

Slack for Classroom Communication

YACT
(Yet Another Communication Tool)

Slack - CSC 170

CSC 170 ▾
● Robert M Kostin

Jump to...

All Threads

Channels

announcements

chatter

help

ta-only

Direct Messages

slackbot

Apps

Google Drive

+ Add Apps

#announcements

☆ | 👤 104 | 🗑️ 0 | Course-wide announcements and academic-based i

Tuesday, September 11th

Robert M Kostin 7:16 AM
@everyone I have to cancel in-person office hours today, Tuesday, September 11, due to an off-campus meeting this morning. As always I'll be monitoring Slack closely.

Wednesday, September 12th

Robert M Kostin 8:22 AM
@everyone Sorry but yet again, I have to cancel in-person office hours today. Use the #help channel in Slack if you need anything else.

Friday, September 21st

Robert M Kostin 1:05 AM
@everyone Although I said lecture attendance (or lack thereof) would not count against your grade, I've decided to implement a bonus if you maintain an 90% or better attendance rate at the end of the semester. (Don't be put off by whatever your rate is at this point. Remember: each lecture counts less we progress through the

Excused absences include: an away game; a religious holiday; sickness (with confirmation from UHS); and maybe some other approved absences as defined by the University.

+ Message #announcements

"Workspaces" allows you to focus on one course at a time

Mass notifications

Better than one-to-one support; everyone gets the benefit of answers

Back channel - private communication with groups

Slack is a Communications Tool

- Any platform app: iOS, Android, MacOS, Windows, and Web
- Smartphone apps: good use of notifications; it's the mode students use most often
- One class, one semester = one Slack "Workspace"
- Free (plus billable extended features)

Benefits

For Students

- Slack: industry standard in technical companies, currently
- Notifications: e.g. project is due; class is canceled
- Private groups: for team assignments, fast create, use, and then delete

For Instructors

- Ability to focus on one topic/course without distraction of everything at once
- Ability to process hundreds of messages instead of a few dozen emails
- Common questions answered by TAs, possibly answered by other students
- Easy mass-communication at a moment's notice

Startup

- In the syllabus: link to the sign-up page
 - e.g. <http://docs.csc170.org/syllabus.html> → join.slack.com/t/csc170/signup
- Advice
 - Load the app(s)
 - Control noise - turn-off some notifications for some channels
 - Setup private channels for teams
- Why use it?
 - Questions via email = one week delay
 - Questions via Slack = almost real-time response
 - *Class cancellations* → via Slack [#announcements](#) channel only

Shortfalls

- Re-directing from email or DM → [#help](#) channel
- UI - not perfect
 - Messages get lost (need to remember to "star")
 - Sort order: chronological or reverse-chronological?
 - Channels can get *noisy*
 - When responding to a post, need to remember to "start a thread" (not do the obvious thing)
 - Do NOT type and press enter! (ding, ding, ding, ding...)
"Hi professor Kostin" <enter>
"I'm having a problem with my project" <enter>
" Can you help" <enter>
"me?" <enter>

...
USE SHIFT-ENTER TO START A NEW LINE!!!
- Don't be spammy - response time will vary