

Class Policies and Expectations

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This document outlines the general policies and expectations for my classes. Keep in mind that some material applies solely to live-session classes while others apply only in the online classes.

Communication

Clear and direct communication is vital for instruction and learning to happen. The following policies and guidelines are to assist in meeting this goal.

- All communication must be respectful and honor individual differences and perspectives.
- All communication must be professional, both oral and written, and should not be considered casual conversation.
- Communication can occur in many ways, in class, on the phone, etc. My preference is that we utilize the communication tools within Blackboard to communicate about questions regarding the class and for class announcements...even for the live classes.
- Class discussions are considered to be confidential and should not be communicated outside of class. Be sensitive that this is a learning environment and people should feel free to explore diverse ideas, opinions, and activities.

Email Communication

- If you email me within Blackboard you can expect to hear back from me within 48 hours (excluding weekends)
- When I email you I can expect to hear back from you within 48 hours (excluding weekends)
- All email communications (and discussion board postings) must be clear, direct, and respectful. I am not obligated to respond to communications that fail to meet these criteria.

Written Documents

Most of the writing that you will be doing in this class will be with a word-processing program (such as Microsoft Word) and you will be submitting your documents electronically through the Blackboard interface.

- You must have reliable access to a computer with an Internet connection (preferably a fast one) with a reliable word-processing program (preferably Microsoft Word).
- Although I am not a huge fan of Microsoft Office, it is recommended that you purchase this suite of software, as it is the standard file type for all courses at KVCC.
- “File Format” refers to the type of file that your word-processor produces. Each product (Microsoft Word, Microsoft Works, AppleWorks, WordPerfect, etc.) has

a unique “File Format”. The acceptable file formats for this course include the following:

- Microsoft Word (.doc)
 - Microsoft Word (.docx)
 - Microsoft PowerPoint (.ppt)
 - Microsoft PowerPoint (.pptx)
 - Rich Text Format or RTF (.rtf)
- Note: The Rich Text Format is ideal in that it is a universal format that allows any word-processor to communicate with any other word-processor. To save a file as RTF you simply open the file and select “Save As” from your file menu. Click the pull-down menu for the file format options and select RTF or Rick Text Format.
 - When you submit a document for an assignment ALWAYS include a title page with your name, date, course, and the name of the assignment

Grading

One of the major concerns of students is getting feedback on your progress. Although I will not be tracking your particular path through the class, I will be making best effort to provide you with timely feedback on how you are doing. There will be a Mid-Term warning that will be issued and I will be discussing how I arrive at the Mid-Term grade in class.

- All assignments will have a due date, and often, a due time (this is because the electronic drop boxes and quizzes require the instructor to set a time of day that the item will shut off.)
- It is important that you get assignments done BEFORE the due date/time to receive full (if any) credit.
- I am not obligated to accept late work regardless of the circumstances...please be courteous and timely in your requests.
- Any quizzes or short written projects will be graded within 7 days
- Longer projects and papers will require up to 2 weeks

Technology

As you can probably tell, my class, and most of education, has become very technology centered. Having and using a computer is no longer an optional part of education. However, there are challenges associated with using technology.

- Both my live and online classes utilize Blackboard extensively. I post a lot of information not discussed in class that you are still required to know.
- I provide a brief orientation to Blackboard within my class but you are also advised to participate in the orientations to Blackboard that are sponsored by the Instructional Technology office at KVCC. See them for details.
- It is recommended that you check into the online portion of the class daily through the week.

- Students who are taking the class online are required to participate in online discussions as part of the graded portion of the class. This would necessitate that students access the site at least 3 times per week.
- I will be using Blackboard to post announcements about the class such as changes in schedules and cancellations. If you are driving a long way to come to class I suggest that you always check Blackboard before leaving home to be sure that class is still in session.
- KVCC maintains a link on the main page that also lists cancellations and is working on a method to automatically send an email to all registered students if an instructor cancels a class. Use the technology daily to avoid the frustration of wasted trips.

In Class Behavior

The classroom is a relaxed, but professional environment. It is important that the activities, conversations, dress, and behaviors of all students maintain this standard.

- You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the material we will be going over. This means that you have any materials that you are required to have and that you have read any required material. Failure to be prepared will lower the quality of the entire class and will affect your grade.
- If you have had a long night and are too “sleepy” to be in class...stay home. You must be ready to participate in the class if you are going to be there.
- No eating is allowed in class (although non-alcoholic drinks are OK).
- Set your cell phones to vibrate and do not answer them in the class. If you are expecting an important call, sit close to the door so your leaving the class will not interrupt the class.
- There is absolutely no text messaging or instant messaging allowed during class. Students found to be doing so will be asked to leave the class and will be subject to embarrassment.
- If you are going to use a computer in class you must use it to take notes or to participate directly in class activities. No web browsing, email, or any other work can be done on the computer. Violations will result in having your use of the computer suspended.
- When you are in the class you are to be involved in doing work for THIS class not any other class.
- Tape recording of classes is OK
- Participation in all class activities is expected and your behavior is to be courteous to the diversity within the class.
- Adult guest (no children should be in the class) will be expected to participate in any activities that are going on in the class.

Online Behavior

The online environment represents an extension of the classroom and all the above rules apply...where applicable.

- Online communication will be respectful and professional at all times.
- “Flaming” or attacking someone online is strictly prohibited and will result in your suspension from the use of Blackboard.
- Online discussions are to be taken seriously and should be explored as an excellent opportunity for learning...you are expected to grasp this opportunity to maximize your learning in this class.
- Keep in mind that discussion boards are public forums. Discussion of personal issues, diagnoses, trauma, etc. are not prohibited, but be knowledgeable that whatever is posted in the discussion boards is viewable by the whole class.
- With the above in mind. What is said in the discussion boards STAYS in the discussion boards. If people open up about their thoughts, opinions, and feelings, it is done with the assumption of confidentiality among the students in the class.
- Reading instructions for detail is a very important skill for online learning. Be sure to read ALL the instructions and documents that I place online.
- Without the advantage of a weekly class to remind you of due dates and assignments, an online class can become neglected. Manage your time and your activities to ensure that you get work done for this class. Failure in my online class is mostly due to a lack of QUANTITY of work, not a lack of QUALITY.