Enterprise Instant Messaging Etiquette Guide

Welcome to FIUchat! Powered by Microsoft® Office Communicator, FIUchat allows you to securely exchange text messages, files, and more, in real time. It also allows you to share your online presence with faculty and staff. This document provides guidelines and best practices to help you use instant messaging (IM) effectively. While these guidelines are generally accepted best practices, you should follow your department’s guidelines regarding the use of FIU resources.

Instant Messaging

- Less intrusive than a phone call and quicker than e-mail, IM use is common in universities and colleges. Here are some tips and guidelines to help you make better and faster decisions with IM.
- Before sending an IM, check the person’s presence status. If the contact’s presence status is Available (the presence icon is green), the contact is willing and available for a conversation, so you can start an IM conversation with the person.

Managing Your Presence Status

- When you need to focus on high priority tasks, set your IM status to Busy to let coworkers know that you are not available for an IM conversation at the time. (See Figure 3.)
- When you or a contact is on a video call, your status is automatically set to Busy and your presence status shows In a Call. You can send an IM to a contact In a Call, but the contact may be slow to respond or may not respond at all.
- If you absolutely cannot be disturbed (e.g., during a presentation), you can set your status to Do Not Disturb or simply log out of FIUchat.
- If you will be away or in training, it’s a best practice to leave a note where you are. Click the Type a note box to leave a note.

Managing Your Contact List

- If a contact’s presence status is set to Busy, refrain from sending a message to the contact unless it’s urgent.
- If a contact’s presence status is In a Call, they may be slow to respond or may not respond at all. Responses will vary by person and by the nature of the call.
- If a contact’s status is set to Do Not Disturb, do not send the contact a message unless it’s an emergency.
- Don’t take offense if your contact doesn’t respond immediately as the contact may be unable to do so, even if the contact’s presence status is Available. Assume the contact will respond when free.
- If you are in a meeting, call, or Web conference, it is best to turn off the sound of your IM to ensure the sound of incoming IMs won’t be disturbing to others who might be meeting with you. To turn off sound for incoming IM alerts, click the Task arrow in the left corner of the Communicator title bar, and then click Tools > Options > Alerts and then under Sounds, select Suspend Sounds when my status is Busy. (see Figure 2). Or simply mute your computer.
- Don’t use all capital letters to type your message. As with e-mail, it is the IM equivalent of shouting.