Virtual Learning Etiquette Protocols

The following list is designed to provide students and faculty with a common set of expectations for how to operate professionally and successfully in the virtual learning setting.

Dress for success

Wear clothes! Yes, this seems silly to have to say, but, believe it or not, some people don't. Remember whether you are in a physical classroom or a virtual learning setting, represent yourself in the best possible manner. How you present yourself now is preparing you for your future role in the workforce.

Consider your background

You would be surprised how much others can see in your background. Before joining a virtual class session, be sure there isn't anything inappropriate, offensive or distracting in your background. Also, it is wise to position yourself near a wall as your background so that people you live with will not accidentally walk through the background and create an unnecessary distraction. Also, avoid sitting with a window directly behind you, the lighting will make it too difficult for you to be seen appropriately.

Determine a workspace

Look, we all know that lying in bed snuggled in your blankets would be the coziest option, but it's just not the appropriate choice. Likewise, sitting in a large social gathering area seems fun, but not likely productive. Your virtual learning session is a place to learn. So, like any classroom, find a table or desk to use as you participate in your virtual classes. Now sign in to your class a few minutes early and use your real name. It may be funny to label yourself as "Mighty Mouse," but it won't help you get class credit.

Show your face

Don't be bashful, point that camera at your face! Think of it as selfie-time! In all seriousness, this is no different than in a physical classroom. We should see each other's faces. This allows everyone to read body language which helps learning. When you cannot be seen, it leaves others with the impression that you are not involved, or perhaps you don't care. You can control how others perceive you just by having your camera pointed at your face. Also, don't take photos or videos of others. You're not the paparazzi!

Turn on the mute button

Dogs barking, doorbells ringing, sounds from chewing gum, and so many other noises just seem to happen around us without you necessarily noticing. However, in the virtual learning setting, these sounds can be very distracting to others. Best practice is to mute your computer microphone. When you need to speak, be sure to unmute your mic, speak, and then

immediately mute your mic again. This simple process will significantly reduce background noises and distractions.

Focus and engage

It is so easy to click "Join Meeting," and then be tempted to watch Netflix in a different tab, or to cook dinner, or even be driving somewhere (Seriously? Driving and Zooming?). Though these things may cross your mind, they become untimely distractions, and some are downright unsafe! Your learning matters. Stay focused and participate fully in your virtual learning sessions. You deserve the best, and your attention to your learning during scheduled classes will help you achieve academic success.

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