**Netiquette Guidelines**

*Adapted from Dr. Pauline Hoffman, St. Bonaventure University*

*Noncompliance with these netiquette guidelines will result in one warning message from your instructor via private message. If violation of guidelines continues after the warning, a failing grade will be given. Violation may be as noticed by the instructor or via confidential complaints from class colleagues to the instructor.*

**Disagree politely** **and respectfully.** You are welcome to disagree, just remember that our communication is akin to a face-to-face discussion. Imagine how you would disagree with a colleague at work and take a similar approach. You are encouraged to be passionate and lively in your communications. However, your ideas should still be delivered with respect and professionalism. You may or may not agree with me and vice versa. We will act professionally. Don’t type whatever may be going on in your head. Think before acting.

**Be open-minded.** You may consider an idea without accepting it. This is part of the educational process. So be open to the perspectives of others, even if they do not resonate with your own point of view.

**Social media vs. online course language.**Keep in mind that this course is within an academic environment. Therefore, you should not write to your professor or to your course colleagues as if you were texting friends, sending an informal tweet or posting on Facebook. Write as you would for any academic or professional pursuit.

**Read and think before “Send.”** Before you hit the “Send” button, check your work for proper grammar, punctuation and spelling. After proofreading, think about your communication and make sure that is what you want to say. Remember that online discussions and emails may be misconstrued because we don’t have the benefit of seeing the associated nonverbal cues.

**Add value.** Get your point across, but be cautious of only pushing your points or agenda. As in any field/work situation, no one wants to listen to someone who is only promoting his or her ideas. Listen to others. Share what you have learned from your own experience. Offer tips to your colleagues.

**Be courteous.** Remember simple courtesies, like saying please and thank you. Don't write in all caps (it looks like you are shouting – unless that is your intention in which case please refer to previous bullet points). While some academics and professionals abhor emoticons, I do not mind them. However, please do not use them in excess.

**Avoid offensive language**.

**Avoid getting off topic**.

**Avoid negative emotional language (flaming).** If you have a concern or are feeling frustrated, you are always welcome to private message me. I would rather you unload with me than with your colleagues.

**Be brave.** Be willing to express your opinion, even if you are in the minority. Doing so, enriches our discussion.

**Be gracious.**We tend to be more critical in written communication, than if we were speaking to one another face-to-face. It’s easier to see mistakes in writing. You will also notice that Moodle does not have a reliable spell-check function. While we should all proofread our work, be gracious and seek to understand a person’s good intention. We are all learning and growing together.

**When in doubt….think first, send later.**