# ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION
## SECTION II
### Total time—2 hours

### Question 1

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts for one-third of the total essay section score.)

Social networking has become a major resource for individuals who want instant connections with others, both friends and strangers alike. The popularity of social networking Web sites has encouraged people to share even some of their most private print and visual information in a very public way, to the degree that many businesses and colleges are now making use of social networking sites to look deeper into their applicant pools to determine who will be hired or who will be admitted.

Carefully read the following eight sources, including the introductory information for each source. Then synthesize information from at least three of the sources and incorporate it into a coherent, well-organized essay that develops a position on the claim that checking social networking profiles is an acceptable practice for potential employers or college admissions officers.

Make sure your argument is central; use the sources to illustrate and support your reasoning. Avoid merely summarizing the sources. Indicate clearly which sources you are drawing from, whether through direct quotation, paraphrase, or summary. You may cite the sources as Source A, Source B, etc., or by using the descriptions in parentheses.

Source A  (Cartwright)
Source B  (NACAC)
Source C  (Schiffman)
Source D  (graph)
Source E  (Jolly)
Source F  (boyd)
Source G  (Lee)
Source H  (Jones et al.)

**GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.**

*The following is excerpted from an article written by a teenager for an organization that seeks new voices in journalism.*

College Application? Check. ACT score? Check. College essay? Check. Recommendations? Check. Facebook page? Check?

It's college application time and as seniors put their final touches on their applications, a new report is showing that they may have one more thing to worry about—their social networking pages.

In September, Kaplan, a company offering ACT and SAT test preparation, released a survey that showed one in 10 admissions counselors at the country's top 500 colleges were using social networking sites, such as Facebook or MySpace, as part of the admissions process.

Marlyn McGrath, director of admissions at Harvard College, said admissions counselors at her college don't check social networking sites on a regular basis, but if they note anything in a student's application that raises a possible red flag, they will. "If students make it public it's public information," she said.

McGrath said because the Ivy League school receives so many applications—27,462 last year at Harvard—the demand for all information available pushes the university to turn to social networking sites.

McGrath said admissions counselors who are checking social networking sites are mostly looking for content that people would find objectionable like racist comments, or would raise concerns about the student. . . .

She also said students who post self-incriminating information online show a lack of common sense. . . .

According to the Kaplan report, the social networking sites had a positive impact 25 percent of the time on admission, while 38 percent of the time it had a negative effect. Many students feel checking social networking profiles is wrong for colleges to do.

Used by permission of ThreeSixty Journalism-University of St. Thomas.

**GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.**

*The following is excerpted from a press release published online by the National Association for College Admission Counseling.*

College admission offices may take a student's MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, or other online social networking activity into account during the college admission process, according to a paper released (members only) by the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC). One-fourth of colleges surveyed indicated that they used Web search or social networking technology to locate information about prospective students. The paper suggests that colleges are also more likely than not to use social media in promotion and student recruitment.

"Social media tools, like Facebook, Twitter and blogs, are key to communicating with this generation of students," stated Joyce Smith, NACAC CEO. "While still no substitute for face-to-face interaction, social media have opened lines of communication and inquiry for both students and institutions that were inconceivable only a decade ago."

Other findings of note include:

- More than half (53 percent) of colleges monitor social media for "buzz" about their institution.
- A majority of colleges maintain a presence in social media, as 33 percent of colleges maintain a blog, 29 maintain a presence on social networking Web sites, 27 percent maintain message- or bulletin-boards, 19 percent employ video blogging, and 14 percent issue podcasts. Thirty-nine percent of colleges reported using no social media technology.
- Eighty-eight percent of admission offices believed social media were either "somewhat" or "very" important to their future recruitment efforts.

The purpose of NACAC's research on social networking sites was to 1) present recent data collected by the author on the extent to which colleges and universities are using social media for recruitment; 2) highlight best practices for blogging and the use of other social media and Web 2.0 applications for those institutions who are new to these endeavors; and 3) begin to explore the ethical and legal issues inherent in engaging with prospective students through these media.

**GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.**

*The following is excerpted from an article in an online newspaper.*

Why did a recent Facebook virus requiring users to join a group (and, in doing so, contract a spamming bug) have such devastating success? The promise to reveal "the status update that got a highschool [sic] student REJECTED from Harvard!" must have struck a chord. Though the page was a hoax, the response it earned reflects a growing apprehension about the increasing significance of social media in the college application and decision-making process.

Establishing a presence on Facebook is a smart recruitment move for colleges, since the site's 350 million members, many of whom are in their target audience, spend a collective 10 billion minutes there daily, the New York Times reports. Schools like Tufts University, which first garnered attention for its forward-thinking admissions essay option allowing students to submit a one-minute YouTube video with their application, have developed social media-based marketing strategies to capitalize on the unprecedented direct access to high school students in their natural environment.

"I think one of the mistakes a lot of universities make is not having a very clear mission for what they're trying to do with social media," says Daniel Grayson, Assistant Director of Undergraduate Admissions at Tufts. "Our goal is to create a place for dialogue between admitted students and current students, and then get out of the way."

For prospective students, Facebook provides opportunities to both complicate and improve the application and decision process. For a hopeful high school senior with questionable content on their online profiles, there's a new risk: a Kaplan survey of 320 admissions officers from the top 500 schools found that one in ten visited applicants' social networking profiles during their decision-making process. Of those visiting student pages, 38 percent reported that what they saw generally had a negative impact on their admissions evaluation (compared to one quarter of respondents who said these background checks improved their opinion of most applicants). One admissions officer admitted to Kaplan that a status update expressing disinterest in the school contributed to his decision to reject the student.

Online background checks aren't limited to admissions decisions. According to a report released April 29 by the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC), 26 percent of colleges use web searches to scrutinize candidates for special programs or scholarships. "In all these cases, the intent was to protect the school from potential embarrassment," the report says.
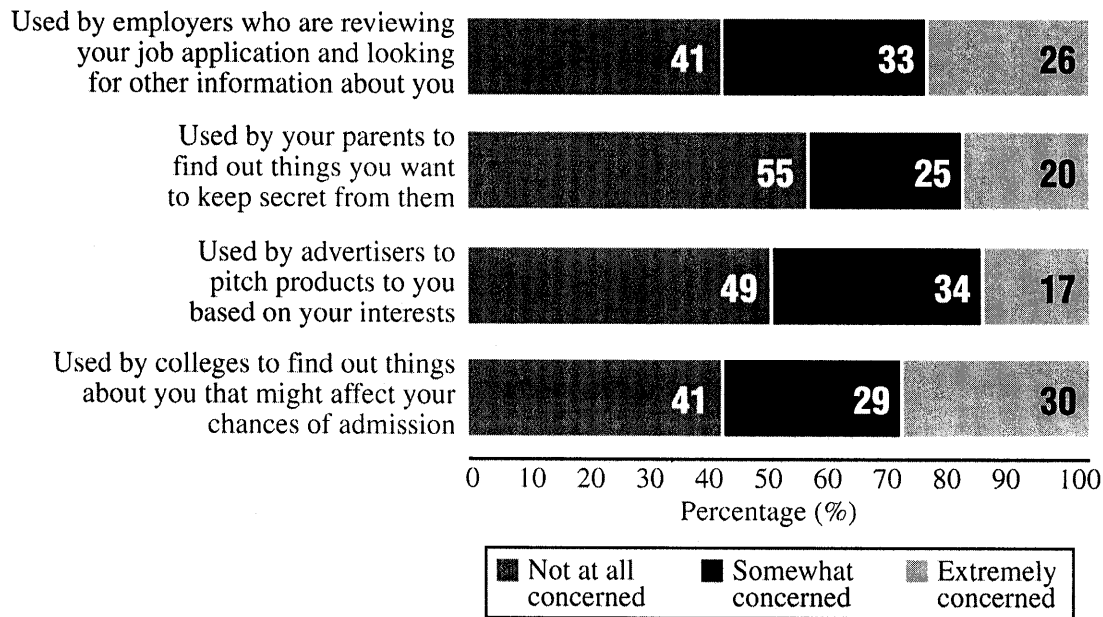
*The following graph is from a national survey of 34,000 high school seniors who registered for the SAT.*

LEVEL OF CONCERN ABOUT POSSIBLE USES OF
PRIVATE INFORMATION ON SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE

| | Not at all concerned | Somewhat concerned | Extremely concerned |
|---|---|---|---|
| Used by employers who are reviewing your job application and looking for other information about you | 41 | 33 | 26 |
| Used by your parents to find out things you want to keep secret from them | 55 | 25 | 20 |
| Used by advertisers to pitch products to you based on your interests | 49 | 34 | 17 |
| Used by colleges to find out things about you that might affect your chances of admission | 41 | 29 | 30 |

Percentage (%) — 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

Legend: Not at all concerned · Somewhat concerned · Extremely concerned

**GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.**

*The following is excerpted from an online article published by a national newspaper.*

As part of the draft of a law governing workplace privacy, the German government on Wednesday proposed placing restrictions on employers who want to use Facebook profiles when recruiting.

The bill would allow managers to search for publicly accessible information about prospective employees on the Web and to view their pages on job networking sites, like LinkedIn or Xing. But it would draw the line at purely social networking sites like Facebook, said Philipp Spauschus, a spokesman for the Interior Minister, Thomas de Maizière.

Chancellor Angela Merkel's cabinet on Wednesday gave its backing to the proposed law. The bill will now go to Parliament for discussion, and could be passed as early as this year, Mr. Spauschus said.

The law also would prohibit companies from secretly videotaping employees, though they could still videotape in certain areas as long as they disclosed the fact. It would also allow employers to hold secret investigations when they suspected a crime had been committed.

Germany's Nazi-era history has made the country extremely cautious on matters of individual privacy. Concerns have been heightened in recent years by scandals involving companies' secret videotaping of employees, as well as intercepting their e-mail and bank data. The explosion of Web-based information tools has added to the unease.

The German authorities are investigating Google for having collected private Internet information while doing research for its Street View mapping service, and they have asked Apple to explain its data-collection policies for the iPhone.

Facebook, which says it has more than 500 million users worldwide, with about 10 million in Germany, has come under fire for what some consider privacy shortcomings, as when the site changed its default settings to reveal more of individuals' personal data. The German proposal, however, is aimed squarely at employers.

Peter Schaar, the German commissioner for data protection and freedom of information, told The Associated Press that the proposal was "a substantial improvement on the status quo in dealing with employees' data."

There are currently no rules governing how companies use Facebook data, Mr. Spauschus said. The proposal is meant to create guidelines for the courts in handling the cases that will inevitably arise as social networking penetrates further into everyday life, he said, and companies would also benefit from clear rules.

Sarah Roy, a spokeswoman in Paris for Facebook, said the company generally did not comment on legislation as a matter of policy. But she said that the Web site's privacy settings allowed users to share information as broadly or as narrowly as they liked, either with entire networks or with a limited number of participants.

**GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.**

*The following is excerpted from a Weblog published by a social media researcher.*

If you were to walk into my office, I'd have a pretty decent sense of your gender, your age, your race, and other identity markers. My knowledge wouldn't be perfect, but it would give me plenty of information that I could use to discriminate against you if I felt like it. The law doesn't prohibit me for "collecting" this information in a job interview nor does it say that discrimination is acceptable if you "shared" this information with me. That's good news given that faking what's written on your body is bloody hard. What the law does is regulate how this information can be used by me, the theoretical employer. This doesn't put an end to all discrimination – plenty of people are discriminated against based on what's written on their bodies – but it does provide you with legal rights if you think you were discriminated against and it forces the employer to think twice about hiring practices.

The Internet has made it possible for you to create digital bodies that reflect a whole lot more than your demographics. Your online profiles convey a lot about you, but that content is produced in a context. And, more often than not, that context has nothing to do with employment. This creates an interesting conundrum. Should employers have the right to discriminate against you because of your Facebook profile? One might argue that they should because such a profile reflects your "character" or your priorities or your public presence. Personally, I think that's just code for discriminating against you because you're not like me, the theoretical employer.

Of course, it's a tough call. Hiring is hard. We're always looking for better ways to judge someone and goddess knows that an interview plus resume is rarely the best way to assess whether or not there's a "good fit." It's far too tempting to jump on the Internet and try to figure out who someone is based on what we can dredge up online. This might be reasonable if only we were reasonable judges of people's signaling or remotely good at assessing them in context. Cuz it's a whole lot harder to assess someone's professional sensibilities by their social activities if they come from a world different than our own.

Given this, I was fascinated to learn that the German government is proposing legislation that would put restrictions on what Internet content employers could use when recruiting.

A decade ago, all of our legal approaches to the Internet focused on what data online companies could collect. This makes sense if you think of the Internet as a broadcast medium. But then along came the mainstreamification of social media and user-generated content. People are sharing content left right and center as part of their daily sociable practices. They're sharing as if the Internet is a social place, not a professional place. More accurately, they're sharing in a setting where there's no clear delineation of social and professional spheres. Since social media became popular, folks have continuously talked about how we need to teach people to not share what might cause them professional consternation. Those warnings haven't worked. And for good reason. What's professionally questionable to one may be perfectly appropriate to another. Or the social gain one sees might outweigh the professional risks. Or, more simply, people may just be naive.

**GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.**

*The following is excerpted from an article in an online magazine.*

Obviously, employers should not use information obtained from Facebook, blogs, or other Internet sites in ways that would be intrinsically unethical or illegal. But there are lots of situations in which such sites could be used legitimately in hiring decisions, and there's absolutely no reason employers shouldn't check them as a normal part of the hiring process.

Employees in sales, public relations, and customer service function as representatives for the companies they work for, so employers have a legitimate interest in ensuring potential workers won't embarrass the company.

More important, a job applicant's well-crafted online persona can serve as an asset, acting as a kind of extended résumé. In many white-collar occupations, a candidate can use his Web presence to demonstrate passion and depth of knowledge for his or her area of expertise. When hiring a writer, for example, I'd be more likely to choose one who had a blog (assuming it was well-written) than one who did not, even if I disagreed with some of the views it contained.

Similarly, a programmer, for example, can enhance his application by keeping a blog that demonstrates his contributions to open-source projects, handiness with gadgets, or knowledge of the technology industry. Ultimately, developing an appealing Web presence is a part of portraying oneself in an attractive manner—no different from wearing a freshly pressed suit and proofreading your résumé.

Of course, in most cases, employers won't find out anything at all about a job candidate. And when they do find information, they should keep in mind that some of it might be inaccurate or give an incomplete picture.

But the bottom line is that a public Facebook page is just that: public. People are responsible for what they post. It's unreasonable to make personal information available to the whole world and not expect employers to look at it.

Facebook gives users the option of keeping their profiles private, and so does blogging software such as LiveJournal. Users should take advantage of these options for information they don't want considered by potential employers. But if applicants choose to make information about themselves available to the world, they can hardly object when employers take that information into account in hiring decisions.

Jones, Michael, Adam Schuckman, and Kelly Watson.
"The Ethics of Pre-Employment Screening Through
the Use of the Internet." *The Ethical Imperative in the
Context of Evolving Technologies.* Boulder: Ethica
Publishing, n.d. Web. 27 Oct. 2010.

*The following is excerpted from a chapter of an online book.*

Another increasingly used practice for employment prescreening is to "Google" applicants. . . .

Over half of the applicants found on search engines and nearly two-thirds of the applicants found on social networking sites were not hired as a result of the information found on sites, such as Facebook.com, MySpace.com, and Google.com. Among other concerns, these sites are not necessarily valid nor is there any way to ascertain the true identity of the person responsible for the information found. Unlike the interview process, there is no personal connection when sifting through information found on the internet and therefore there is a greater likelihood for the information to be taken out of context or misused. In many cases, the information used to determine the suitability of a prospective employee had little or no bearing on their ability to adequately complete the work. In fact, 8% of the potential employees that were rejected as a result of information found on search engines and networking sites were rejected because their screen name was unprofessional. As information on the internet is generally considered public, permission for these searches is not required and the information found need not be disclosed. As a result, unverified information can sway a future employer's decision without any input from the employee in question. . . .

The ethical dilemma that arises as a result of these searches is one of fairness. According to the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics, the fairness and justice approach to ethics stems from "Aristotle and other Greek philosophers [who] have contributed the idea that all equals should be treated equally." This approach states that "ethical actions treat all human beings equally—or if unequally, then fairly based on some standard that is defensible." People generally assume that they have a certain degree of informational privacy, yet the information accessed on the internet is not restricted in a way that would protect this sense of privacy. While rules exist to prevent employers from asking questions about belief systems or disabilities of their prospective employees, these rules fail to prevent the same information from being divulged through internet searches. These laws are intended to prevent discrimination on the basis of information irrelevant to the job. By circumventing these laws, the information used to make hiring decisions may unfairly discriminate against people with certain beliefs or backgrounds. The lack of these laws in regards to their application to the information found on the internet may lead to discrimination, whether done on a conscious or unconscious level.

**GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.**

# AP® ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION
## 2014 SCORING GUIDELINES

### Question 1

**General Directions:** This scoring guide will be useful for most of the essays you read. If it seems inappropriate for a specific paper, ask your Table Leader for assistance. Always show your Table Leader books that seem to have no response or that contain responses that seem unrelated to the question. Do not assign a score of 0 or — without this consultation.

Your score should reflect your judgment of the paper's quality as a whole. Remember that students had only 15 minutes to read the sources and 40 minutes to write; the paper, therefore, is not a finished product and should not be judged by standards appropriate for an out-of-class assignment. Evaluate the paper as a draft, making certain to reward students for what they do well.

All essays, even those scored 8 or 9, may contain occasional lapses in analysis, prose style, or mechanics. Such features should enter into your holistic evaluation of a paper's overall quality. In no case should you score a paper with many distracting errors in grammar and mechanics higher than a 2.

---

**9** Essays earning a score of 9 meet the criteria for the score of 8 and, in addition, are especially sophisticated in their argument, thorough in development, or impressive in their control of language.

## 8 Effective
Essays earning a score of 8 **effectively** develop a position on the claim that checking social networking profiles is an acceptable practice for potential employers or college admissions officers. They develop their position by effectively synthesizing* at least three of the sources. The evidence and explanations used are appropriate and convincing. Their prose demonstrates a consistent ability to control a wide range of the elements of effective writing but is not necessarily flawless.

**7** Essays earning a score of 7 meet the criteria for the score of 6 but provide more complete explanation, more thorough development, or a more mature prose style.

## 6 Adequate
Essays earning a score of 6 **adequately** develop a position on the claim that checking social networking profiles is an acceptable practice for potential employers or college admissions officers. They develop their position by adequately synthesizing at least three of the sources. The evidence and explanations used are appropriate and sufficient. The language may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but generally the prose is clear.

**5** Essays earning a score of 5 develop a position on the claim that checking social networking profiles is an acceptable practice for potential employers or college admissions officers. They develop their position by synthesizing at least three sources, but how they use and explain sources is somewhat uneven, inconsistent, or limited. The writer's argument is generally clear, and the sources generally develop the writer's position, but the links between the sources and the argument may be strained. The writing may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but it usually conveys the writer's ideas.

---

\* For the purposes of scoring, *synthesis* means using sources to develop a position and citing them accurately.