

Distance Learning Procedures, Best Practices & Etiquette

(Upper School Guidance)

Aristoi Classical Academy's mission is to provide students with an academically challenging Classical Liberal Arts education that encourages them to develop a passion for learning and that gives them the means to become responsible citizens of virtuous character. The practices and administrative procedures concerning student conduct apply to the student's choices of actions off and on school property when the student is involved in a school-related activity. The following are focus points as we incorporate an online environment with our traditional on ground environment.

Whether on campus or online, classrooms should be a safe space to foster thoughtful comments and open discussions without hostile, discriminatory or inappropriate comments. Thus, it is important to ensure course participants engage in proper Internet etiquette to keep posts and visuals organized, focused and productive. Setting ground rules is useful to help raise general awareness among students and staff to maintain the learning experience.

Basic Ground Rules:

Honesty: Individuals must demand from themselves and their classmates' academic honesty and integrity. Academic honesty means demonstrating and upholding the highest integrity and honesty in all the academic work that is produced. In short, it means doing one's own work and not cheating, as well as not presenting the work of others as one's own. In contrast, academic dishonesty or misconduct is any type of cheating that occurs in relation to a formal academic exercise and shall not be tolerated. It includes plagiarism which is the adoption or reproduction of ideas, words or statements of another person without due acknowledgment.

Interactions: Kindness should rule the classroom environment. Aristoi's vision for each classroom is to cultivate virtues of courage, moderation, and wisdom. Online classrooms aim to be a refuge of humble and magnanimous dialogue seeking to help each member become who he or she is meant to be.

Best Practices to follow while engaging in online learning & visual communications:

1. Wear classroom appropriate attire in a livestream setting. Be conscious that everyone in the conference can see you.
2. Hang a sign on the door of your room entry that you are in a video conferencing session.
3. Test your microphone before you video call. Mute your microphone whenever you're not speaking -- even if you're alone in the room. Background noise can be an annoying distraction and stifle any conference flow.

4. Make sure your room is well lit (side lighting is the best). Use natural light from windows or simply turn on the overhead light in the room to brighten up the conference. Video allows face-to-face meetings from our virtual study space.
5. Be punctual and courteous. Introduce yourself and take note of other attendees' names so you can address them by name.
6. Refrain from unnecessary distractions such as excessively clicking your pen, tapping on your desk or doing anything else annoying or distracting. Avoid yawning, gum chewing, etc.
7. Wall art or decorations should be appropriate. Avoid having mugs, dishes or trash viewable.
8. Refrain from eating. Having a glass of water nearby away from your tech equipment is appropriate.
9. Position your camera to avoid odd angles. Weird camera angles can be distracting during video conference calls. Camera should be eye level.
10. Do video calls from your desk or other appropriate location. Lying on the couch (or anywhere) with your pc on your chest or stomach doesn't present a scholarly view.
11. Avoid high traffic areas. Sometimes it's hard to avoid but do not position yourself where your siblings, pets, etc. will be parading through the view of the camera on a regular basis.
12. Proper identification of self when entering an online forum is mandatory. Use of a false name or irregular login will not be allowed. If using a pic moniker (avatar) to further identify self, be sure that it is classroom appropriate.

Best Practices for Online Discussions

- 1) Participate:** A shared learning environment is effective if everyone involved shares.
- 2) Respect Diversity:** Your virtual classroom—and academia as a whole—should be, without question, a safe space for people of all races, genders, ages, orientations, religions, disabilities and economic statuses. Derogatory, sarcastic comments and jokes that marginalize anyone are unacceptable. Offensive language—or language that could be construed as offensive—should be avoided and defused. In the unfortunate event that this becomes an issue, immediate action will be taken to protect the integrity & safety of the classroom.
- 3) Use Proper Writing Style:** This is a requirement. A virtual classroom is a scholarly environment. Write as if you were drafting an essay. Correct spellings, grammar rules, and styles are expected in all scholarly writings.
- 4) Help Others:** The benefit of interactive education is that students can act as additional facilitators. If you find that some of the participants have more experience than others in using online discussion forums, encourage them to advocate. This will not only give them a boost of confidence, but it will also help bring the other students up to speed.