QCC Virtual Classroom Faculty Guidelines

This document is not meant to mandate how faculty members teach their real time remote courses. Rather, it provides faculty with guidelines to help them set expectations for students in their virtual classroom and address Code of Conduct issues should they arise.

Faculty members have the right to manage their classrooms and set reasonable rules in order to maintain a productive and disruption-free learning environment. A remote or online course should be administered in the same manner as an in-person course to the extent possible. Student conduct that is prohibited in an in-person course may be similarly prohibited in a virtual course, including, but not limited to, coming to class high or drunk, dressing inappropriately, engaging in sexual behavior or harassment, and inviting non-students into the classroom. Faculty should be clear in their syllabus and/or learning management system as to their expectations of student conduct, including a statement that all student conduct, regardless of the course modality, is subject to the Student Code of Conduct. Virtual classrooms are considered College property, so the College Policies about such matters as drug and alcohol use, sexual harassment, Title IX, and safety apply to these settings. (Visit https://www.qcc.edu/student-handbook/college-policies to view the full list of policies.)

If an issue related to the faculty member's virtual classroom expectations arises, the faculty member should address this issue directly with the student. If the problem persists after communicating with the student, the faculty member can use the appropriate Student Incident Report form on this website http://www2.qcc.mass.edu/generic/forms/incidents.html to report the issue to the Dean of Students' Office. A student who engages in classroom conduct that interferes with or disrupts the learning process, or who engages in threatening, harassing or intimidating conduct, may be temporarily removed from a virtual class meeting by a faculty member and is subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the College's Student Code of Conduct.

Regardless of time of day, in case of an emergency where a student's well-being is in jeopardy or a law has been broken, please contact Campus Police at 508-854-4444.

Setting Virtual Classroom Participation Expectations

Webcam Use
As long as this is clearly stated in their syllabus and/or learning management system, the faculty member can determine whether students are required to turn on their webcams or whether this is optional.

Possible Wording You Can Use in Your Syllabus and/or Learning Management System:
- **Webcams Required**: This class requires that students have their webcams turned on. If you have unique circumstance that prevent this, please speak with me privately.
- **Webcams Required on Certain Days**: This class requires that students have their webcams turned on, on presentation days.
- **Webcams Optional**: Students are encouraged to turn on their webcam if their context allows but are not required to.

Some things to consider when making this decision:

- You may need to see students while they are taking tests or for accreditation purposes.
- The content and/or assignments of some classes, such as Speech Communication Skills, may necessitate students having their webcams turned on to present, demonstrate a skill, and/or act as audience members for their classmates.
- If you are asking students to turn on webcams so you can gauge their level of participation, consider whether there are activities or other virtual classroom tools (such as breakout rooms/breakout groups or polls) that could serve the same purpose.
- Some students may be accessing the virtual classroom by calling through a cell phone and therefore they cannot turn on a webcam.
- Some students may be taking the class from a setting which they do not want to share with others.
- Although Zoom has a virtual background option, this does not work on all devices, such as Chromebooks. The Zoom virtual background also uses algorithms that cause the background to cover the faces of some people with darker skin tones.
- Using a webcam requires a high level of bandwidth. Depending on a student's location and Internet provider, they may not have enough bandwidth to turn on their webcam without causing Internet stability issues.

Driving or Riding in an Automobile

The College does not approve of students driving while participating in a virtual classroom because of potential safety hazards and because driving can impact the student's ability to focus on and participate in the class.

Name

When logging onto the virtual classroom, students should use their name that is on the faculty member's roster or the preferred name that they have shared with the faculty member.

Guests in the Virtual Classroom

The faculty member can set reasonable guidelines about guests in the classroom while taking into consideration that some students may be attending class at home where there are children or other family members.

Chat

The faculty member has the option of enabling or disabling private chat between students in their virtual classroom. If private chat is enabled and a student reports to the faculty member that another student has engaged in harassing behavior, the faculty member should report this incident using the appropriate Student Incident Report form.

Lying Down in Class

The faculty member can set reasonable expectations for virtual classroom behavior. For example, if a faulty member would not permit a student to lie on the classroom floor during an in-person class, the faculty member can have a similar expectation for a virtual class.

Use of Profanities and Vulgar Gestures

The faculty member can set expectations in their syllabus about student behavior in the virtual classroom.

Drugs and Alcohol

Quinsigamond Community College complies with all state and federal laws with regard to the possession, use, manufacture, and/or distribution of unlawful substances. All such activities are strictly prohibited on all College property, in College vehicles, and at all off-campus College-sponsored events. If the faculty member suspects or witnesses a student drinking alcohol or using illegal drugs, the faculty member can report this using the appropriate Student Incident Report form.

Sexual Behavior

The law is very clear that engaging in sexual behavior and/or appearing nude or in various stages of undress while on a video system is considered dissemination of pornography. Since virtual classrooms operate through the use of video systems, there are legal ramifications of such behavior.

Sexual Harassment

If a student sexually harasses another student/other students or the faculty member, the faculty member should report this incident using the appropriate Student Incident Report form.

Smoking

For legal reasons, the faculty member cannot prevent the student from smoking tobacco in their own home.

Concern For A Student

If you are worried about a student (maybe you have seen changes in their behavior or they start missing classes, or they share that they are dealing with major life crises, for example COVID, safety issues, hunger or homelessness), please fill out the CARE team form https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?QuinsigamondCC&layout_id=3, and the CARE team will reach out and provide case management as needed.

FERPA Considerations

If a parent, guardian, or other person enters your virtual classroom and asks how their student is doing in the class, you can explain that legally you cannot share that information with them and that they should speak with their student.

Please review the "FERPA Considerations for Remote Instruction" document for further information. (You can find this document in the Educator Instructional Resources course. Go to the "How-To Resources and Videos" content area of that course and click on the "Video Recording - FERPA & Accessibility" folder.)