



Communication guidelines

Isla Vista Community Relations Committee



Asynchronous

Choose asynchronous modes of communication if your message is simple, urgent, and does not require much back-and-forth conversation.

Slack

When you need to talk to someone within IVCRC, Slack should always be your first choice.

- Slack encourages people to share information with multiple people at the same time, which increases efficiency and transparency.
- Slack offers better organizational features—like channels, threads, and search—that group information together and make it more easily discoverable.
- Slack lets us talk to basically everyone in AS.
- Slack is, nowadays, a legitimate and desirable skill to have in the workforce. You should put it on your résumé.

Download Slack for desktop and mobile to keep up-to-date with notifications.

Reply to Slack messages within a day at most in most cases. Exceptions include the following:

- Do not send messages during weekends, holidays, and vacations unless it's an emergency. You need time off to recharge and be at your best.
- Delays of 2–3 days in responses are fine during dead and finals week.

Update your Slack status (Ctrl/Cmd+Shift+Y) if you won't be available for an extended period of time—maybe you're going on a vacation or you're studying for an exam for most of the week. Updating your status lets people know they likely won't receive a response quickly, which lets them calibrate their expectations.

Decide when you want to get notifications during the day by setting your notification schedule in the preferences menu.

- Give some time to yourself—you probably don't want to bother with messages at 12am. Your messages will still be there when you come back.
- When people send you a message outside of your schedule, they'll see a message that you currently have notifications disabled. They can still override that setting and notify you anyway, but only if it's an emergency.

Type /anon in the message box to post something anonymously (powered by OpenSay).

If you have leftover food from events, post about it in the #freefood channel so that it doesn't go to waste. You can leave the food in the Pardall Center or in AS Main for people to grab.

Text messages

Use text messages sparingly.

- Texts encourage a one-on-one exchange of information, which silos the different parts and people of IVCRC.
- If you need to add a new member to a group chat, you have to create a new group chat, which makes previously sent messages inaccessible to the new person.
- Texts are only accessible on phones unless you go out of your way to use a special application or software (or unless you've been completely absorbed into the Apple ecosystem).
- Once someone leaves IVCRC, the messages they've sent disappear forever.

Use texts only if

- there's an emergency and you need someone's response ASAP.
- someone isn't responding to you on Slack. (Once you get in touch with them, make sure to push them back to Slack!)

We do have a text chat for the entire committee. But this chat is only for **meeting reminders and major and urgent announcements only**. Everything else should go on Slack.

Email

Always use your IVCRC Google account for IVCRC-related matters. Don't use your personal or regular UCSB email.

- Using your IVCRC account is more professional when contacting people outside of IVCRC.
- It also lets you leave a legacy, as future members will be able to look at all the messages you sent and all the documents you created.
- Exceptions to this rule include Duolingo (because language experience is something you take with you) and Shoreline (because IVCRC accounts don't have Shoreline accounts).

Email is best for contacting people outside of IVCRC and AS. Use Slack and text to contact people on the inside.

Check your email at least 2–3 times a week. Expect longer response times when using email as opposed to Slack or text.

Don't add a recovery phone number or email address to your account. If you forget to remove this information before leaving IVCRC, it makes it much more difficult for a newer member to access your account.

Calendar

Google Calendar is an asynchronous means of communication: you inform people of your schedule without talking to them face-to-face. By displaying your schedule all the time, you make it easier and quicker for people to schedule meetings with you, which makes everyone happier.

On your calendar, only include commitments absolutely set in stone, like classes, work shifts, and doctor's appointments.

Don't include stuff you can move around, like meals, exercise, and social times. There are around 20 people in IVCRC, all with their own lives and schedules, and we'd never be able to get everyone in the same room at the same time if everyone treated their personal time as absolutely inviolable. **Be ruthless when deciding what you can reschedule.**

While this may sound harsh, IVCRC only meets for 1–2 hours each week.

Therefore, the potential sacrifices you make in not eating dinner at a specific time, in exchange for attending an IVCRC meeting, are relatively small and infrequent.

Synchronous

Choose synchronous modes of communication if you want to discuss something in detail.

Slack huddles

Use Slack huddles if you plan to talk with IVCRC members only (and anyone else who's in the AS Slack workspace). Advantages of Slack huddles over Zoom include the following:

- You can start a huddle directly in Slack, which means it takes less time and effort.
- You can still do pretty much everything you'd usually do in Zoom, like share your screen, annotate images, use video and audio, and enable closed captioning.
- Chat messages are automatically saved in a thread.
- You can invite team members to join a huddle, and Slack will send them a notification. This means you don't have to fuss over links.
- Slack shows when you're in a huddle, and people can easily join by clicking the icon next to your name.

If you're working with someone over multiple weeks, try talking in a huddle at least once per week.

- There's a limit to what you can do just by writing to people. Sometimes you need to use your physical voice.
- Working alongside people in short bursts can help you get more done faster, hash out disagreements, and get you to consider things you hadn't considered before.

Zoom

Schedule a Zoom meeting if you plan to talk with people outside of IVCRC.

Unfortunately, there's currently no way to invite people who are outside of the AS Slack workspace to a Slack huddle, so we have to fall back to Zoom in these cases.

The Zoom link is the same for every meeting, and it is sent out in every week's meeting reminder. For the meeting ID and the passcode, react with the Zoom emoji on any message.