Laptop misuse disrupts learning

Doodling has gone wireless.
Students have always spent time mindlessly drawing shapes and figures on their notes during lectures, but the availability of laptops and wireless connections in the classroom has created new ways for minds to wander from course material.

At a wired laptop university, it shouldn’t come as a surprise that Northern students are using their computers for more than writing notes or papers.

In fact, for many students, the main purpose of bringing their computers to class is to keep them occupied.

“I instant message, I check my bank account, I’m on SOLAR, checking my phone bill ...” one student told The North Wind (Her list could have continued for quite awhile).

As a result of this, some professors have cited the technology as more of a distraction than an educational tool and have stopped students from opening up their computers during lectures.

Professors deserve to be treated with respect whether their classes are interesting or not and it is a shame that so many students are rude enough to mindlessly chat away on messenger services while professors work hard to teach certain concepts, ideas or events. Is it really too much to ask to have students keep their hands off of their messaging services and e-mail for three or four hours out of a day?

Due to the continuing misuse of laptops within classrooms, the university is currently in the exploration stages of the suitable behaviors that should be used within the classrooms in regards to the laptops.

It is likely that the same students who are playing on laptops now were the ones doodling or daydreaming during classes years ago, but the interactive feature of instant messaging takes disrespecting a professor to another level.

Not only is this disruptive for the professor, but students sitting near others who are using their laptops for non-academic purposes in the classrooms can be distract ed as well.

The implementation of laptops on campus shouldn’t discourage students and their classmates from learning. Teachers deserve respect and technology shouldn’t interfere in that process.