Online participation

Many subjects consist of hybrid face-to-face and online methods to deliver content. This blended approach may look different depending on the unit or the content that is being presented. Successful online strategies aim to facilitate students in:

→ student-led discussions.
→ finding and discussing web resources.
→ helping each other to learn (peer assistance) (Pelz, 2010).

You still need to show similar active participation skills in an online discussion just as you would in person, in your class. However, there are some nuances that will allow you to get the most out of your class.

Netiquette

A word that you will undoubtedly come across is 'netiquette'. This term refers to the written or unwritten rules that you should abide by when participating in online platforms. In brief, the following key elements are important:

→ be polite and avoid the use of bad, inappropriate, or offensive language
→ respect others' points of view
→ be aware of cultural differences, and
→ be careful with humour and sarcasm (Western Sydney University, 2015).

Getting started with vUWS

If you need an introduction to vUWS (the WSU online learning platform) watch this YouTube playlist. It's a series of short videos that will orientate you well on how to use all the different features of a vUWS site. If you still have questions and need further information the University has the IT Survival Guide with helpful documentation and contact links.

Video conferencing

Western Sydney University predominately uses Zoom. Getting to know how to use this platform early will be helpful, as you'll undoubtedly need to access it at some point through your course. The resource Communicating your ideas (PDF, 75 kB) for face-to-face classrooms is also relevant for video sessions.

References

Blackboard Inc. (2013). *How to use blackboard discussions.* Retrieved from

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Networks, *14*(1), 103-116. Retrieved from http://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ909855

Western Sydney University. (2015) *A Guide to online netiquette*. Retrieved from

https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/tld/home/how_to/how-

to_resources/internet_resources/outlook_online_netiquette (URL no longer accessible,

instead please access: Western IT Survival Guide)