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# NETIQUETTE STATEMENT

## Blanket Netiquette Statements

* Netiquette is a set of rules for behaving properly online. Something about cyberspace makes it easy for people to forget that they are interacting with other real people.
* When you engage peers in conversation through any discussion in this course, keep in mind that it is academic conversation that should reflect the characteristics of professional communication. This not only includes complete sentences and the best grammar and spelling you can manage, but it also includes tone. Be aware of tone in all classroom communication and treat one another respectfully and well in these forums.
* All communication in the course, including emails, should be carefully thought out, drafted, and edited as though it is being published for an audience. The expectations in an academic environment are that students will aim to write clearly, concisely, and professionally, editing for tone, grammar, and spelling prior to posting their work.

## Tone

* Be sensitive to the fact that there will be cultural and linguistic backgrounds, as well as different political and religious beliefs, plus just differences in general.
* Use good taste when composing your responses in Discussion Forums. Swearing and profanity is also part of being sensitive to your classmates and should be avoided. Also consider that slang can be misunderstood or misinterpreted.
* Don’t use all capital letters when composing your responses as this is considered “shouting” on the Internet and is regarded as impolite or aggressive. It can also be stressful on the eye when trying to read your message.
* Be respectful of your others’ views and opinions. Avoid “flaming” (publicly attacking or insulting) other students as this can cause hurt feelings and decrease the chances of getting all different types of points of view included in a discussion topic.
* Every day may feel like casual Friday in an online classroom where you don’t see anyone in person, but a certain level of formality is still expected in your communication with instructors. In addition to proper punctuation and spelling, it’s good netiquette to use respectful greetings and signatures, full sentences and even the same old “please” and “thank you” you use in real life.
* As a rule of thumb, do not include insensitive digital images, link or articles that could violate the other etiquette points laid out in the syllabus or other documents within the course.

## Structure

* Be careful when using acronyms. If you use an acronym it is best to spell out its meaning first, then put the acronym in parentheses afterward, for example: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). After that you can use the acronym freely throughout your message.
* Always make an effort to use proper punctuation, spelling and grammar. Trying to decipher a string of misspelled words with erratic punctuation frustrates the reader and distracts from the point of your message. On the other hand, it’s important to be reasonable about others’ grammar mistakes. Nobody likes the grammar police and scolding a classmate because he or she used “your” instead of “you’re” isn’t practicing proper netiquette.

## Plagiarism and “Fact-Checking”

* Include all references and cite sources according to syllabus guidelines to avoid plagiarizing resources.
* Understand that all students have the potential to view your discussion posts. While each student is responsible for confirming information, when sharing your points of view ensure the accuracy of the information to avoid confusion within the discussion.
* Refrain from including links to external sites and software that are questionable in nature- this can mitigate the dangers of students downloading harmful files that could potentially infect their computer, thus impacting their ability to participate in the discussion/course.

## Best Practices for Discussion Replies

* Take some time to read through each of the previous discussion post responses before writing your own response. If the original post asked a specific question, there’s a good chance someone has already answered it. Submitting an answer that is eerily similar to a classmate’s indicates to the instructor that you haven’t paid attention to the conversation thus far.
* Remember, discussions can move fairly quickly so it’s important to absorb all of the information before crafting your reply. Building upon a classmate’s thought or attempting to add something new to the conversation will show your instructor you’ve been paying attention.