Getting Started with Zoom

Checklist for Instructors

Establishing Your Zoom Account

- Visit columbiauniversity.zoom.us and log in with your UNI. You now have a Basic Zoom account.
- Visit https://cuit.columbia.edu/service-desk to open a ticket with CUIT. Request an upgrade to Zoom Pro.

Adding Zoom to Your CourseWorks Site

- Log into your CourseWorks course
- Select "Settings/Navigation"
- Find "Zoom Course Sessions" in the list of items hidden from students and drag it up to the navigation list
- Click "Save"

Selecting Meeting Settings

- Meeting ID – Generate automatically
- Video – Host ON; Participant OFF
- Meeting Options – enable Join Before Host
- .Meeting Option – enable Mute Participants on Entry

Support

For **teaching and learning with Zoom support**, please request a Columbia Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) consultation by emailing ColumbiaCTL@columbia.edu

For **technical support** using Zoom and other University support tools contact CUIT at https://cuit.columbia.edu/service-desk

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Synchronous Online Teaching: Tips and Strategies

Promote Social Presence

Unlike teaching in a classroom, teaching online leaves us without many of the social connections and contexts we rely on to engage students. Online, we cannot look around the room and check whether students are paying attention or following along as we can face-to-face. Forming a sense of community, or social presence, is therefore even more important in this teaching context, and taking time to do so has been shown to improve students' perception of their learning and satisfaction with the class.

Clarify online classroom expectations and roles through community agreements. If learning in an online environment is new for you and for your students, consider having a discussion with students about how to translate your classroom norms from the face-to-face classroom into your online space. By building these community agreements collaboratively with your students, you and your students will be more invested in using the online classroom as a shared space. Topics to address include use of microphones, webcams, and chat features; protocols for interacting and engaging during online activities; and ways to seek help with technology.

Encourage webcam use. Listening to a disembodied voice over slides can be very disengaging. Similarly, having a conversation without seeing the person on the other end removes many of the social cues we rely on to understand one another. For these basic reasons, using a webcam for discussions or other interactive activities can improve engagement and learner satisfaction. However, keep in mind the limits of the online environment. Some things that may make sense to you and your students locally, such as making gestures or pointing at something on your screen, may make no sense when you are interacting online.

Create opportunities for students to interact informally as they would in a face-to-face classroom. These bits of small talk or fun can go a long way in helping build community over distances. This can be done quickly through icebreakers or activities that students can do as they enter the online classroom right before class or as class begins.

Create an Active, Student-Centered Environment

Without the non-verbal cues of the face-to-face classroom, active learning becomes an even more important tool to help students demonstrate learning progress and for us to provide feedback on their learning. Creating an active, student-centered classroom environment will also help keep students more engaged and motivated.

Translate your favorite face-to-face activities to the online space. Though not everything will translate directly, the online classroom provides many analogues that help you can use to get students to engage in their learning and with each other. For example, try using **breakout rooms** for small group discussions before thoughts are shared out over webcam in the main room; use **polls** in Zoom or via PollEverywhere as

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a digital clicker system; or use the **chat** for a class brainstorm. Introducing even small, informal activities throughout your class session helps keep students more engaged.

Encourage collaboration through shared note taking using **Google Docs,** or group generation of questions to be answered by instructors or other students via **chat.** Increasing opportunities for you and your students to exchange ideas in real time will help further motivate students to participate in your online class sessions. **Model collaborative interactions** for your students to help encourage productive participation.

Define learning objectives and participation. Communicating learning objectives to students helps to keep them focused on what they are learning, and will help you and your instructional team determine what is most important to do synchronously online. Use your objectives to consider what should or can only be done when your class is meeting and what might be movable to out-of-class videos, homework, or activities. Similarly, defining what participation looks like will help your students make progress towards these learning objectives, and allow for you to give feedback on engagement.

Teach as a Team

If you are working with Teaching Assistants (TAs) to facilitate your online course, you can share responsibilities like communication, discussion facilitation, and possibly low-level student technology support. If you are teaching as an instructional team, it will be important for you to have clearly defined roles and a tactical game plan.

Define teaching roles and make the roles clear to students. If you have an instructional team (e.g. co-instructors or TAs), determine the roles that you will play during class. Two such roles include the instructor who leads the class (providing the main voice and being the person on camera throughout the learning experience) and the instructor who supports the lead instructor (helping to answer questions on chat, to set up any online tools (e.g., breakout rooms, polls), and to assist with troubleshooting if students have any problems). If you use breakout rooms, the supporting instructor or TAs can also help facilitate small group discussion. Making these roles clear to students is helpful so that they can engage the appropriate person if they need help.

Create a clear lesson plan and class outline. Creating a class outline that signals to your instructional team and to your students what technology, tools, or platforms they will be expected to use as part of class is also a good practice. This helps signpost to students what is coming up, and transparency about technology use gives them an opportunity to prepare so that they are ready to engage once the activities begin. Additionally, if you are shifting roles throughout the class period, a clear lesson plan will make sure that your team knows when and how these transitions occur, and when during class students may need assistance.

Check your tech and test your activities with your team. Making sure all technology is working well is even more important online, when the whole class is relying on

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technology to enable interaction. Test any external tools that you may be using on multiple devices, if possible. Also test out activities with your instructional team, and get their feedback in order to best assure success when running the activity with students and to help get your team all on the same page. Once you know how you would like your activities to work, encourage your students to check technology and practice using it so that the class experience can be as seamless as possible.

Start Small, Collect Feedback, and Reflect

Teaching online is likely a new experience for you and your students, and will certainly not be without its challenges. Do not feel you need to use all the tools at once, as that would most likely be overwhelming for everyone. Instead, introduce tools and activities slowly to give you and your students practice. Encourage your students to provide feedback on their experience to help you to reflect, revise, and try again next class.

References and Further Reading

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Support

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For assistance with the instructional technologies mentioned (Discussion Tool in CourseWorks, Zoom), please contact the CTL Learning Designer assigned to your school or department.

Find contacts at https://ctl.columbia.edu/faculty/faculty-contacts/), or email the CTL at ColumbiaCTL@columbia.edu.

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Online Discussion: Tips and Strategies

Prepare for discussion

Articulate and communicate the purpose (not just the topic!) of discussion.
Consider both the content you want students to learn and the skills you want them to apply and develop through the online discussion. Sharing the learning goals will help students understand why you're using discussion and how it will contribute to their learning. These learning goals will inform the strategies and digital tools you use during discussion.

Determine whether you would like to host a live (synchronous) discussion via Zoom and/or **an asynchronous discussion** via CourseWorks's Discussion tool.

Select the type of discussion activity that best meets your learning goals and allow students to explore course topics at a deeper level. Types of activities include: building a discussion around readings or video content, reflection questions, debate, question forum, small group discussion, etc..

Set the tone for online discussion

Establish an inclusive climate that welcomes and supports contributions from different voices, perspectives, and experiences by establishing online discussion guidelines that communicate expectations for online etiquette.

Encourage student ownership of course policies by involving them in revising, contributing to, or co-creating the agreed-upon guidelines. Post the guidelines online in CourseWorks, and refer to them as needed.

> Sample discussion guidelines include:
>
> - Contribute respectfully
> - Constructively critique ideas, not individuals
> - Allow everyone the chance to contribute
> - Refer to classmates by name

Communicate expectations for participation

Articulate participation expectations. Specify what students should include in online contributions, the number of contributions you expect, the types of interactions (e.g., students direct their responses to you, or students must interact with each other, they are required to build on the information shared by peers), the language/terms students should use, the writing style you expect (e.g., including references or more informal conversation), and when students are expected to contribute if the discussion in asynchronous.

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Share the criteria that will be used to evaluate discussions. Identify and communicate the elements of a quality contribution and how students' contributions will be evaluated. Consider using a rubric to help your students understand the requirements of the discussion.

Maximize student engagement in online discussion

Encourage students to take an active role

Ask students to volunteer or assign them to roles such as facilitator, discussion starter (e.g., designate 2-3 students per discussion to spark the conversation with a question, quote, an example, or link to previous course content), note-taker, summarizer, etc..

Students can be encouraged to:
- generate discussion questions
- respond to peer comments/questions
- bring in outside readings or experiences
- share course-related materials (e.g., articles, video clips, other media)
- relate course topics, make real-life connections to the topics discussed

Form discussion groups to foster interactions online

Whether teaching a large or small class, consider using discussion groups to encourage students to interact with one another (e.g., to talk about the reading, to brainstorm ideas, to debate, to share examples). Keep discuss groups small and conversation focused. Ask a member of each group to create a group summary of the discussion to share with the whole class.

Resources:
- Groups can be created in CourseWorks (Canvas Guide): How do I create a group discussion in a course?
- Groups can be created in Zoom Breakout Rooms (Zoom): https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206476093-Getting-Started-with-Breakout-Rooms

Plan to ask questions that advance student learning

For asynchronous discussions, prompts can include a link to a journal article, chapter excerpt, case study, or video clip.

Draft open-ended questions that inspire a range of answers. For asynchronous discussions, consider prompts that ask students to engage is specific actions (e.g., find, compare, explain, identify, connect). For live discussions, vary question complexity over the course of the discussion. If there is one right answer, ask about the process to get to the right answer.

Things to Avoid for live online discussions:
- Yes/no, vague, or leading questions

- Filler questions ("Do you understand?" or "Do you have any questions?").
- Answering your own question before pausing to give students time to think/respond
- Making assumptions about students' shared values or life experiences
- Asking students to speak for an entire social group

Facilitate the discussion

Clarify your role. Tell students what they can expect from you and/or your TA(s) in online discussions.

Be present and play an active role in guiding the discussion but let students do most of the contributing. You can do this by modeling contributions, asking questions, using students' names, giving feedback, and affirming student contributions. In addition, if facilitating a live online discussion: actively listening, pausing to give students time to think, and repeating questions. For asynchronous discussions, log in daily to read and respond to student posts.

Intervene when necessary. Manage discussion dynamics, make sure all students have the opportunity to contribute to the discussion, ask students to explain or provide evidence to support their contributions, redirect/keep the conversation on track, and revisit discussion guidelines as needed.

Provide timely feedback. Focus the feedback on the learning and the criteria you identified to evaluate discussion contributions.

Close the Discussion

Bring an online discussion to a close. Give students an opportunity to reflect on and share what they learned. Enlist a few students per discussion to be "discussion wrappers" and ask them to wrap up the discussion by identifying and posting themes, extracting key ideas, or listing questions to explore further.

References and Further Reading

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