

Protocols and Etiquette For Attendance At EpicureanFriends Zoom Meetings

Post by "Cassius" of May 15, 2024 at 9:34 PM

It has been suggested that we post a public list of "protocols" or "etiquette" so that people who attend our EpicureanFriends zoom meeting will know what to expect. We've received a number of comments about how appearing live on camera can be intimidating for new people on a first time visit, so this document will allow us to explain the ground rules and hopefully lessen any anxiety that might hold back someone from participating. This will likely be revised over time, but for now the list is as follows. Please feel free to comment in the thread below if you have any comments or questions about this.

Protocols and Etiquette For Attendance At EpicureanFriends Zoom Meetings

1. Eligibility For Attendance: As explained in various rules below, we restrict participation in our Zoom meetings to those who have a good faith interest in Epicurus and general agreement with the Rules of the EpicureanFriends forum as included in our [About](#) page. Those who wish to attend who have not previously participate should message Cassius or one of the other Moderators for information on attending. Requirements for attending our Wednesday meetings are more relaxed than those for attending our "Twentieth" meetings, which we generally reserve for regular participants on the forum. New participants in the forum are encouraged to attend a "First Monday" meeting where we especially address the welcoming of recent participants on the forum.
2. Unless stated otherwise, all of our Zoom meetings are largely informal. We will have an agenda and a general understanding of topics to be covered, but all of our meetings are intended to be relaxed discussions. We generally have from five to ten participants, with some meetings considerably larger. Special programs which are primarily lectures or presentations could be larger, but these rules apply primarily to our regular informal meetings.
3. Our meetings generally last about an hour, but they have been known to go as long as an hour and a half. Feel free to leave meetings early, and if you choose to do so it is not necessary to announce that you are leaving. However a text message in the meeting chat that you are about to exit would be appreciated.
4. At the beginning of each meeting we will start with a welcome, and we will introduce anyone who is new to the Zoom sessions. While we don't want to consume each meeting with a re-introduction at length of all participants, we find that it is interesting and helpful even for our regular members to summarize who they are and why they are participating, so if a meeting has new participants please expect to say a short hello about your

background and interest in Epicurus. We do not seek or encourage the exchange of personally identifying information, especially as to specific geographic location, but we do encourage you to let us know about your region of the world (we have participants from across the globe) and at least a little about your level of education and interest in Epicurus. Please select a screen name that does not reveal personal information. If you have not previously attended a Zoom session, it would be desirable to let the moderators know the Zoom name you intend to use. We use the "waiting room" feature of Zoom, and so as to avoid "Zoom bombing," user names which are not recognized may not be admitted into the meeting.

5. It is not required that you turn on your camera and participate in the video feed. We encourage those who wish to do so to use video, as that helps with the flow of conversation and helps to build friendships more quickly. However while most of our participants do generally use video, some do not. We would prefer to have you without video than not have you participate at all.
6. Especially if you do not use video, please use the "raise hand" feature, and or type into the meeting chat, to let us know that you wish to speak. We have a very diplomatic and considerate group and do not generally have too many issues with people trying to speak over each other. We try to allow everyone to participate and to say what is on their minds about a topic.
7. Please understand that because we are in many cases using video, and in all cases we have a live audio feed, we must use caution to ensure that everyone who participates is doing so in good faith. For that reason we do not distribute the link to the session to anyone who has not previously registered on EpicureanFriends and given us at least a short summary of their background and interest in Epicurus. Zoom links can and do change over time, so we generally use a forum "conversation" to distribute the meeting link on the day of each meeting. If you do not have the current Zoom link for the meeting that you wish to attend, please message one of the moderators, and they will get back to you as appropriate.
8. Our Zoom sessions are not debates. We encourage the expression of differing opinions, but as with all aspects of EpicureanFriends, we expect participants to be at least somewhat familiar with and supportive of core Epicurean ideas. All regular rules of participation at EpicureanFriends, especially as to avoidance of discussion of contemporary partison politics, remain in effect during our Zooms. If you disagree substantively with opinions that are being expressed you should do so considerately and without unduly negative and extensive commentary. If your find yourself in fundamental disagreement with a core aspect of Epicurean philosophy you should be considerate in the way that you express that disagreement, keeping in mind that the purpose of EpicureanFriends and its Zoom meetings is to allow for the exchange of ideas among those who are supportive of Epicurean philosophy. If you find an opinion that is a significant part of Epicurean philosophy to be offensive or intolerable to you, you are probably not in the right place to attend the EpicureanFriends zoom meetings (or for that matter, to participate on the Forum). There are many other opportunities to discuss opposing philosophic views on the internet, and to pursue eclectic blends, and if you are

regularly inconsiderate of this rule then your invitation to attend will eventually be revoked.

9. Almost every Zoom meeting is preceded by a meeting announcement posted at least several days in advance. If you have suggestions for items that you would like to see discussed, please add a message to that thread and let us know so we can update the agenda beforehand.
10. Given that our main goal in our regular Zoom meetings is to participate in the study of Epicurus in a supportive environment, please remember that a tone of supportiveness and considerateness should be maintained at all times. One of our moderators will act as facilitator of the meeting and attempt to both keep things on track and allow everyone to speak, but please be considerate of others in avoiding monopolizing the conversation and avoiding getting too far off topic.
11. If you have distracting background noises, please mute yourself until it is appropriate for you to speak. If you are falling asleep or working on something else, please consider closing your camera for the duration of that distraction.
12. All meetings will be conducted primarily in English. We will regularly discuss the translation of Latin and Greek words, but the majority of our participants are primarily or fluently English-speakers, so efficiency and consideration requires that we communicate primarily in English.
13. It is not necessary to attend *every* session in order to attend *any* sessions. Participants are welcome to attend as their schedules allow. Participants should, however, familiarize themselves with the published agenda of the meeting they attend so that they can interact appropriately and on topic with other participants.