

Netiquette for online teaching: Guidelines for students

(Updated: 02.06.2020)

The need to transition to online teaching at short-notice and without prior preparation requires instructors and students to demonstrate patience, creativity, and a readiness to embrace unfamiliar and new teaching methods. Please observe the following guidelines to ensure the smooth execution of digital courses.

General guidelines for synchronous courses

1. Be punctual and sign in a few minutes before the scheduled start to test the audio and image quality.
2. Keep your microphone on mute whenever you are not speaking. Avoid creating any background noise when your microphone is on.
3. If possible, use a headset (plug-in headphones or similar) to avoid feedback effects from your computer's speakers.

Additional guidelines for lectures

1. During lectures or large Q/A sessions offered in addition to teaching videos, you can participate and answer or ask questions using the integrated chat function or the microphone and video camera. Your lecturer will inform you of the options available. You are not required to turn your camera on.
2. Audio or video recordings of the course – including partial recordings – are only permitted with the prior express consent of all participants. Any images and audio are the property of the lecturers.

Additional guidelines for seminars, practical sessions, and tutorials

An online seminar remains a seminar; it is not a podcast. Please actively participate and remain focused, just as you would during an in-presence seminar. Your grade/credits will continue to be awarded based on your active participation and contribution. To ensure the quality of dialog-oriented seminars with fewer participants, the following additional rules apply.

1. Audio and video recordings of content contributed by the seminar instructor are only permitted with the express consent of the seminar instructor. Photos and audio and video recordings of any content contributed by students or guests (e.g. presentations, expert interviews) are prohibited.
2. Your oral contributions and assessed work (e.g. presentations) should be made with your camera on as far as possible. In exceptional cases it may be advisable to switch off the camera to conserve bandwidth. The seminar instructor will determine and inform you of binding rules.
3. If you would like to conceal your background while your camera is on, ZOOM offers the option to replace it with a virtual background. Other providers offer the option to diffuse the background.

4. In order to assist your seminar instructor in moderating the course, please enter your first name and the first two letters of your last name when signing in to the video conference. Alternatively, you can also enter your full name.
5. Under no circumstances may your video background be used to communicate political or commercial content (political party or campaign posters, political symbols, advertising messages, etc. Seminar instructors are authorized to exclude students from participating if they repeatedly violate this rule.

Standard etiquette, as for in-presence seminars, and the University's netiquette guidelines on its Facebook page apply to all participants in every online course. To report any recurring and gross violations, please send an email to vp-sl@tu-berlin.de.

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