

ENR 259 Spring 2017

Team Slack Account

Notify your coach of your team name and a “channel” will be assigned to your team.

It is recommended that you create your own slack team so that you can privately control channels, members etc however you should be including your coach as a member. In the meantime, the team *mcc-robotics* is used for general use and can be used if you prefer not to bother with creating a team.

Purpose

The purpose of a team Slack account is to allow for communication amongst team members. In addition to team members, coaches will be able to communicate and teams can communicate with other teams as well. Slack offers many benefits such as customizing when and what messages you are notified of including key words. Slack allows for uploading files and direct integration with Github, Google Drive and many other programs.

Setting up Slack

Slack can be used on many devices including any smartphone by downloading the app. Slack can also be used on OSX, Linux and Windows operating systems by visiting the team site.

No matter which method you choose to use, when registering you **must use your student email** as it is automatically set up to register accounts with the MCC domain.

Smartphone setup

To set up slack on a smartphone, download the app and when prompted for the team name enter the following team name.

mcc-robotics

Computer setup

To set up on a computer simply visit the following site to use the browser app.

<https://mcc-robotics.slack.com/signup>

As you will likely find out after visiting the site, there is also a computer application that can be downloaded. When you visit the site Slack will likely ask if you would like to download the app. The benefit of the app is that it is always running in the background and you don't need your browser open.

Slack Features

Teams

Each Slack team is private and has its own set of channels, all teams initially start out with a general channel and a random channel. You may still have private channels within that team to which only certain members can access. Slack understands that you may be part of many different teams so they provide a simple team sidebar where you can easily switch between different teams.

Channels

Channels are designed to provide an area to discuss a topic, you can subscribe to a channel if you would like to comment on that topic get notifications or leave a channel to not longer take part in that topic. If you simply don't want notifications you can turn them off for a channel but still stay subscribed

Private Channels

Channels can be made private and users must be invited to such channels. Your team will have a private channel for discussing topics amongst yourselves regarding topics you do not want/need others to see.

Search

One major benefit of Slack is the ability to search, you can search a whole channel or all channels. Additionally, you can filter by date, the person who wrote the message or even by an emoji that you happen to remember was used as a reaction. So, effectively you can "tag" your messages by using a specific emoji for specific messages. If you are looking for a message relating to a file upload, code snippet or post you can filter by those as well and you can even filter by the file type.

Customizing Settings

One of the best features of slack is the very detailed customizability, particularly with notifications.

General Notifications

You can customize notifications specifically by both channel and by device and you can set it to provide notifications for **all** messages, **mentions** which means only when your name is mentioned or you can simply turn them off altogether.

Highlight Words

This feature allows you to specify certain words to be highlighted, if you are the programmer you might want to highlight words such as "code, program, programming, compile, etc". Additionally you can choose to only be notified if one of the specific highlight words is contained in the message so you will effectively turn off notifications unless one of those words is used.

Do Not Disturb

This feature allows you to set a specific time frame for which you do not want to receive any notifications. If a member feels it is important enough, they can force a single notification during a do

not disturb time frame. If a person is in do not disturb their username will show “zzz” next to the name. Additionally, Slack may remind you if someone will not get notified of a message you send because of this feature.

Code Snippet / Post / File Upload

Next to the message box you will see a plus sign. With this button you can create a code snippet, a post or upload a file.

Code Snippet

This feature can be handy if you have a snippet of code that you want to discuss. It gives you the ability to provide syntax highlighting so that code is formatted properly. Additionally you can provide a title and leave comments for a code snippet.

Post

Posts are ways to provide a lot of information but rather than putting it in a message you can create a post and get the benefits of additional formatting like a document. You can add headings, bullets and other formatting options. You can provide a title and leave comments on a post.

File Upload

Files can be uploaded by using the plus symbol or simply dragging and dropping when using a computer. Images can also be pasted directly by using Ctrl+v.