

Online Etiquette / Netiquette Guidelines

Cedarville University is a community of believers accountable to one another, called to reflect the character of Jesus Christ and to be obedient to His Word. We hold to the following core values: love for God, love for others, integrity in conduct, and excellence in effort.

Participation in online communication provides an opportunity for you to demonstrate your commitment to the University's core values and professionalism in interactions with peers and faculty. Online environments provide flexibility for you to complete coursework and to develop essential skills suitable for professional interactions. The skills that enable you to succeed in a traditional classroom are also essential for successful online learning.

In an online environment, communication may depend primarily on the written work of the course participants. Verbal and non-verbal communication cues will be different from a face-to-face environment. Online communication with peers and faculty will be enhanced by keeping the following guidelines in mind when using email, chat rooms, discussion boards, or video chat.

Love for God

- Behaviors that demonstrate love for God include:
 - Keeping God's command to love Him with your heart, soul, and mind as you diligently complete your studies, as unto the Lord.
 - Loving God's Word and representing His Word faithfully in your communication.
 - Allowing God's Spirit to develop spiritual fruit in your life to transform your communication and relationships with others.
- Examples:
 - Being a faithful steward of your study time to focus on learning about and understanding God's Word and world. Do not allow your grades to become an idol in your life.
 - Encouraging and motivating one another by allowing God's truths to permeate conversations.
 - Being positive. Communication can be easily misunderstood; avoid language that may come across as strong or offensive.
- Biblical Perspectives
 - [Matthew 22:37-38](#); [John 13:35, 14:15](#); [Romans 12:1-2](#); [Galatians 5:22-24](#); [Colossians 3:23](#); [II Timothy 3:16-17](#)

Love for Others

- Behaviors that demonstrate love for others through respect and kindness include:
 - Respecting your instructors.
 - Respecting your peers.
 - Respecting opinions and diversity of individuals, cultures, and experiences without judgmental comments.
 - Respecting the privacy of others.
- Examples:
 - Addressing instructors by their proper/preferred title (e.g., Dr., Mr., Ms.).
 - Submitting individual and group work in a timely fashion.
 - Avoiding typing in ALL CAPS as it can be interpreted as yelling.
 - Being forgiving of others' mistakes like spelling and grammar.
 - Keeping attachments small.
 - Acknowledging valid points and asking questions for clarification when you experience discomfort with what someone else has communicated.
 - Receiving permission before sharing personal information about a classmate or instructor.
- Biblical Perspectives
 - [Proverbs 27:17](#); [Matthew 22:39](#); [Romans 12:10](#); [Ephesians 4:29, 32](#); [James 1:19](#)

Integrity in Conduct

- Behaviors that demonstrate integrity in conduct include:
 - Adhering to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#).
 - Adhering to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#) when using technology.
 - Adhering to additional requirements from your school/department.
- Examples:
 - Providing truthful, accurate, and credible responses to professors and peers.
 - Avoiding plagiarism and assigning appropriate credit to others' work when referencing or quoting sources.
 - Not forwarding inappropriate material.
 - Remembering, although online, this is a class and you are not anonymous.
- Biblical Perspectives
 - [Proverbs 4:25-27, 11:3](#); [Luke 16:10](#); [II Corinthians 8:21](#); [Ephesians 4:25](#); [Philippians 4:8](#)

Excellence in Effort

- Behaviors that demonstrate excellence in effort through professionalism, participation, and collaboration include:
 - Preparing comprehensive, thoughtful responses including correct grammar, sentence structure, spelling, and punctuation.
 - Providing clear, concise, formal language with judicious use of emoticons, humor, or sarcasm.
 - Being patient and gracious in communication content and tone.
- Examples:
 - Reading, proofing, and editing communication before uploading or sending.
 - Staying on topic.
 - Reading all postings first and then writing a response. This ensures that your comments are relevant to the current dialogue.
 - Being cautious with humor and sarcasm. They do not always translate well in an online environment.
- Biblical Perspectives
 - [Proverbs 18:21, 25:11, 29:20](#); [1 Corinthians 10:31](#); [Colossians 3:17, 4:6](#)

Next Steps for Violations of the Guidelines

- Students:
 - Seeking peace and resolution.
 - Refer to the [Seeking Shalom - Student Complaint and Conflict Resolution](#) website.
- Faculty:
 - Initiating faculty discipleship and community accountability.
 - Refer to [The Cedarville Experience student handbooks](#) specifically the following sections: Accountability and Discipline; and Biblical Principles that Influence our Approach to Discipline.
 - Initiating disciplinary action, as necessary.
 - Refer to the [Vice President for Academics website](#) and the [Academic Integrity Statement and Procedures](#) to address academic dishonesty.