

Discussion Etiquette

Online or in-classroom discussion can aid you in developing your understanding of the subject you are studying. If online, it allows you to engage in discussion from anywhere you have access to the internet and will provide a record of the debate. As well, discussion and collaboration with other students increases your chances of success. However, while you may be familiar with chats or discussions in informal internet communities with friends, there are certain standards of behaviour expected online and in this class. Please refer to the following points for guidance on how to participate most effectively.

1. Be respectful and carefully use language. Do not be abusive in a discussion (mock, threaten, embarrass) or use offensive language.
2. Be very specific in your responses. Don't just say you agree or disagree. Provide examples to support your discussion.
3. Begin your responses with the following prompts. "I understand..." "I know..." "I wonder..."
4. When involved in online discussions, using CAPITALS is the online equivalent of shouting. You could consider using caps (sparingly) if you want to emphasize a point. However, using an exclamation mark (!) directly after your word or phrase also demonstrates emphasis.
5. Just as with email, be careful how you express yourself. 'Spur of the moment' responses or sarcasm can be misinterpreted. Compose your message or answer before you join the discussion room.
6. Make a conscious effort to observe the discussion before joining in so you are not repeating what has already been said. That being said, the comment "I think Michael was right" shows you are following what Michael said but it is vague and does not clarify your idea or point.
7. Remember, a discussion room and a physical classroom is a public place, so behave as you would in public.