



IKONOS

Introductory Course for Cultural
Mediterranean Heritage -
Student Guide

THE STUDENT GUIDE

Why are we using videoconferencing?

The system makes it possible for students at different locations to take courses not available on their home campuses. For conferences and meetings, the use of this system saves both travel time and expense.

The purpose of this guide

Videoconferencing is different from the classroom situations to which we are most accustomed. This guide will give you a handful of guidelines that will make your videoconferencing experience more productive and pleasurable.

Rules for the classroom:

Be on time. We recommend that you arrive a little early for your class. If the technical set-up proceeds, the class is trouble free, then you may have time before class to talk with the instructor or students at the distant sites.

Use the Microphones when talking. The microphones which you are using may be hand held in which case they might come in handy when passing them from one person to the other, or else you might use the other mics which are available in your videoconferencing room. In either case, the use of the microphone is requested at all times should you feel the need to speak or prompted for an answer. Without the microphone you will not be able to be heard from all the other sites.

When speaking in class, face forward and talk normally. It is not necessary to lean forward but avoid leaning back or slouching away from the microphones. The audio system in the classroom is not a public address system, so to make yourself heard by the other people in the room with you, project yourself, as you would in a normal classroom.

Be Assertive. It has been recommended to your instructors that they establish some type of protocol that allows you to interrupt and get his or her attention. Feel free to interrupt the instructor if you cannot hear or see what is happening. If more than two sites are connected the instructor may not be able to see you to know that you have a question or that you are confused. When you ask a question or interrupt the instructor it is best to state your name. Also you need to let the instructors know if they are talking too fast or if the type on the supporting graphics is too small or hard to see.

Camera Control. Sometimes the instructor may control the camera switching from the front of the room. In some classrooms there may be an assistant/helper or an operator assigned to manage the cameras. The cameras may be automatic, moving as someone speaks. In whatever case, if there is a problem with sound or picture you will need to contact the operator about it. If there is no operator/teacher in the room, you will be given instructions on how to contact an operator technician. The problem may be something easy to fix if the right person is made aware of the problem.

You need to participate. This system is called interactive, and you are expected to participate in the experience. In order to make your participation easier you should know that there might be a delay between the time you ask or answer a question and the time that the next person will speak. This delay is a characteristic of the videoconferencing system and is caused by the time it takes for the equipment to code and compress video and audio information and send it back and forth between sites.

Usually we expect a delay of two or three seconds, so do not worry if the response is a little slower than you expect.

Feedback. Your instructor(s) may ask how things are going in relation to your general distance learning experience or specifically regarding a certain issue or problem. Don't be shy! Providing feedback and input will improve your experience and make the process easier for future students.

Assignments. Since more than one site may be connected for a given course, label all your work with your site, course title and your name, so that you will get credit for your work and will get your work back.

Instructor Contact. Remember that usually, you will not be able to stay after class to confer with the instructor. If you need, then you should contact your instructor by e-mail. For any problems/queries log in to www.ikonosheritage.org or send an e-mail to introductorycourse@ikonosheritage.org .

Serving as an Assistant. As in a conventional classroom, you may be asked to help the instructor by collecting assignments at your site or handing our materials. Your help will be appreciated.

Whilst we wish you good luck with your course, please note that any feedback from your end regarding the course will always be welcome.

Vanessa Camilleri
IKONOS - Pedagogic Coordinator
Malta Centre for Restoration, Malta © 2004