

## Netiquette

This open and interactive learning environment provides several opportunities for communication among students and online instructors in the Discussion Boards, chat, and emails. Online communication should be conducted in a professional and courteous manner at all times; be guided by common sense, collegiality, and basic rules of etiquette. Students are expected to be respectful to each other and to the instructor at all times and to refrain from making inappropriate comments. The following guidelines should be observed by all students whenever communicating online with instructors and/or classmates.

- **Write professionally** at all times.
  - Use standard English, not “Textlish.”
  - Use correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
  - Use acronyms and emoticons sparingly, if at all. These can sometimes help communication, but they can also impede it if your recipient is not familiar with them.
  - Don’t submit anything that was composed while you were under the influence of street drugs or alcohol. Your mental state will most likely show.
- **Be considerate of others’ time.**
  - Don’t overwhelm your classmates or instructor with emails or lengthy discussion contributions.
  - Write concisely and stay on topic.
  - Respond promptly to emails, especially when something is requested from you.
- **Be respectful** of other people.
  - If you disagree, do so respectfully, without sarcasm or ridicule.
  - TYPING IN ALL CAPS is usually interpreted as the equivalent of SHOUTING.
  - Flaming or ranting is unacceptable - it's the online equivalent of throwing a tantrum in the classroom.
- **Be calm.** If you are upset or frustrated or angry, keep this out of your communications with your fellow students or instructors. An angry or sarcastic comment does little to win respect or cooperation.
  - Think about what you are going to say before you type, and say it in an unemotional, professional manner.
  - When asking for help, take the time to provide adequate information for the instructor or classmate to understand your problem. That will save time in the long run.
- **Think twice before clicking on *Send*.** Make sure you are saying what you mean to say.
  - Remember, when you are communicating online, you don't have the nonverbal cues you get when you are face-to-face, and it’s easy to misinterpret the written word.
  - Ask yourself, how will the person on the other end interpret a message? While no one can anticipate all reactions, think about how your message may be received, and read over each message before sending. Remember, that's a real, live, feeling person who is reading your email or discussion.

- Allow for the possibility that you can misinterpret someone else’s message. If you’re unsure of the writer’s meaning, or if you’re feeling annoyed or angered by what they said, before you pound out a sharp retort and send it off, ask the writer for clarification.
- **Stalking and derogatory comments are inappropriate.**
  - Do NOT: Stalk a classmate, make derogatory or inappropriate comments and jokes, or forward emails that make fun of or put down someone because of their race, gender, age, religion, physical characteristics, disability or sexual orientation. These types of communications are unacceptable and subject to the same disciplinary action that they would receive if they occurred in the live classroom. Worse, if you do the above in online discussion, blog, or email, you leave tangible evidence of misbehavior!
  - If you have concerns about something that has been said to or about you or other classmates, you should let the instructor know.
- **Spamming, phishing, and hacking are not allowed.**
  - Do not send advertisements or solicitations to buy something to your classmates or instructor (spamming).
  - Do not attempt to obtain private information from your classmates via deceptive means (phishing).
  - Do not attempt to break into a classmate’s computer or the university’s network (hacking).
- **Plagiarism, cheating, and other violations are unacceptable.**
  - Plagiarism, cheating, and other violations of ethical student behavior are serious actions in a learning community. Just like derogatory comments, this behavior is subject to the same disciplinary action as if the behavior occurred in the live classroom. See <http://pathfinder.unm.edu/campus-policies/academic-dishonesty.html> for campus policies.
  - Do not copy and distribute copyrighted materials unless you have permission to do so.
- **Respect the privacy of your classmates.**
  - Do not ever forward or copy and paste the contents of their emails, course messages, discussions, or blogs outside of the online classroom.
  - Do not provide their email or other contact information to anyone outside of the class.
- **Avoid distributing malware** (e.g., viruses, Trojans).
  - Run virus-scanning software daily on your computer, and keep the software up-to-date.
  - UNM IT provides free antivirus software to students and faculty, available here: <http://it.unm.edu/download/> (Symantec Endpoint-protection, as of this writing).