

Golden Gate University

A Student Guide to Cyber-Courses

In an effort to promote a high-quality student experience, we want to communicate expectations with regard to participating in the Golden Gate University CyberCampus delivery system. We believe we have operationalized this mode well, and are receiving good feedback about our CyberCampus classes. For example, *US News and World Report* rated Golden Gate University's CyberCampus classes as being amongst the best in the nation.

Golden Gate University's CyberCampus classes are designed and managed to deliver the learning outcomes of a traditional, face-to-face classroom. Former students report that Cyber-classes are often more demanding than classes offered in alternative modes. Research shows that to be a successful online student, one needs to be self-directed and show ability for independent work. Students should be prepared to invest an adequate amount of preparation and participation time to achieve, for themselves and their classmates, the learning objectives of the class. In achieving this, cyber-classrooms give them great flexibility in scheduling learning activity time.

We have found it valuable to communicate to students the specifics of what is involved in taking a CyberCampus class.

Time Management

- 1. Login frequently.** Login and participate in class activities at least four days every week unless otherwise instructed by the professor.
- 2. Make quality postings.** Quality participation involves more than just making an isolated posting; postings should build on previous submissions and expand the depth of the discussion. Your instructor will have additional guidelines.
- 3. Read all materials thoroughly.** Students are responsible for reading all content items in the course, since different class assignments and activities are often located in different areas of the class.
- 4. Stay current.** Students are expected to keep current with all the readings, assignments, homework and classroom participation. It is important to note that falling behind in a Cyber- Campus class makes it very difficult to catch up.

Communication

- 1. Have reasonable expectations for e-mail responses.** When communicating with professors, anticipate a reply within two business days; hence, when sending an e-mail build in the expected response time. In case of emergency, try to contact the instructor by phone or fax. Follow the instructions that the instructor gives you about appropriate use of e-mail communication for the given class. In general,

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communication should be via the class discussion area. E-mails should be restricted to issues of a personal nature.

- 2. Create high-quality postings.** Thread your postings with the postings of others in the discussion by engaging in the dialogue. Try to ask questions, add clarifications, present comparisons, relate professional-practice insights and show appreciation for your peers' contributions.
- 3. Avoid value judgments.** Value judgments imply a right and wrong, rather than a difference of opinion. They involve making an estimation of the quality and/or goodness of a person, action or event. They retard rather than promote communication.

Etiquette and Protocols

- 1. Be professional when communicating.** Participation in the classroom should uphold principles of collegiality and professionalism. Issues that arise between the instructor and the student should be kept isolated to the concerned student and instructor. The use of the cyber-platform electronic features such as e-mail, discussion groups, chat and doc sharing for disbursement of inflammatory issues is considered inappropriate behavior. Instructors reserve the right to delete any such postings.
- 2. Avoid abusive language.** Abusive use of language and a hostile attitude within classroom interactions is considered unacceptable. Be careful not to be malicious, spiteful or overly confrontational.

Academic Integrity

- 1. Cite sources properly.** Learning how to cite sources properly, giving credit to original author's works, is an important element in the Golden Gate University teaching/learning environment. Students should be familiar with the guidelines the university provides and try their utmost to avoid the pitfalls of plagiarism. Citing all sources — hard copy, Web-based, and others — in proper academic format is expected of every student.