

September 15, 2013

Communication Agreement for Online Courses

This agreement is meant to provide ground rules for discussions and providing feedback in this online course. Although the class will not be meeting face-to-face, students are still required to participate in discussion threads. Every student will be graded on the quality of their posts and responses to other students. Please complete all necessary work (readings, quizzes, videos) prior to constructing your post addressing the assigned discussion prompt. Your participation in these discussions will be a portion of your grade for the course.

The discussion, in its entirety, will be followed and read by the professor or a TA. Similar to in-person classroom settings, you are expected to be respectful of all course participants. If a post or response expresses personal insult or may be questionable in content, the professor or TA reserves the right to remove the post from the discussion. If you have critiques for the professor about how the course is being conducted, the discussion boards are not the place to express them. Course e-mail will be used for any criticisms of individual student posts.

Basic expectations of student posts and responses:

- Write complete sentences with proper grammar, spelling, punctuation, and paragraph structure. Treat course discussion threads as you would an essay assigned in a classroom, except you are given the opportunity to learn from and respond to fellow students online.
- Your post should address all requirements of the prompt, stay on topic, and should end in a way that facilitates further responses and discussion. Your responses must also be related to the discussion topic.
- You are graded on the quality and frequency of your responses. Give thoughtful feedback to other students. Avoid saying that you simply 'liked' something about the post.
- Be aware of your tone when writing responses and posts online. Humor and sarcasm are more difficult to express in an online setting than in the classroom. Read what you are writing as though you were the student to whom the response is addressed. Any responses that seem disrespectful will be removed and limit your ability to participate in discussions.

The above expectations are meant to allow for an inclusive and productive online learning environment. Individual professors may provide further instructions on the specifics of online discussion interactions and expectations.