

# NETIQUETTE GUIDE FOR ONLINE COURSES

It is important to recognize that the same communication expectations apply to residential and online classrooms. High standards are expected when you communicate with instructors and classmates.

## SECURITY

Remember that your password for your student account is the only thing protecting you from identity theft and other problems.

- Do not share your password with anyone.
- Change your password if you think someone else might know it.
- Always log out when you are finished using the system.

## COMMUNITY GUIDELINES

- Be respectful and kind in all communications to faculty, advisors, and your fellow students. The following article can be helpful in considering how you communicate in a university setting like ours: <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2015/04/16/advice-students-so-they-dont-sound-silly-emails-essay>
- Assume your professors and advisors have your best interest in mind and will work within the bounds of what is appropriate and possible to help you.
- Avoid devolving to the use of snarky, exaggerated, or expletive language if you become frustrated. Related to sub-optimum communication, please also take time to read the UF Code of Conduct: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>

## OTHER GUIDELINES

When communicating in an online format, you should:

- Unless otherwise directed, always use your professor's proper title: Dr. or Prof., or if in doubt use Mr. or Ms.
- Use clear and concise language.
- Remember that all college-level communication should have correct spelling and grammar (this includes discussion boards).
- Avoid slang terms such as "wassup?" and texting abbreviations such as "u" instead of "you."
- Use standard fonts such as Ariel, Calibri or Times New Roman and use a size 10 or 12 pt. font.
- Avoid using the caps lock feature AS IT CAN BE INTERPRETED AS YELLING AND RUDE.
- Consider if the use of emoticons like :) or ☺ is appropriate.
- Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm as the tone is sometimes lost in an email or discussion post and you may inadvertently communicate the wrong message.
- Be careful and confidential with personal information (especially other's) in emails and discussion posts.

## EMAIL NETIQUETTE

When you send an email to your instructor, teaching assistant, or classmates, you should:

- Use a descriptive subject line.
- Be clear and concise.

- Avoid attachments unless you are sure your recipients can open them.
- Avoid unnecessary text decoration in email and HTML in favor of plain text.
- Sign your message with your name and return e-mail address.
- Think before you send the e-mail to more than one person. Does everyone really need to see your message?
- Be sure you REALLY want everyone to receive your response when you click, “reply all.”
- Be sure any email you forward was intended to be passed along.
- It is always a good practice to maintain a respectful and professional tone.
- Consider the use of BCC for protecting the privacy of email addresses of recipients who do not know one another.

## MESSAGE BOARD NETIQUETTE AND GUIDELINES

When posting on the Discussion Board in your online class, you should:

- Make posts that are on-topic and within the scope of the course material.
- Take your posts seriously and review and edit your posts before sending.
- Be as clear and concise as possible while still making a thorough comment.
- Always give proper credit when referencing or quoting another source.
- Be sure to read all messages in a thread before replying.
- Do not repeat someone else’s post without adding something of your own to it.
- Avoid short, generic replies such as, “I agree.” You should include why you agree or add to the previous point.
- Always be respectful of others’ opinions even when they differ from your own.
- When you disagree with someone, you should express your differing opinion in a respectful, non-critical way.
- Do not make personal or insulting remarks.
- Be open-minded with a commitment to receive constructive feedback (or, please do not dismiss constructive criticism that can help you improve a project).
  - Per the Python Community Code of Conduct (<https://www.python.org/psf/codeofconduct/>):

**Be open.** “Members of the community are open to collaboration... We're receptive to constructive comment and criticism, as the experiences and skill sets of other members contribute to the whole of our efforts.. .”

**Be considerate.** “Members of the community are considerate of their peers... We're thoughtful when addressing the efforts of others, keeping in mind that often times the labor was completed simply for the good of the community.. .”

**Be respectful.** “Members of the community are respectful. We're respectful of others, their positions, their skills, their commitments, and their efforts... When we disagree, we are courteous in raising our issues.. .”

\*Adapted with permission from the UF Center for Teaching Excellence