

Guidelines for Electronic and Wireless Devices in the Classroom Fall 2007

❖ Guidelines for Faculty & Staff

Electronic and Wireless devices have become an integral part of modern life. These devices allow for ready access to knowledge and continuous connectivity. It is important to acknowledge not only the power of electronic/wireless devices but also the appropriate use of these devices. The guidelines outlined below provide the College of Health Sciences community, including faculty, staff and students, with a framework directing the use of wireless and electronic devices in the classroom.

It is important to acknowledge that today's students accept electronic and wireless devices as a necessity of modern life. Many students use these devices to take notes and organize their coursework, whereas others may need these devices in order to succeed. However, electronic/wireless devices are also a potential source of distraction to students, instructors, and the classroom setting. Setting a few simple ground rules will allow for the appropriate use of electronic/wireless devices by students and minimize the potential distraction of these devices to the classroom setting.

- Considerations for regulating the use of electronic/wireless devices in the classroom
 - It is your right to specify the acceptable use of electronic/wireless devices in your classroom.
 - In the course syllabus, outline guidelines for the appropriate use of electronic/wireless devices in the classroom.
 - In the course syllabus, outline consequences of inappropriate use of electronic/wireless devices in the classroom.
 - Set “no laptop times” when laptop users must close their lids. Note that it may be necessary to make exceptions for students with special needs.
 - Explicitly state that the use of electronic/wireless devices is prohibited during exams or quizzes, unless otherwise specified.
 - If it is necessary to use these devices during an exam, consider restricting access to any web-based course-related materials during the exam period (i.e., course D2L sites).
 - Encourage students to be mindful of how they use these devices.
 - Empower students to speak directly with their peers to stop inappropriate use of these devices.
 - Establish a policy for communication of SAFE Alerts during device prohibited times.

- Establish laptop expectations: remind students of the following
 - All devices should be set to “vibrate” or “mute” during class.
 - Prohibit students from accepting non-emergency phone calls or messages during class.
 - Ask students to identify emergency situations **before** class begins.
 - Be willing to make accommodations if an emergency situation exists by requesting that the student sit near an exit and step outside of class to accept the call.

- Stay on task: avoid surfing, playing games, checking email or texting during class.
- Follow “device restricted times.”
- Respect requests from fellow students or instructors to turn off devices if they are distracting.
- Recognize that some students are legitimately distracted by the use of electronic/wireless devices. Be willing to make accommodations if concerns are raised (i.e., allowing students to change seats).

➤ Suggestions for the use of wireless devices in the classroom

With the availability of wireless connectivity across campus, the potential for using wireless devices in the class room is greatly expanded. Below are some further suggestions for using electronic/wireless devices in the classroom.

- Instructing
 - Create active-learning opportunities: Laptop and other e-learning strategies are most effective when used in combination with teaching methods designed to increase student participation.
 - Make use of “screen up” and “screen down” times.
 - Circulate around the classroom and take note of how students are using electronic/wireless devices.
 - Be familiar with the programs and technologies you are using; have a back-up plan if the technologies fail.
- Interacting
 - Use laptops to record or monitor group projects in class.
 - Increase student-student and student-instructor interaction to support active learning.
 - Integrate electronic/wireless devices into in-class and out-of-class activities.
- Improving
 - Seek feedback and suggestions from students.
 - Keep abreast of new technology and how these could be incorporated into the classroom setting.
 - Discuss successes and failures in the use of electronic/wireless devices with colleagues. What works and why?