

CHAPTER 2:

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COLLEGE STUDENT ETIQUETTE

PRINCIPLES/THINGS TO KNOW

Three important truths

1. Certain things are expected of you in college. The sooner you know how to meet and surpass those expectations, the more success you'll achieve.
2. People judge you by your manners. Develop good ones.
3. Likeability gets you a long way. If you respect others and respect yourself, you will be more likeable. You can't please everyone, but you can respect everyone.

Before you even show up, start thinking like an adult

Be an adult. Even if you don't feel like one yet; even if you don't want to; even if it's hard. You may regret acting irresponsibly or entitled or short-sighted like a teenager, but you will never regret being responsible and gracious and patient like an adult. How do you become an adult? It's a lifelong process, and you definitely know people who haven't gotten there, but here's some advice to get started.

Adults ask for help

Ask your professor, your roommate, your residence hall director. Worried about how you get your mail? Can't find your classroom on the

first day? Ask someone. Can't find research? Librarians EXIST to help you. So do most of the people at K-State. They work here because they enjoy students. Don't ever worry about if asking questions makes you look stupid. Your peers aren't looking at you. They're worried about how they can find the answers to their own questions.

Adults keep their commitments

Can't keep up with all of them? Choose a few and commit 100% instead of flaking.

Adults have good manners

Manners aren't about being snobby or keeping your elbows off the table. Manners are about being considerate, respectful, and honest with the people around you. College is an unfamiliar world, but you and the people around you shouldn't have to feel uncomfortable as you navigate that unfamiliar world. The following advice will help you become comfortable with your new life here at K-State.

Professionalism

"So the first thing is, start practicing on never saying 'um'."

I'm sure multiple students have heard this suggestion from English teachers throughout their high school career but it is actually an important piece of advice to follow. When talking with professors, friends, coworkers, or anyone that you are trying to make a good first impression on, do not use the word "um" (or "like" for that matter. In fact "like" is worse).

Without using filler words such as like and um, you can come across as more confident, intelligent, and believable.

This is most important in speeches and job interviews and it's best to start practicing early than learning this lesson the hard way.

Darrah Tinkler, K-State First Student Advisory Board Member

RESIDENTIAL LIFE

Community

Living with hundreds of other people in the same building AND sharing a room and bathroom is hard work, so think of your residence hall community as a job. Your community members are your bosses. Act respectfully and considerately so your bosses don't want to fire you. Often, roommate conflicts can be solved with small acts of thoughtfulness such as using earbuds instead of blasting your favorite song, taking visitors to the lobby or other common spaces, and keeping your messiness to a minimum.

It is not uncommon to have minor disagreements or moments when you feel uncomfortable as you set the ground rules for living in your space. You should have conversations with your roommate about what each of you needs to be successful. If you're having a problem with your roommate or community, finding the right information to solve that problem is essential. Often, the person who has that information is outside of the situation. Your Resident Assistant or Community Coordinator are two options for helping you mediate any conflicts, and they can help you build your new community.

Great communities are made up of people who contribute. Consider serving as a leader on your floor or in your hall. You have many opportunities, and you are sure to find a way to apply your leadership skills through the Association of Residence Halls, National Residence Hall Honorary, housing and dining ambassadors, hall governing board or judicial board. You will gain great experience, and it will help your voice be heard.

Don't be a mooch

Be considerate of other people's time, stuff, and money. If you're low on cash, pay the other person back later that day, if possible. If you borrow a towel or a shirt from your roommate, return it promptly (and wash it first; otherwise – ew). If you make a commitment, even just to hang out, show up on time. No one wants to be the person everyone quits inviting over because of that person's extreme moochiness.

Do not, I repeat, do not, be a total slob with your new roommate. Examples that I can give, from experience, include not letting your apple juice grow mold in your cups, leaving ramen noodles in a bowl for so long they could become the new Hoover Dam, and bringing home a trash bag full of wet clothes from Christmas break, planning on drying them in the residence hall dryer, and then find said wet clothes still in the trash bag when you are preparing to leave for Spring break. True story.

Darrah Tinkler, K-State First Student Advisory Board Member

THE CLASSROOM

Go to class

This isn't a secret. Showing up is essential to success in college.

K-State Tuition (ONLY tuition –no fees, etc) Fun Facts:

- In-state students pay \$18.27 per each class session for a MWF schedule.
- Out-of-state students pay \$48.47 per each class session for a MWF schedule.
- For a TU schedule, in-state students pay \$27.11, and out-of-state students spend \$72.71 per class session.
- Feel like sleeping in? Pretend you're throwing a \$20 in the trash as you hit snooze.

Also, disappearing helps *no one*. Family member sick? Chronically ill? Tell your instructor and tell K-State's Office of Student Life.

Dress for the occasion

Pajamas/yoga pants/gray sweat pants tell your instructor and your classmates that you see class as a distraction from your busy life of working out or sleeping or playing video games instead of as your main priority. If you're on the way to the Rec, pack a change of clothes. Your instructor does not expect a suit or a ball gown; jeans and a K-State t-shirt are adequate. No one wears pajama bottoms to Bill Snyder Family Stadium; your classroom deserves even more respect. (Note: However, just because you wear body paint to football games doesn't mean you should wear *that* to class.)

Don't pack up before class is over

Even if you have to get to another class across campus, this is rude and distracting. Essential information about upcoming homework assignments or exams comes in the last few minutes of class, so you're not just setting yourself up to miss something, but you're signaling to the professor that you do not care. Plus, the sound of zippers zipping is loud and contagious. Don't be patient zero.

Don't ask, "Can we get out early?" – even on Fridays

Your instructor will think you're being whiney (because you are), and you'll lose their respect.

Don't compare grades in class

Your grade is private. If you want to discuss your grade with a classmate or a friend, that's your business, but don't do it when the entire class (including your instructor) can hear your joy or your dismay.

Don't ask, "How do I get an A?"

First of all, the instructor doesn't "give" grades; *you* earn them. Instead, ask something along the lines of, "How can I learn the most?" If you're worried about a paper, see if the professor will meet with you a few weeks before it's due and go over it with you. This means you have to be prepared, but if you truly want the "Excellent" designation rather than the Average (a C) or an Above Average (a B), you have to earn it.

Don't follow your professor to their next class

The ten minutes between classes are crucial for your instructor to prepare for their next class, so they cannot give you their full attention. Make an appointment. You'll both get more out of the encounter.

When to stay home from class

If you have the stomach flu and are throwing up in the trash can in the hallway and your classmates then feel prompted to call out their sympathies from their desks (this is from real life, BTW), you need to stay home. You never have to give your instructor the gritty details. A simple, "I'm not feeling well, and I will not be in class today" is sufficient information.

Eat discreetly/leave food at home

Bringing Panda Express from the union to class every day will get on your classmates' nerves. It might make more money for Panda, and they'll appreciate it, but no one else will. Stick to foods that are quiet and smell-less. Think granola bars rather than orange chicken.

Group project etiquette

Everyone has a nightmarish group project story. Working in a small group with nearly total strangers can be hard, but the ability to work well with others is a life skill that you can use to impress employers and become a person other people actually want to be around. Come to the group meetings on time, take responsibility for your share of the work (don't be bossy and don't be lazy), and be considerate, honest, and respectful of your classmates.

Tips for successful out-of-classroom learning

1. If you attend a lecture, show up on time and stay through the question and answer session. The lecture is not over yet, and leaving is rude. This is often when the speaker is the most engaging, so you might enjoy it even more than the lecture.
2. Never use your cell phone (not even to check the time) during plays, lectures, concerts, or film screenings. In the case of live performances, often, they can see you being rude and looking at your phone. Think how much work your fellow K-State students or the visiting artists have dedicated to provide you with this experience. That dedication deserves your full attention.
3. Show up on time to tutoring sessions, advisor meetings, professor meetings, study groups, and any other commitment you make. Come prepared with questions or a draft of your paper or your ideal class schedule so you make the most of the time.

Email etiquette

The perfect email has:

- Specific subject line
- A respectful greeting
- Clear message body with a neutral or friendly tone
- Specific signature with student's name and the name and date of the class
- Does not ask for information your professor already gave you elsewhere

Example:

SUBJECT: Absent from class today

Dear Professor Smith,

I missed class today. Is the homework for Thursday the reading listed on the syllabus, or did you make changes in class today?

All the best,
Rachel Student
ENGL100
TU 9:30

A bad email has:

- No greeting
- Assumes class was not important
- No specific signature

Example:

Did we do anything important today?

Rachel

A REALLY bad email has:

- An impolite greeting
- Too much information about why you missed class
- No signature at all (but with an email as bad as this, who would blame you for preferring to stay anonymous?)

Example:

Yo,

I was hungover this morning and decided class wasn't worth my time. Did we do anything important?

Another really bad email has:

- An impolite greeting
- Accusatory tone with capital letters
- No specific signature

Example:

Hey,

The grade I got on my paper was stupid, and WE NEED TALK ASAP.

Rachel Student

Proper way to email your professor about your grade:

- Even if you feel your grade is unfair, you need to be an adult about it. To review, that means you need to be honest, considerate, and respectful.

Example:

SUBJECT: Discussion of recent paper

Dear Professor,

Could we meet to discuss the grade on my last paper? I'm available on Monday and Wednesday after 1:30 p.m.

Thanks!

Sincerely,
Rachel Student
ENGL100
TU 9:30

Avoid alarm clock errors

Always set an alarm for the right time of day. It doesn't do you much good to set an alarm to 9:00 pm when your class is at 9:30am.

Cooper Clawson, Learning Assistant for the Profitability in Livestock Enterprises CAT Community

TECHNOLOGY USE

Effective uses within the classroom

In some courses, professors will allow you the use of your electronic devices (laptops, tablets, iPads, e-readers, and smartphones) for classroom activities, learning engagement, and quick access to information. Since we use mobile technology in our daily lives, it can be beneficial to incorporate it into the classroom to develop additional skills for later success.

Appropriate uses of technology (through instructor permission):

- Recording of lectures or discussions
- Taking notes on laptops or iPads
- Collaborative note taking (live tweeting films, events, etc.)
- Use of smartphones to calendar events/ assignments
- Instant communication (polling features, study guide games)
- Photo capturing for assignments
- Research
- Information sharing for group work

When using technology in the classroom, be sure to follow the ground rules laid out by your instructor in their syllabus and daily directions. Use the technology as a way to engage in the class: do not text friends, chat, take calls, use social media, etc. unless given explicit instruction or permission to do so.

Regulated use within the classroom

Not all instructors incorporate or allow the use of mobile devices in their classroom. If it is not allowed, follow their instructions. Turn off your cell phone. Don't check it throughout the class, don't text, and seriously do not talk on it. If you use a laptop (and check and make sure your instructor allows laptops), take notes instead of surfing the web or getting on social media.

Inappropriate uses:

- Texting (typing or reading)
- Talking on the phone
- Sending/reading personal emails
- Checking in with social media
- Gaming

- Shopping online
- Reading materials/articles not related to class
- Paying bills

Learning is social just like Twitter, and you may distract your peers and appear disinterested. You can kill the learning buzz. After all, you aren't just in class to learn the material; you are honing your ability to focus on a topic and/or a person for at least an hour at a time, which is something you will need to do for the rest of your life.

Are you bored? That can be the professor's fault, but most of the time it's your own. You can choose to engage with the lecture and the material, or you can choose to sit and think about what you're eating for lunch or what you're doing on Saturday. You'll get more out of the \$18.27 you are paying for each class session (MWF) if you're paying attention. Plus, you'll fulfill the overall goal of spending four years of your life in college: to learn the most possible.

Pocket Points

Now, you can earn rewards through some K-State Union vendors by staying off your phone during class thanks to the Pocket Points app. Simply create an account, lock your phone through the app during class, and earn rewards. For more information, check out the Pocket Points webpage: <http://union.k-state.edu/pocket-points>.

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IDEA/TEVAL FORMS

Feedback and assessment

There are two different kinds of assessment tools used at K-State which allow you to provide feedback about your courses and instructors at the end of the semester. These are the TEVAL and the IDEA Forms.

K-State First uses the IDEA forms in all First-Year Seminar and CAT Community courses. These forms are a bit longer, and include opportunities for you to assess parts of the courses that are important to you, including the learning objectives, critical thinking skills gained, your general effort and workload, as well as the teaching methods, styles, and overall effectiveness of your instructors.

We encourage you to be open and honest on each question as you fill out the bubbles, and also to provide additional written comments at the end of the form to offer details about your experiences. Some guiding questions to help you with your written comments are:

- What is one thing your instructor is doing really well?
- What is one thing your instructor could improve?
- What is one in-class activity, co-curricular event, assignment, etc that you found to be particularly effective in helping you learn?

Assessing the K-State First program

The IDEA Form responses are not only helpful to your instructor, but they are also beneficial to the K-State First program as a whole as it allows us the opportunity to learn and grow based on the evaluation of all courses and instructors in the program. We use the assessments to help determine any faculty/staff training needs, as well as a way to further understand the impact our program has on individual students like you.

Cell phones

I would advise freshmen to make sure that they have their phone off or on vibrate while in class. My first semester I had my cell phone go off during a Chemistry I lecture. Not only was it very embarrassing, but it also disrupted the entire class.

Erica Schmitz, Learning Assistant for the Art of Engineering
CAT Community