

With classes being delivered in alternate formats, we are relying on online and virtual communication more than ever. Your ability to communicate clearly and professionally online is important. Use the tips below to make sure your online communication reflects you. Please remember that the St. Lawrence Student Code of Conduct applies to all your interactions with others - even online.

## PAUSE BEFORE YOU POST

Take a moment to proofread your writing for spelling and grammar before posting online, submitting an assignment, or sending an email. Knowing your audience will allow for clear communication and avoid misinterpretation. For example, slang language is not appropriate in professional communication.

## Five things to think about before making an online post/email or message

### 1. Would I say this to someone in person?

If the answer is no, don't post it.

### 2. Could my tone or choice of words be misunderstood?

If the topic is heated or sensitive, be careful about the words and tone you use. If you're not sure how it will be received, consider getting a second opinion, reconsidering your word choice, or not posting it.

### 3. Should I use all caps?

Using all caps is often interpreted as anger or yelling. Avoid using all caps in any communications, academic or social.

### 4. Should I use emoticons, humour or sarcasm?

Emoticons, humour, and sarcasm are not understood by everyone in the same way. Use them with caution and only when you know your audience, especially in online academic environments.

### 5. What should I do if there has been a misunderstanding?

Miscommunication can happen when communicating online. Using "I" statements and giving others the opportunity to explain before jumping to conclusions is important. It's okay to not agree with someone else, but always be respectful of different opinions.

## Participating in an Online Classroom

- ▶ Treat your online classes like they are in person.
- ▶ Dress as if you're going to campus or your workplace.
- ▶ Ensure your video background is free of distractions and does not include any pictures or art that can be viewed as inappropriate.
- ▶ Mute your microphone when you're not speaking. Background noise like paper shuffling, music, or other people can create distractions.

## Email Etiquette

- ▶ Your subject line should reflect the purpose of your email
- ▶ Use a proper greeting
- ▶ Avoid slang, short forms, and emoticons
- ▶ Organize your thoughts into paragraphs so the reader can understand the information
- ▶ Sign your email with your full name and student number.

If you are angry or upset, don't send an email. Instead give yourself a 24-hour cooling off period. If you still want to send an email, perhaps have a friend or family member read it over before sending. Make sure your message is clear and respectful.

## Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying can take many forms: personal insults, excluding others from academic discussions, posting pictures without someone's permission, gossiping and discussing others online, posting offensive content, cyberstalking, trolling, and many others.

From the St. Lawrence College Student Code of Conduct:

*(e) refrain from using information and communication technologies, such as e-mail, cell phones, text or instant messaging, social media, AirDrop technology (Bluetooth messaging) and websites to engage in deliberate, repeated and/or hostile behaviour that has a negative impact on another person's dignity, causes harm or makes a person feel unsafe. (p.4).*

*(f) refrain from making statements or actions that are known, or ought to reasonably be known to be unwelcome or damaging to another member of the college community, the institution, or its agencies. These statements and actions include those that are written, spoken, or electronic.*

## SLC Student Code of Conduct

Become familiar with the SLC Student Code of Conduct so you know what is expected of you and what your responsibilities are. The Code of Conduct can be found on your SLC.me page under Campus Life>Student Code of Conduct Policy.

For more information, or to report inappropriate online behaviour, contact the tri-campus Student Rights & Responsibilities Office:

**SRRO@sl.on.ca**  
**stlawrencecollege.ca/SRRO**

Or if behaviour is concerning or unsafe, you can make a report to:

**Behavioural Intervention Team**  
**stlawrencecollege.ca/BIT**