# Protocols

## Classroom Expectations

The following ground rules will help your work in this course to go much more smoothly. Please carefully review these expectations and follow them.

1. Academic integrity will be appraised according to the student academic behavior standards outlined in The Golden Rule of the University of Central Florida’s Student Handbook. See [http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu](http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/)/ for further details.
2. Don’t turn in late assignments. Late submissions will result in a lower grade (will not be accepted).
3. Keep up with the reading. You have quite a few chapters, modules, discussion postings, and e-mail messages to read for the class. Please keep up with the reading. Students who keep up with the reading tend to do much better in this kind of class than those who do not.
4. Don’t miss a quiz. Missed quizzes may not be retaken.
5. Work with others. You are required to make every effort to work effectively and promptly with others in your groups. Fair criticism of your failure to work effectively with others will significantly affect your collaboration and participation grade. However, you are personally responsible for your own work. If in doubt regarding collaboration on a graded assignment, **immediately ask for clarification** from the instructor.

## E-mail

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

1. Check your e-mail at least twice per week (more often is better).
2. Be patient. Don’t expect an immediate response when you send a message. Generally, two days is considered reasonable amount of time to receive a reply.
3. Include "Subject" headings: use something that is descriptive and refer 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 (you may want to compose in a word processor, then cut and paste the message into the discussion or e-mail).
7. Break up large blocks of text into paragraphs and use a space between paragraphs.
8. Sign your e-mail messages.
9. Never assume that your e-mail can be read by no one except yourself; others may be able to read or access your mail. Never send or keep anything that you would not mind seeing on the evening news.

Note: Review the Netiquette and Viruses section below

## Discussion Topics

Many of the "rules of the road" or protocols that apply to e-mail also apply to the use of discussions. Use the following conventions when composing a discussion posting:

1. During a Discussion assignment, deadlines for posting to 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. Use the appropriate Discussion Topic; don’t post everything on the "Main" Discussion Topic.
4. Be patient. Don’t expect an immediate response when you send a message.
5. A helpful hint for use with both discussions and e-mail --- Compose your message in your word-processing application in order to check spelling, punctuation, and grammar --- then copy and paste your composition into e-mail or the discussion. This also saves online time.
6. Everyone should feel free to participate in class and online discussions. Regular and meaningful discussion postings constitute a substantial portion of your grade.
7. Respect each other’s ideas, feelings and experience.
8. 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.
9. Explore disagreements and support assertions with data and evidence.
10. "Subject" headings: use something that is descriptive and refer to a particular assignment or discussion topic when applicable. Some assignments will specify the subject heading.
11. Use the "reply" button rather than the "compose" button if you are replying to someone else’s posting.
12. Do not use postings 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.
13. Avoid posting large blocks of text. If you must, break them into paragraphs and use a space between paragraphs.
14. Use the Technical Discussion topic for assistance with technical issues. Use the Help Discussion topic for questions about course material or assignments. There will be specific discussion topics for particular discussions - pay close attention to the assignment, and post appropriately.

Note: Review the Netiquette, Viruses and Technical Resources sections below.

## 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 when possible. 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.

You can learn more about Netiquette and electronic communication by visiting Learning Online.

## Viruses

A virus can spell disaster. Your use of a reputable anti-virus program is a requirement for participation in this course (good ones include McAfee or Norton).

Also, back up your files: "My hard drive crashed." "My modem doesn’t work." "My printer is out of ink." These are today’s equivalents of "My dog ate my homework." And these events really do occur and they are really inconvenient when they do. However, these are not valid excuses for failing to get your work in on time.

## Technical Resources

For specific problems in any of the areas below or for further information go to the corresponding link for assistance.

* [UCF Home Page](http://www.ucf.edu) will help find UCF resources
* [UCF Computer Service Desk](http://servicedesk.ucf.edu/) – You can also call the Service Desk at 407-823-5117.
* [Learning Online](http://learn.ucf.edu) This site provides information on study skills for distance learners, the library and the writing center.
* Buying a new computer or upgrading your current equipment – <http://www.cstore.ucf.edu/>
* [Hardware/Software Requirements](http://learn.ucf.edu/webcourses/support.html)
* Technical Discussion Topic: If you have technical questions and/or problems, please post a message to the Technical Discussion Topic. I encourage members of the class who are technically proficient to also monitor this discussion topic and assist your classmates.
* If your equipment problems prevent you from using e-mail from home, there are many computer labs on campus and virtually every public library offers Internet access.