



# NETnet's Student Orientation to Interactive Videoconferencing (ITV)

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## Instructions:



*It's a good idea to introduce students to distance learning in the ITV classroom environment on or before the first class meeting. Using the outline provided below, address these issues and explain the instructor's expectations of students in the ITV classroom. **THIS IS A SUGGESTED ORIENTATION ONLY. CHECK WITH YOUR INSTITUTION FOR INSTITUTION-SPECIFIC GUIDELINES AND MODIFY THIS OUTLINE ACCORDINGLY.** Footnotes provide links to additional instructor resources at the NETnet Online Resource Center.*

## Student Orientation to Distance Learning

- Download and distribute [A Student's Guide to Distance Education](#)<sup>1</sup> or direct students to the [NETnet Student Website](#)<sup>2</sup> for glossaries, guides, and tips for getting the most from their distance learning course
- If possible, arrange for a pre-class orientation session

## Orientation to the Equipment<sup>3</sup>

### Cameras

- Point out the teacher and student cameras to the students
- Ask students to sit within camera view (when possible; the default student camera shot may not be able to capture the entire class)

### Monitors

- Explain what students will see on the monitor(s); the instructor, other remote classes, videotapes, document camera, whiteboard, PowerPoints, etc.)

### Student microphones

- Inform students that in NETnet classrooms, the mics are 'push-and-**hold**' to talk, and that a red light will indicate when the mic is on
- Explain that when the mic is pushed, the student camera will automatically track to the area where the student is sitting
- Ask students to wait at least one full second after pressing the mic to begin speaking. This will allow the camera to track to the student, and compensate for the brief audio delay. Ask students to wait a second to release the mike after they have finished speaking

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.netnet.org/instructors/resources/PDFpage.htm>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.netnet.org/students/index.htm>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.netnet.org/instructors/resources/faq.htm>; <http://www.netnet.org/instructors/netnet/manual.htm>

## Policies

### **Videotaping policy**

- Inform students that the class may be videotaped and have them sign a **Student Conduct Contract and Waiver**<sup>4</sup> if they have not already done so

### **Etiquette policy**

- Ask that students turn off cell phones unless the instructor has given prior approval. A ringing cell phone can disrupt the audio in a NETnet room. If cell phones must be left on, set to vibrate
- Request that no food or drink be brought into the ITV classrooms
- Require students to identify themselves by name and site when asking a question or making a comment: "This is Angelica in Tyler"
- Ask that students face forward and speak clearly in a normal tone of voice so they can be heard distinctly at all the sites
- Due to the brief time delay in transmitting audio, students (and the instructor) must learn to finish thoughts in a single statement with an obvious conclusion. Otherwise, students will assume the speaker has finished the statement, press their mics to talk, and people will begin 'stepping' on each others' comments
- Ask students to allow the onscreen site to finish speaking before responding
- Remind students that an ITV course is not passive television viewing; it's an interactive course in which they are expected to participate
- Advise students to avoid side conversations - they can be noisy and distracting
- Ask students to let the instructor or facilitator know if there is a problem with the video or audio so **Tech Support**<sup>5</sup> can be contacted to correct it

### **Attendance policy**

- Inform students of the class attendance policy, including the policy regarding late arrivals
- The instructor should also indicate the procedure students are to follow if the instructor is absent unexpectedly. (Students may be asked to wait for a host-site facilitator to indicate that they may leave, or directed to their onsite facilitator or course website for instructions)

### **Language policy**

- Remind students to watch their 'humor' - not everyone thinks the same things are funny, and reactions of other students may be hard to gauge at a distance
- Advise students that racist/sexist/inflammatory comments will not be tolerated - remind students that classes may be videotaped
- Encourage students to use the new terminology they learn in the course

### **Discipline policy**

- Require students to fill out a **Student Conduct Contract and Waiver**<sup>6</sup> and keep it on file. This should spell out the instructor's expectations in detail, and also list consequences

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.netnet.org/instructors/resources/PDFpage.htm>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.netnet.org/instructors/coursedev/itvcourse/index.htm>

## **Procedures**

### **Asking questions**

- Explain the procedure for asking questions in class. Should students hold questions until a designated time, or will the instructor accept questions during the lecture/presentation?
- Remind students of the steps in using the mics: press-and-hold mic, wait a second, begin speaking, finish their comment (avoiding long pauses), wait a second, and release the mic

### **Procedures for **technical difficulties**<sup>7</sup>**

Explain in detail:

- When, how and where students can get technical support
- What to do if they cannot hear or see the instructor
- What to do if the instructor cannot hear or see them
- What to do if the system goes down
- How long to wait for the system to come back up

### **Handling of student materials**

- Explain where and how (from their local facilitator, remote library access, email, snail mail, fax) students will get readings, assignments or other course materials
- Explain how students should handle turning in assignments - email, snail mail, fax, or by other means
- Spell out in detail the policy on late assignments, technological difficulties, illnesses, etc.
- Let students know how their work will be evaluated and when they can expect their grades

### **Testing procedures**

- Explain how testing takes place in the ITV class - will students go to a testing center at their site, will a proctor be present in their classroom, will they be given take-home tests and email completed tests to the instructor?
- Spell out in detail the policy on make-up tests

### **Office hours**

- Inform students when and how the instructor can be reached (phone, email, fax, chat room, etc.). This should also be stated clearly on the course **syllabus**<sup>8</sup>

### **Check website for announcements/syllabus changes**

- Remind students that the course website/homepage will often have late-breaking announcements, and encourage them to check the website prior to each class. This is particularly helpful during inclement weather or during flu season, etc.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.netnet.org/instructors/resources/PDFpage.htm>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.netnet.org/instructors/coursedev/itvcourse/index.htm>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.netnet.org/instructors/coursedev/webcourse/syllabus.htm>