**Chat Conventions**

Please review and abide by the following chat conventions. These are intended to facilitate a dialogue, not to be constrictive. We all enter into a chat with different experiences and expectations. Conventions are an attempt to ‘level the playing field.’ If you know other strategies, please suggest them!

All course chats will be structured with a specific learning objective. This requires attentiveness. I will call on folks occasionally, so be prepared for the discussion just as you would in a class. As in face-to-face courses, some folks may prefer to ‘listen’ and be less comfortable with participation – sometimes

Internet connectivity or keyboarding ability makes it difficult to keep up with the flow of the conversation. If this is the case, you are welcome to ‘lurk’ but only if you agree to occasionally e-mail the course instructor so she will know you are alive and well and thinking about what is being discussed.

* TYPING ALL IN CAPS is considered shouting and rude.
* If you send a message to someone and they don’t answer, that person may be typing to someone else, away from the computer or have a slow connection; give them time to respond.
* A good rule of thumb is to count to 10 between posts.
* No profanity or personal criticism is allowed.
* If you want to post a long sentence, start it with about 10 words followed by … then enter your message. Immediately start the second part with … and continue your thought. When this occurs we should all wait until the thought is completed before responding.
* It is very frustrating when people ‘talk’ at the same time, carrying different conversation threads or personal conversations. If you carry on a personal conversation, you can leave Wimba and talk in another area. This is particularly frustrating for new chatters, so those of us used to ‘overtalk’ should be considerate.
* Do not ‘flood’ by sending the same message over and over again.
* If you want to direct a question or comment to someone specifically, begin your statement with their name. You can address me as Patricia, Dr. P., or Dr. McGee, whatever is most comfortable for you.
* When the chat flows very fast, abbreviations and emoticons (e.g. :-) are sometimes used. However, it is important to make sure that everyone knows what these abbreviations and emoticons mean before using them.
* If you step away from the Wimba Classroom, click on the bird icon below the list of names to indicate that you have stepped away.