twitter>. You can follow them individually or subscribe to the list.

Hashtags

Hashtags allow users to search a series of tweets and follow a conversation without following everyone individually. There are hundreds of thousands of hashtags, but here are a few to get you started. Follow people in your field and watch for what hashtags they use. Using field-specific hashtags will let you join the wider conversation and help you build your network.

Hashtag	How It's Used
#academic	for anything academic
#academiclife	general tag for sharing the ups and downs of academic life
#acwri	academic writing (sharing writing progress and motivation)
#altac	alternative academic (use of graduate degrees outside of traditional academic roles; transitioning from academic to non-academic careers)
#amwriting	sharing the joys and agonies of writing
#brocku	tag #brocku to get picked up and RTed by other Brock people
#Cdnpsc	Canadian post-secondary education
#ecr	early career research/er
#ff	follow Friday (use to recommend other accounts your followers might like)
#highered	higher education
#PhDadvice	discussing PhD life
#postac	post-academic (similar to #altac; transitioning from academic to non-academic work)
#PostDoc	post-doc
#pse	post-secondary education
#scholarsunday	a #ff but for academics. Recommend an academic to follow on Twitter and share why. Started by @raulpacheco
#tbt	throwback Thursday—use to post pictures from the past
#twitterstorians	historians on Twitter

We also encourage the use of program-specific hashtags to promote discussion. You may also want to use course-specific hashtags and hashtags for specific events.

Remember reciprocity is key! Engage with other users under the hashtags you are using. Responding to and retweeting other people's tweets will encourage them to do the same for you.

Tips on Using Hashtags

- Don't use spaces or punctuation in your hashtag.
- Use capitalization where necessary to help the reader understand the hashtag. Eg. #brocku and #BrockU are both easy to read, but #NewBrockBadger is much easier to read than #newbrockbadger. Capitalization does not affect how the hashtag works, as Twitter does not distinguish between cases in search.
- Use hashtags sparingly! Best practice is to use just one or two hashtags per Tweet. Having too many hashtags obscures your message.
- Only use hashtags relevant to what you're Tweeting.
- Keep your hashtags short—you only have 140 characters!
- Clicking on a hashtag in a Tweet or searching for a hashtag shows all Tweets using that hashtag.
- When choosing a hashtag, do a quick search to see if that hashtag is being used for something else. You need something unique so that followers don't become confused and conversations don't become muddled.

- If you're creating a new hashtag, do a quick Twitter search first to make sure it's not already in use for something else.
- When using hashtags for a course or conference, make sure everyone knows what hashtag(s) to use! For example, if you're live-tweeting CLAS1P95 with the hashtag #1P95, Tweets using #CLAS1P95 won't be a part of that conversation.

Further Resources

Twitter. "Using Hashtags on Twitter." Help Centre. *Twitter*. <https://support.twitter.com/articles/49309>

Deanna Zaucha. "5 Golden Rules of Hashtag Etiquette." *Pagemodo*. 22 July 2014. Blog. <http://www.pagemodo.com/blog/5-golden-rules-hashtag-etiquette/>

Erica Clement-Goudy. "The 5 Most Common Hashtag Mistakes and How to Avoid Them." *Honeypot Marketing*. 5 April 2013. Blog. <http://honeypotmarketing.com/twitter-hashtag-tactics/>

Erin E. Templeton. "Choosing #Hashtags." ProfHacker. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. 24 June 2013. Blog. <http://chronicle.com/blogs/profhacker/choosing-hashtags/50229>

Twitter Chats

A Twitter chat (or tweet chat) is, simply, a group of users coming together and a determined time to discuss a particular topic. A host (moderator) will pose questions numbered Q1, Q2, etc, with the Twitter chat's hashtag. Participants respond to each question A1, A2, etc, also including the hashtag. Follow the hashtag to see what other people are saying and engage directly with other users. Using an app like Hootsuite or Tweetdeck makes following along even easier.

Twitter chats are valuable opportunities to network with people sharing similar interests. If you're new to Twitter chats, you may find following along silently once or twice will increase your confidence and comfort levels.

There are lots of Twitter chats, and most happen on a fairly regular basis. Here are a few that caught our eye:

#PhDChat—created by @NSRiazat; Wednesdays 7.30-8.30 GMT <https://thesiswhisperer.com/join-the-thesis-whisperer-on-phdchat/>

#museumhour—managed by @ITweetMuseums; guest hosts; Mondays 3pm EST

#withaPhD—twice monthly chat with @FromPhDtoLife for grad students and academics; see <http://withaphd.com> for schedule and topics

Further Resources

Matt Diederichs. "How to Run a Twitter Chat: The Complete Guide" Sept 8, 2016. <https://blog.hootsuite.com/a-step-by-step-guide-to-twitter-chats/>

Nicole Miller. "Twitter Chats 101: A Step-by-Step Guide to Hosting or Joining a Twitter Chat" Aug 20, 2014. <https://blog.bufferapp.com/twitter-chat-101>

Ro-Cur Accounts

Following a rotating curator account (abbreviated rocur) is an easy way to discover new people and new subjects. The account organizer selects a new host each week; the hosts prepare discussion topics for each day and engage with the account's followers. Hosting a rocur account gives you access to a new and larger audience. Rocur seems to be more popular in the sciences, but accounts such as @realscientist are good models to follow and @wethehums has potential for humanities scholars. You can also find rocur accounts on many topics and themes with the hashtag #rocur.

Matthew Partridge. "Why You Should Follow RoCur Accounts." *Errant Science*.

<http://errantscience.com/blog/2015/03/11/why-you-should-follow-rocur-accounts/>

Although written for a science-based audience, Partridge's argument applies equally to the humanities!

Going Further...

Teaching with Twitter

Mark Sample. "A Framework for Teaching with Twitter." ProfHacker. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. 16 Aug 2010. Blog. <http://chronicle.com/blogs/profhacker/a-framework-for-teaching-with-twitter/26223>

Twitter for Talks and Conferences

Adeline Koh. "Open-Thread Wednesday: Best Practices for Live-Tweeting at Conferences?" ProfHacker. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. 3 Oct 2012. Blog. <http://chronicle.com/blogs/profhacker/open-thread-wednesday-best-practices-for-live-tweeting-at-conferences/43106>

Anastasia Salter. "Presenting for Twitter at Conferences." ProfHacker. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. 8 Oct 2012. Blog. <http://chronicle.com/blogs/profhacker/presenting-for-twitter-at-conferences/43176>

Derek Bruff. "Encouraging a Conference Backchannel on Twitter." ProfHacker. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. 10 Feb 2011. Blog. <http://chronicle.com/blogs/profhacker/encouraging-a-conference-backchannel-on-twitter/30612>

Erin E. Templeton. "Choosing #Hashtags." ProfHacker. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. 24 June 2013. Blog. <http://chronicle.com/blogs/profhacker/choosing-hashtags/50229>