

Ground Rules for Chat in Zoom Meetings of the Delegate Assembly
Professional Staff Congress/CUNY, August 2020

(Adapted from the NYSUT Code of Conduct)

In all of our communications and actions, PSC is committed to providing a positive and respectful environment that is free of discrimination and harassment, regardless of an individual's race, ethnicity, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, gender identity or expression, ancestry, pregnancy or any other characteristic. PSC is a democratic organization that values open and vigorous discussion of the issues facing our Union, our members, working people and the labor movement.

This document applies to all PSC members who participate in the chat function at the online DA meetings.

The main purpose of an "assembly" is to listen to whomever has the floor and to fully participate in the main discussion and collective deliberations. The chat should be a space to clarify points, post relevant links, and engage in brief productive conversations. While political discussions by their very nature often become heated, we nonetheless expect people to engage in respectful dialogue. One of the hallmarks of a democracy is people's willingness to express, defend, and perhaps reexamine their own opinions, while being respectful of the views of others. Open discourse relies on several things: a community of trust, not attacking any one individual, and allowing for dissenting opinions.

This Code of Conduct is not intended to restrict free and open debate, but to prevent unacceptable behavior that stifles debate, and to ensure a productive conversation. The following Code of Conduct will guide chat discussions:

Code of Conduct:

DO:

1. Respectfully express your views and your difference in positions.
2. Assume good faith from fellow speakers even if you strongly disagree.
3. Use "I" statements (rather than "you" statements) where appropriate.

DO NOT:

1. Do not let disagreements or conflicting views devolve into name-calling and shouting (i.e., using all-caps excessively), these are not acceptable ways of conversing.
2. Do not engage in harassing, discriminatory, or intimidating behavior.
3. Do not use the chat to drown out discussion. (For example, copying and pasting the same message over and over so that other people's comments can't be followed.)

There will be two EC members, identified at the start of the meeting, who will participate in and moderate the zoom chat. (A PSC staff member will also monitor the chat to provide technical assistance.) Also, if anyone feels that someone on the chat is violating the Code of Conduct, they can contact one of the two designated EC members to express their concern. As a community of elected representatives, we expect that all delegates will abide by this Code. In the rare instance that someone violates the Code, the person will be asked to refrain from the chat. If the chat becomes a site of continued violations, the EC reserves the right to close the chat function. As we discuss, debate, and make decisions on crucial issues, we hope this document will help us to move the work forward and prioritize solidarity. We are in this together; our power and effectiveness will be enhanced by a spirit of unity and purpose.