Online Courses Guidelines

Classroom Expectations

The following guidelines will help your work more efficiently in this course. Please carefully review these guidelines and follow them.

1. You are expected to maintain academic integrity in this course according to the student academic behavior standards. For further details take a look at: Undergraduate Student Policies and/or Graduate Student Policies.
2. Keep up with the readings. You will have chapters, modules, discussion postings, and e-mail messages to read for the class. As with any learning experience, the more you are able to put into reading, thinking, and applying the material in this course, the more you will get out of the course.
3. Be prepared to spend at least 6 - 9 hours per week working on this course. If you are less experienced with online learning, and/or less experienced with the content of this course, expect to spend more hours per week to participate fully.
4. Don’t turn in late assignments. Late submissions, if accepted, might result in a lower grade.
5. Don’t miss a quiz or test. Missed quizzes or tests without instructor approval may not be retaken.
6. Work with others. You are required to make every effort to work effectively and promptly with others in your groups and discussion boards. Fair criticism of your failure to work effectively with others may significantly affect your collaboration and participation grade.

E-mail

E-mail will be an integral part of this course. Make sure you:

1. Check your e-mail a minimum of twice per week to assure that you receive course information in a timely fashion.
2. Be patient. Don’t expect an immediate response when you send a message. Generally, two business days is considered reasonable amount of time to receive a reply.
3. Include "Subject" headings: use the course name and something that is descriptive and refers to a particular assignment or topic.
4. Be courteous and considerate. Being honest and expressing yourself freely is very important, but being considerate of others online is just as important as in the classroom.
5. Make every effort to be clear. Online communication lacks the nonverbal cues that fill in much of the meaning in face-to-face communication.
6. Do not use all caps. This makes the message very hard to read and is considered "shouting." Check spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
7. Break up large blocks of text into paragraphs and use a space between paragraphs.
8. Sign your e-mail messages.
9. Please ensure you have a legitimate need before you write an email. Some of your questions might be answered by reading the course syllabus or by reading the “Questions for the Instructor” forum on your discussion board.

10. Your instructor will answer emails about:

- Questions arising from difficulty in understanding course content
- Requests for feedback about a graded assignment
- Private issues appropriate for discussion within the teacher-student relationship

11. For general questions about the course, please use the “Questions for the Instructor” forum on your discussion board. Many of you will have the same or similar questions related to this course, so to help on repetition, please post your questions there.

**Discussion Topics**

Many of the rules that apply to e-mail also apply to discussion boards. Use the following guidelines when composing a discussion posting:

1. During a discussion assignment, deadlines for posting and replying will be specified with each assignment. It is a good practice to always check the discussions multiple times during the week.
2. If you want to send a personal message to the instructor or to another student, use e-mail rather than the discussions (see above E-mail Protocols).
3. Each assignment will have a specific forum, so use the appropriate forum to post your thoughts.
5. Everyone should feel free to participate in online discussions. Regular and meaningful discussion postings constitute a substantial portion of your grade.
6. Respect each other’s ideas, feelings and experience.
7. Be courteous and considerate. It is important to be honest and to express yourself freely, but being considerate of others is just as important and expected online, as it is in the classroom.
8. All students have a right to express their own opinion in discussion, and every other student must respect this right. Any student posting a disrespectful comment will be asked to leave the discussion, and a grade of 0 points will be recorded.
9. "Subject" headings: use something that is descriptive and refers to a particular assignment or discussion topic when applicable. Some assignments will specify the subject heading.
10. Use the "reply" button rather than the "create thread" button if you are replying to someone else’s posting.
11. Do not post responses such as "I agree," "I don’t know either," "Who cares," or "ditto." They do not add to the discussion, take up space on the discussions, and will not be counted for assignment credit. Students will be graded on discussion postings. Points are earned based on quality of responses and compliance with the required number of postings as specified in individual assignment instruction.
12. The points earned by each student on a given discussion will be posted to the online grade book.
13. Break large blocks of text into paragraphs and use a space between paragraphs.
14. Use the “Questions for the Instructor” forum for questions about course material or assignments. Use the Student Coffee House to post any of your off topic conversations.

Netiquette

"Netiquette" has evolved to aid us in infusing our electronic communications with some of these missing behavioral pieces. "Emoticons" and other tools have become popular and I encourage their use when it will add to the clarity of your communication.

- :-) happy, pleased
- :-( sad, displeased
- :-O surprised
- >:| angry

Abbreviate if the instructor allows. Some instructors will not want abbreviations in your work. Be sure to use only commonly known abbreviations in your postings. Examples:

- LOL laugh out loud, "I find this funny"
- ROFL rolling on floor laughing, really funny
- BTW by the way
- *grin* smiling
- IMHO in my humble opinion
- FYI for your info
- Flame antagonistic criticism

Netiquette continues to evolve and I am sure that we will have constant additions to this growing language. The important thing to remember is that all of the "cute" symbols in the world cannot replace your careful choice of words and "tone" in your communication.

Sources:


Notes for instructors:

Please feel free to make any changes or additions that you feel necessary. Email me at leitetrambod@unk.edu for any comments or suggestions you have for improving this document.
If you using the Module Template you might find useful to make use of the “Quiz for Online Courses Guidelines” that it is available for you. The quiz will help students make sure they understand the guidelines of the course before they embark into it.