

Discussion Guidelines

(<https://pixabay.com/illustrations/balloons-clouds-word-clouds-4111586/>)

Netiquette, also known as 'net etiquette,' refers to using respectful and inclusive language with proper tone and mechanics (including full sentences), as well as courtesy and respect for others' opinions, when you are communicating in online discussion forums. Instructors may interpret breaches of netiquette as disruptive behavior. Communicating effectively in an online class can help build community and engagement. Please keep the following guidelines in mind:



- **Identify yourself by your real name.** Be mindful of your personal safety, and avoid including personal information, such as phone numbers or addresses, in discussion forums. All online communications should be transmitted with the intent to inform and inspire, not to offend or breach personal privacy. Never use private information about other individuals and be sensitive to the information you share about yourself.
- **Write in the first person.**
- **Use humor, joking, or sarcasm with caution.** We often rely on non-verbal cues such as facial expressions to communicate joking or sarcasm; but these cues are not always clear in an online environment.
- **Be professional, clear and respectful.** Clear and effective writing translates to clear and effective communication. Writing the way you would speak is a good rule of thumb. Use a positive tone and adhere to the same rules you would follow in face-to-face communications. As well, use proper grammar, spelling and formatting, and check all communications before sending. Respond to colleagues in a prompt manner.
- **Read and formulate communications carefully.** Take the time to think about the information contained in all of your online communications. This will allow you to thoughtfully consider all points, reduces confusion and prepares you for a valid response. You can in return, research your facts and provide citations for information stated within your communications. This promotes a robust academic environment and adds credibility to any course. Re-read communications before sending to avoid emotional and or "all capital letter" statements and keep communications meaningful and succinct.
- **Be tolerant and cooperative.** Keep in mind that all students are here to learn, and anyone can make a simple mistake in research, knowledge or communication. Address the idea or concept, not the person. Keep an open mind and focus on the goal of learning. When adverse communications

or conflicts arise, try to help rather than hinder. True cooperation means working together to the same end; everyone wants to be successful.