**Ventura County Writers Salon**

**A Moderator’s Guide to Professionalism**

As a moderator for the Ventura County Writers Salon you are the face of the group. It is your responsibility to help members and guide them to get the most out of VCWS.

A moderator monitors the site to ensure compliance with all comment policies but should not engage in an argument other than to keep the peace. Keeping the site safe and appropriate for all participants is of primary importance, and this includes being an example to civil intercourse.

Every engagement on this site is valued for its content. This forum allows everyone to have a say and brings out many different ideas and viewpoints. In order to play a positive part in the discussions, follow the rules below:

**Etiquette**

1. Always respect the views of other participants even if you don't agree with them.
2. Be constructive. It's okay to disagree with other forum participants, just keep the comments positive.
3. Keep things civil. It is important to keep the comments focused on the issues rather than letting it deteriorate into personal insults.
4. Once you've left your comment keep an eye on the forum to see what other people have to say.
5. If you feel a dispute is happening, diffuse it. Don't perpetuate the dispute.
6. Stay on topic. When a thread should be in another location, point it out to the users so they can move it to the appropriate channel.
7. Remember to turn off the "CAPS LOCK". Writing in ALL CAPS is the equivalent of SHOUTING and may be offensive.
8. Don't bully, harass or threaten other participants. If another participant proffers an opinion that you don't agree with, you have no right to demand that they support their position with a detailed reply. They do not have to respond to your questions. It is up to each individual to participate in the forum as much or as little as they wish.

**Moderation Rules**

Comments that violate the terms of use agreement or that are unlawful may be removed by the moderator.

1. Back each other up in public. If a rule or decision is made while you were away from discord, you can debate it in the moderator forum. Any action by the moderating staff should be supported by you on the public forum.
2. Never post personal information about another forum participant. This includes identifying any individual by their real name if they have not already done so or providing personal contact information.
3. Don't post anything that threatens or harms the reputation of any person or organization. If you wish to accuse someone of committing a crime or being an idiot this is not the place to do it.
4. Don't post anything that could be considered intolerant of a person's race, culture, appearance, gender, sexual preference, religion or age.
5. Don't be obscene. Swearing in your work is freedom. Being obscene to another person is intrusive to their personal space. Be sensitive to others’ feelings.
6. Don't personally insult or harass other participants. Focus on your substantive comments and not on other commenters, personally.
7. Don't post or link to inappropriate, offensive or illegal material. Inappropriate content is anything that may offend or is not relevant to the forum.
8. Don't post any advertisements or solicitations outside of drawing attention to an interesting book or a work or post you have published.

**Sanctions**

As a moderator, your comments hold more weight in the eyes of the forum users than you think. Violation of the moderation rules may result in:

1. Removal of comment — any comment that, in the view of the other moderators, violates the rules will be removed.
2. Temporary suspension — a moderator who repeatedly violates the moderation rules may be suspended from access to the site for up to one week as determined by the moderators.
3. Permanent blocking — a moderator who continues to violate the moderation rules following reinstatement after a period of suspension may have their access to the site permanently blocked or be asked to step down as moderator.