



Student Online Learning and Community Conduct Guidelines

Online learning and teaching, often taking place within the comfort of one's home, can diminish or confuse professional guidelines for both instructors and students. Please review the following considerations to ensure respectful and productive "netiquette", which supports bountiful online learning and community.

Preparing for Online Learning

- Students are encouraged to prepare their personal appearance as they would when attending class in-person. That said, comfort is key!
- Arranging lighting in your space, or rotating the computer station to face lighting or a window, will help make you clearly visible to your instructor and peers during video calls.
- When your video is turned on during course sessions, the instructor and peers will be able to see the space around and behind you. Even if your learning space is located in private or personal space (ex. Bedroom, living room, kitchen, etc.), we recommend approaching your learning space as an "office" or professional space, wherever and however possible. To alleviate visual distractions, students should attempt to declutter and simplify the "background" area of their learning space.
- Check if there are noisy objects, materials, clothing, or accessories around your workstation or near your mic, or other disruptive or distracting sources of background noise in your home or immediate area.
- You may not be aware that elements of your at-home set-up may be disruptive, offensive, or in some way negatively impact the session. It is strongly recommended that students remove explicit or private decorations, objects, or paraphernalia from their camera's line of sight.

Video and Audio Etiquette

- Please mute your microphone as you enter the BlueJeans video call and keep it muted throughout the lecture, slideshow presentation, or demonstration. This prevents disruptive background noise. Your instructor, as the moderator of the BlueJeans call, may choose to mute all or select students.
- Communicating in a virtual classroom is an exercise in patience – it is important that everyone wait their turn to speak and avoid talking over each other. Interrupting can cause breaks in audio and/or rapid shifts between speakers when BlueJeans is in Speaker or People View Modes.
- If your video is turned on during lectures, slideshow presentations, or demonstrations, you may physically raise your hand to ask questions or make comments. Alternatively, you may ask questions or make comments using BlueJean's chat function. These approaches help prevent participants talking over each other.
- Speak clearly and steadily – this helps mitigate auditory information being lost due to delayed or unclear audio. Enunciation is key!

- You may feel compelled to raise your voice when speaking to your instructor or the group, however there is no need to speak any louder than one would when in-person. If the instructor or your peers are unable to hear you, they will communicate as such using the BlueJeans chat function.

How to Communicate Online/Online Communication Practice

- Read your written communications out-loud before sending, especially if chatting with your peers in a Moodle Forum or the BlueJeans chat function. Written text (in general, but especially in more casual virtual spaces) can be easily misinterpreted. Be aware of how written tone and symbols may come across; for example, sarcasm, rhetorical questions, exclamation points, or all-caps.
- Keep written communications, whether via email or chat, formal and professional. The occasional emoji for quick communication, emphasis or humour is acceptable, but try to maintain clear and correct grammar, spelling, and writing structures. For example, write emails with addresses and sign-offs (ex. Dear Instructor, Sincerely Your Student), and avoid text speak (ex. Brb, l8r, r u here).
- It is essential to cite your sources when sharing images, website pages, quotes, or other resources anywhere in Moodle or BlueJeans. Providing the URL is a good place to start.
- As participants in an online community, students must consider the digital and virtual safety, security, and privacy of their peers and instructors. With this in mind, students will not:
 - Download, transmit, post, publish or display any offensive, abusive, or illegal materials.
 - Knowingly upload any file that contains computer viruses, malware or other malicious codes or programs.
 - Record, “screen grab”, “screenshot”, or otherwise digitally capture course video sessions.

In-Session Community Conduct

- Be punctual, as you would be for in-person course sessions.
- When in a BlueJean’s breakout room for group discussion or activity, please participate in the breakout room activity throughout the timeframe provided rather than leaving the breakout room early.
- The security of one’s home can create a false sense of privacy; in general, keep in mind that you will be on camera at all times and everything you do is seen. With this in mind, it can be distracting and disruptive to vape, smoke, eat, text or go on your smartphone, hold side conversations with members of your household, and leave the computer during a session. Please wait until break time, as you would during regular in-person sessions.
- As in an in-person classroom, students should not “walk out of” the session for breaks without letting the instructor know. You may give the instructor a heads-up, via direct BlueJeans chat, when you are, for example, leaving to take a bathroom break and will be back in a moment. In addition, you may mute your video when you take a break.
- If a student is behaving disruptively or offensively, the instructor will likely attempt to contact the student using the BlueJeans direct message chat function to intervene and/or mute the individual student’s video and mic until a proper conversation can be had.

10 Core Netiquette Rules, excerpted from *Netiquette* by Virginia Shea

Rule 1: Remember the Human

- We all come with personalities. Remember there is a person behind the words. Ask for clarification before making judgement.
- Check your tone before you publish
- Respond to people using their names
- Again, culture and even gender can play a part in how people communicate
- Remain authentic and respect the same of others
- People participate in different ways – some just by reading the communication rather than jumping into it
- Avoid jokes and sarcasm – they often don't translate well to the online environment

Rule 2: Adhere to the same standards of behavior online that you follow in real life

- Demonstrate honesty and integrity
- Respect the differences in people, their ideas and opinions
- Treat one another with respect and dignity especially when there is disagreement
- Respect and treat others fairly
- Respect the rights of others
- Demonstrate respect for others especially those in positions of authority
- Respect the need of others to work in an environment that is conducive learning and teaching in an online setting
- Be courteous and polite at all times especially in electronic mail exchanges
- Respect the integrity of all online systems and networks
- Respect all copyright laws
- Respect the personal information and privacy of others
- Be active and engaged participants in the learning program
- Be accountable for off-school internet services which may have a negative impact on the school program, teachers or students
- Obey directions from teaching and administrative staff
- Complete all assignments and work in a timely and thorough manner

Rule 3: Know where you are in cyberspace

- What you say online is difficult to retract later – once in print. Be judicious
- Consider your responsibility to the group and to the learning environment
- If you are working collaboratively – agree on ground rules for text communication (formal or informal; seek clarification whenever needed, etc)

Rule 4: Respect other people's time and bandwidth

Rule 5: Make yourself look good online

Rule 6: Share expert knowledge

Rule 7: Help keep flame wars under control

- Accept and forgive mistakes
- Consider your responsibility to the group and to the learning environment
- Seek clarification before reacting
- Ask your instructor for guidance*

**** Sometimes, online behavior can appear so disrespectful and even hostile that it requires attention and follow up. In this case, let your instructor know right away so that the right resources can be called upon to help.***

Rule 8: Respect *other* people's privacy

- Always quote if you are responding to a specific point made by someone else
- Ask the author of an email before forwarding it

Rule 9: Don't abuse your power

Rule 10: Be forgiving of other people's mistakes

And a few more notes:

- **Be respectful.** While it is easier to say hurtful or disrespectful things without standing face-to-face with someone, it is important to remember that your classmates and teachers are real people who are affected by the words you say and write. It is essential to keep in mind the feelings and opinions of others, even if they differ from your own. ***If you wouldn't say it to someone's face, don't say it online either.***
- **Cite your sources.** Whenever you are sharing an idea that originated from someone else (even if it is not word for word), it is good practice to cite that source. This applies to discussion forums too. If you read a great thought in your text, share it, but be sure you let your audience know where you saw it first.
- **Don't post or share (even privately) inappropriate material.** Enough said there. Nothing is truly private online.
- **Be forgiving.** Remember that not everyone will know these rules before posting. Try to be understanding of others when they struggle with written communication. It is very different than simply talking to a person face-to-face.