Netiquette and Student Communication in the Virtual World

Jana McCarthy
Master Advising Specialist
Austin Community College
jana.mccarthy@austincc.edu
Internet People - Gretchen McCulloch

● Pre-Internet People
  ○ The Oldest Group - Late adopters who only sporadically use the internet out of necessity.
  ○ According to McCulloch (2019), “Internet slang like acronyms and emoticons is not just unfamiliar to them, it signals membership in a group that they have no desire to be a part of.”

● Old Internet People
  ○ Earliest adopters of the internet. Familiar with coding, created leetspeak, and early rudimentary hacking.
Internet People - Gretchen McCulloch

- Full Internet People
  - Joined the internet in the late 1990s or early 2000s as a social tool. Most of their internet slang came from peers, who used acronyms and emoticons to connote tone of voice.

- Semi-Internet People
  - Joined around the same period and initially used the internet for work/school purposes. To Semi-Internet People, *All meaning is face value meaning.*

- Post-Internet People
  - Youngest group, have grown up with access to the online world and tend to **infer emotional meaning** from subtle cues.
Generation Z and The Tech-Obsessed World

- Gen Z students, our Post-Internet people, may be comfortable with all of this, but they may struggle under it as well (Mims, 2019)
- Gen Z does not distinguish between them - followers matter
- Online Privacy is a myth
- Social Media is their primary info source and connection
- High comfort level with communication via text/chat
- Good at inferring emotion and meaning through text
Internet Speak Can Fill the Emotional Gaps

- Our brains process emojis in the same way they process faces (Gantiva et al., 2019). Emojis manage the emotional tone of digital messages
  - For example:
    - Could you review that email again? 😊
    - Only one more semester until graduation. 🎓
    - I nearly broke my leg! 😂

- Emoticons still work as well.

- To younger students, these small acts make you feel more accessible and available to them.
Internet Speak Can Fill the Emotional Gaps

● Capilizations
  ○ When texting or chatting, the importance of capitalization varies by generation.
  ○ DON’T YELL, unless you want your student to feel scolded, avoid all caps

● Question Marks
  ○ Used to express uncertainty (Food?), to show confusion (?), and more confusion (????)
  ○ Exception - Rhetorical Questions

● Repeat Letters for Effect - with or without sarcasm
  ○ Example: Nooooooooooooollllllllllllllllllllllllllll
  ○ May not be a best practice for Advisor-to-Student Communication, but it’s important to be aware of this, as students may use it themselves to communicate with their advisor
Internet Speak Can Fill the Emotional Gaps

● Ellipses ...
  ○ The most used and most misunderstood punctuation on the internet.
  ○ Over age 35? You are more likely to view “...” as a pause when typing or texting.
    ■ It’s a break in the stream of consciousness or for emphasis
  ○ Under 35? “Why are you judging me?!?!?”
    ■ Ellipses are seen as a precious and poignant expression of hesitation, disappointment, or impatience.
    ■ Most passive-aggressive punctuation in the English language.
  ○ When your boss replies to a long email simply with, “Thanks...”
Email - What do you notice in this conversation?

Subject line: 1234567 Changing Major

hi I need to make an appointment with an advisor

Hi Student,

I’ve reviewed your account and it appears that there are a few holds on your account. Please see your next steps below:
[insert steps here]
Please let me know if you have any further questions about this or if you get stuck.

thanks!

when can i register for classes?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Style 1</th>
<th>Style 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alex:</strong> id 1234567 I need to change my major</td>
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<td><strong>Advisor:</strong> I’m happy to assist with that. Please give me a moment to open and review your record.</td>
<td><strong>Advisor:</strong> Hi Alex, I’m happy to assist with that. Please give me a moment to open and review your record.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Alex:</strong> ok</td>
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<td><strong>Alex:</strong> I did not pass.</td>
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<td><strong>Advisor:</strong> Alex, have you had your scores sent to ACC? We’ll need those.</td>
<td><strong>Advisor:</strong> That’s okay, it’s not a pass/fail test :)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alex:</strong> no</td>
<td><strong>Alex:</strong> Have you had your scores sent to ACC? We’ll need those.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advisor:</strong> Okay Alex, we need you to do that next.</td>
<td><strong>Advisor:</strong> No problem. I’ll get you everything you need to get that done.</td>
</tr>
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### Chat Comparison - What differences do you see?

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<td>Alex: ok</td>
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<td>Advisor: It looks like you will need to either take the TSI placement test or send your scores to ACC. The link to take it is <a href="https://www.austincc.edu/admissions/tsi-assessment">https://www.austincc.edu/admissions/tsi-assessment</a> . If you need to order them instead, you need to complete the form at the bottom of that link instead. Once you have your test done, we can meet again for an advising appointment. What questions do you have?</td>
<td>Advisor: We need to work together to determine your TSI status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex: I did not pass it.</td>
<td>Advisor: That’s okay, it’s not a pass/fail test. :) Do you want to retake it or use your previous scores?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisor: Awesome. I’ll get you the link to schedule that at the end of our chat with your next steps. What questions do you have about the TSI?</td>
<td>Advisor: I think I want to retake it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex: Is there something I can use to study?</td>
<td>Advisor: Sure is. I’ll get you that link too! Let’s schedule a follow up appointment.</td>
</tr>
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Professionalism with Personality

- Ask yourself, “is my tone and intention clearly expressed?”
  - Can I do something to make my student feel more comfortable?
    - Without making myself look silly.
- Don’t assume everyone knows where you’re coming from
- Rather than using “...” consider send one line of text at a time
- Emojis and Emoticons are okay
  - Avoid overuse and using them to provide a negative expressions of emotion.
- Remember the Human - Golden Rule of Internet Communications (Shea, 1994).
  - Always be aware that you are talking to a person, not a device.
- Sarcasm does not translate well
Professionalism with Personality - Emojis once more

- **Benefits of Emojis at Work:**
  - Communicate nuances in tone
  - Show empathy and spread positivity
  - Helps reflect your personality.

- **Using Emojis at Work:**
  - Focus on reinforcing your message’s true intent.
  - Avoid “softening” biting words. Best to leave negative emojis out.
  - Stick with the safe, basic, professional emojis. There are plenty to choose from.
Literature Sourced/Referenced


● Grammarly Study. 
  https://www.grammarly.com/blog/workplace-email-report/


● Survey Monkey Study.  

● Wall Street Journal  
  https://www.wsj.com/articles/yes-you-actually-should-be-using-emojis-at-work-11563595262  
Websites & Web Articles Sourced/Referenced

- https://medium.com/@frithahookway/unpacking-ellipsis-aka-the-dots-of-doom-36b610b02abf
- https://blogs.scientemag.org/books/2019/06/03/because-internet/
- https://frontapp.com/blog/using-emojis-professionally-at-work
- https://emojipedia.org/
- https://www.wired.com/story/boomerspeak-enregisterment/
Videos Sourced/Referenced

**YouTube Playlist Link:**

Professionalism with Personality

https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PL761TadX7QRFZlEWNVscENb8EmOWF9Rek

Want to Share Ideas or Discuss More?

**Jana McCarthy**  
*Austin Community College*

jana.mccarthy@austincc.edu