

## **Academy Course Guidelines**

The Wisconsin Academy and our instructors strive to provide a welcoming and inclusive environment for all Academy Course participants. As such, there are a few basic guidelines we have that help to ensure participants get the most from their experience. Egregious or multiple violations of these guidelines can result in participant removal from a course (refunds will not be issued for anyone removed from a course).

- 1) **Eliminate distractions:** When preparing for your course, please strive to eliminate any possible interruptions. Best practice includes logging out of email, silencing your cell phone, and going inactive on instant messaging or social media apps. If you have coworkers or family in your immediate space, putting a “do not disturb” sign on your door can also prove helpful.
- 2) **Share space:** Participants should contribute to discussions but should not dominate the conversation. A shared learning environment is only effective if everyone involved respects all voices. Pause and allow time for your colleagues to respond. Encourage others to speak who have yet to share with the group.
- 3) **Respect diversity:** Your digital course “room” on Zoom is a safe space for people of all races, genders, ages, sexual orientations, religions, abilities, and socioeconomic statuses. Derogatory and sarcastic comments or jokes are considered harassment and will not be tolerated. Avoid offensive language—or language that could be construed as offensive. If this behavior is observed, immediate action will be taken to protect the safety and comfort of our students. Participants are encouraged to speak out and inform instructors or course coordinators if they witness or are the target of harassment during their participation in the course.
- 4) **Ensure criticism is constructive:** The learning environment demands critique, so make sure it is considerate, constructive, well-meaning. Keep the focus on the work at hand and not the person presenting the work. Personal criticisms or verbal attacks directed at any participant are unacceptable.
- 5) **Have patience:** Participants who ask questions in face-to-face courses expect immediate answers. Sometimes this does not happen in the virtual classroom, especially if participants submit questions via the chat feature. Instructors will monitor chat and respond via text or verbal response when they can. As such, please keep all cross-talk on chat to a minimum.