

SAMPLE MESSAGE TO STUDENTS REGARDING WHATSAPP

Hi Everyone,

I hope you are all making your way through the syllabus and finding everything to be understandable. Please be sure to ask me any questions you may have.

I would like to take a moment at the beginning of the semester to address the use of WHATSAPP as a mechanism for communicating with fellow students in this course and in all your courses.

WHATSAPP can be a very useful tool for communicating with fellow classmates as a means for asking questions, keeping up with deadlines and to form a virtual study community. I encourage you to use WHATSAPP for these purposes.

However, I am aware that often times, FIU students use WHATSAPP for the purposes of cheating. Students have been found to cheat on exams in online classes using this app as a tool. I would like for you all to know that using WHATSAPP in this manner is indeed a violation of the academic integrity honor code and can come with consequences.

As the Associate Chair of the department of Psychology, I oversee all cases of academic misconduct that occur in Psychology courses. Last semester, I had to preside over 40 hearings in which students were found responsible for cheating using WHATSAPP (across a variety of courses with different instructors) and each of these students did receive penalties for misconduct. Unfortunately, each of these students had their grades and GPA negatively impacted by participating in misconduct.

Please be mindful of this and DO NOT use the WHATSAPP group for these purposes. I know that most students are honest students who truly do want to learn without violating the honor code, but there may be a few students who may encourage the cheating in these chats. If you are a member of a chat in which cheating is occurring, I would encourage you to leave that chat at the first sign of misconduct. You can never be sure that something put in writing isn't shared with others.

Thanks,
Dr. Nichols