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Virtual Class Guidelines

Below is a list of technology guidelines and common etiquette rules everyone should follow to the best of their ability when joining virtual classes on Zoom.

1. Zoom Tutorial

The following is 8-minute tutorial on how to use Zoom if you are unfamiliar with the cloud-based video conferencing application:

<https://youtu.be/9isp3qPeQ0E>

2. Zoom Class Invitation

You will be emailed a Zoom class invitation. You need to use the site link at the end of the emailed invitation and the class ID code and Passcode to log into the classroom. The email with the Zoom class invitation goes out to BOTH on-campus and virtual classroom students. *(If you attend class on campus and unexpectedly need to attend the virtual classroom for a day to avoid missing the class and incurring makeup time, please let your instructor know immediately so that attendance is properly recorded.)*

3. Zoom Class Waiting Room – Join the Class Early, Not Late

The virtual class waiting room opens 15 minutes before class begins for you to enter and wait. Sometimes joining a virtual class can get delayed due to internet speeds, technical issues, or other crossed wires. To make sure your face actually appears on screen on time, you need to join virtual classes at least 5-10 minutes early. The instructor will be taking attendance at this time to ensure you are in class on time. If you are not on time, makeup time will be necessary under OSBN mandatory curriculum requirements.

4. Test Your Technology Beforehand

Conduct a test of your technology: device (*computer, laptop, tablet, smartphone, etc.*) camera, microphone, internet connection, and application to ensure everything is working properly before the virtual class begins. You don't want to delay the start of class because no one can see or hear you. *Is your equipment fully charged, and do you have a charger at the ready? Do you have a strong internet connection?*

5. Turn Off or Silence Loud Notifications

Silence or pause any noisy incoming email, calendar, task, phone, or other notifications before joining a virtual class.

6. Find a Quiet Place – Limit Distractions

Ideally, you have a low-traffic room where you can close the door and shut out any extraneous noise when you attend virtual classes. If you're unable to have privacy for your virtual class, opt for an area of your home where others are less likely to be. Slightly before your class, inform your family members, roommates, or friends that you'll be

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participating in a virtual class and aren't to be interrupted. Make childcare arrangements in advance. If possible, put pets in a separate room.

7. Be Screen Ready – Appropriately Groomed & Dressed.

One of the best things about attending a class from home is being able to dress more casually. But how you present yourself matters – put on appropriate neat, clean clothing that complies with CTI dress code policies, and check your appearance in the mirror before your virtual class or class begins.

8. Be Present – Remain on Camera, Make "Lens" Contact

Students are required to remain on camera during virtual classes, except during established breaks. Also, remember that to make eye contact with virtual class and class participants, you actually need to look straight into your *camera lens, and not into people's eyes.*

9. Use a Well-lit, Clean Background.

The best background for virtual classes is a relatively blank one that won't be distracting. Clean up the space around you and make sure the background is pleasant to look at. Most virtual class platforms allow you to change to a professional looking background or blur your background, if needed. Also check to see that the lighting is adequate so people can see you clearly.

10. Keep Your Device Stationary

Remember to place your device on something stationary so it isn't disorienting to others. If you join the class on a mobile device, avoid walking around or shifting about too much.

11. Mute When Not Speaking, Unmute When You Are

One of first mistakes that many people make during Zoom virtual classes is to not place themselves on "mute" to prevent others in the class from hearing what's going on in the background. Remember to "enter a virtual class on mute" and get into the habit of "turning on mute" whenever you're not speaking, or finished speaking, to keep background noise to a minimum and prevent anyone, or anything else, in your home, yard, or neighborhood, from causing distractions.

12. Speak Clearly

Remember to enunciate your words and speak slowly during virtual classes. Home internet connections quality can vary, as does the reliability of devices.

13. Don't Talk Over the Presenter

When you interrupt, you disrupt the class and also make it difficult for others to follow along. Interruptions are challenging during in-person interactions, but they're even more frustrating during virtual ones. Keep in mind that there's often a minor delay when someone talks, so pause after asking a question or listening to someone's response. It's easy to inadvertently interrupt other speakers. If you have a question, to ask it to use the use the "raise hand" feature or wait until the presenter asks if anyone has any questions.

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14. Pay Attention – Don't Multitask

Curb distractions when attending virtual classes. Don't do anything that would be impolite or inappropriate to do during an in-person class. Good virtual class etiquette means resisting the temptation to check the news, social media, or emails. It's obvious to the instructor when a participant isn't paying attention during a virtual class.

15. Avoid Eating During Classes

Taking a sip of a beverage (*water, coffee, tea, soda, juice, etc.*) occasionally during a virtual class is fine, but it is inappropriate during virtual classes to eat meals, snacks, or be seen doing things that you wouldn't ordinarily be doing during an in-person class, such as smoking or drinking an alcoholic beverage.

16. Don't Assume You're Off Camera.

Be careful not to say or do anything you wouldn't want others to see or hear until you're completely sure your camera and audio are off, and the class has ended. Don't assume you're in the clear until the camera light is officially off, and you've closed the virtual application.

17. Be Patient & Kind.

Be patient and courteous during virtual classes. People have different levels of comfort and expertise when it comes to technology and virtual platforms. Offering some technical assistance or reassurance, as necessary, will help everyone feel like they're supported and part of the team, even when you're not in the same place.