

Netiquette Guide

A Netiquette Guide is a preventative tool you can post in the online classroom prior to the first day of class, which lists acceptable online interaction behaviors so that students may participate appropriately. The netiquette guide can be included in the course syllabus, as an announcement, or as part of the instructions in discussion forums. Regardless of where it appears, this guide gives your students an idea of what kinds of language and tone work best for participating in academic dialogue throughout the class and in messages to the instructor. A netiquette guide diminishes the potential for students to communicate inappropriately or in a hostile manner towards one another by setting the expectations up front, and you can refer to it when conduct problems arise. This tool can make your job easier and help you remain unemotional when addressing students who need correction in areas addressed by the netiquette guide. The sample netiquette guide included here provides an example of what you may wish to include, and it may be freely used or modified to fit your needs.

Sample Netiquette Guide

Most of our time together in this course will take place in "Forums," our class discussion boards. Please keep these tips in mind as you work in the online format, to assure that your thoughts are clearly understood and accomplish their intended purpose:

- For all posts, select the "small" font size or larger. Class members will all have different screen resolutions, and anything smaller can be challenging to read.
- When replying to an individual, begin your post with that individual's first name. If we have two students with the same name, include the last initial also.
- Sign each post with the name you prefer to be called by classmates. For example, if your name is "Thomas," and you prefer to be called "Tom," please sign your posts that way.
- Use spell-check. It's a feature inside the editor area in the forum posting box.
- Identify your post using the "subject" area as appropriate for the topic.
- Check your posts for clarity by reading through before posting. It is easy to write something that might be humorous and meant in good fun that may seem offensive or hostile when read online without your voice inflection and facial expression. Likewise, use academic language, and avoid profanity. This tip is especially important when you feel emotional and are responding to someone in particular.
- Avoid profanity and vulgarity. Let's keep it professional and help everyone feel comfortable in our online class.
- If you would like to chat with classmates about off-topic ideas, please move your discussion to the "Hallway" forum, and open a new thread there.
- Try to remain positive. 😊

