Video Conference Etiquette

The current COVID-19 pandemic has motivated a quick transition of courses and instructional activities from in-person to online formats. Virtual conference platforms, such as Zoom or Blackboard Collaborate, are available to support learning activities synchronously, such as discussions, group meetings, interactive lectures, office hours, review of presentations, assignments, and student advising. Many of us use Zoom or Bb Collaborate as the primary tool to conduct meetings, continue committee service, and remain professionally active. In whatever capacity we may be using virtual conference platforms, we all benefit from practicing video conferencing etiquette to make our conferences productive and engaging.
These guidelines apply equally to other virtual platforms as well.

Before the meeting:

- Join a test meeting to test your internet connection, audio and video settings.
    - [Zoom test meeting](#)
    - Bb Collaborate test meeting
- Pre-test your "camera appearance"
    - Be mindful of your background lighting to ensure others can see you on the screen rather than a silhouette.
    - Adjust your camera if it is too low or high. Your camera should be at eye level.
    - Provide a clean, work-appropriate background with minimal distractions.
- Try to hold or attend meetings in quiet, indoor locations to control ambient noise.
- You have the option to join a meeting by audio only by stopping the video. Joining by audio only helps save bandwidth and accommodates all the comforts of home (pajamas in bed).
- Ensure all participants have the meeting invitation link and materials.
- Close applications that you will not need to access during the virtual meeting to mitigate distractions from ringtones and applications on your desktop.
- Log in to your virutal meeting early to set up and test connection.
- Mute your microphone when entering the virtual room.

At the beginning and during the meeting:

- Mute participants' mics at the beginning of the meeting and show them how to unmute to speak. For groups of more than ten participants, show and ask them to use the "raise hand" feature to signal and tell them to unmute their mic to talk.
- When not speaking, make sure your audio is muted. This will prevent inadvertent noises, such as coughs, typing, dogs barking, from interrupting others.
- If you plan to record the meeting, notify all participants at the beginning of the meeting.
    - If you are using Zoom as a meeting, for anything other than instructional/class format, you may not record the session without the agreement of all members in the session.

- Make a quick round of introductions to increase participants' level of comfort and ensure that everyone can hear each other properly.
- Introduce the meeting agenda at the beginning to clarify expectations, activities, and timeline.
- Remind participants of appropriate etiquette for **verbal** (i.e., audio), **visual** (i.e., camera and background) and **written** (i.e., "chat") communication to support professional, respectful, and inclusive conduct.
- Use the "chat" function (text) selectively for questions or technical issues. In discussion-based meetings, limit the "chat" function to specific aspects of the conversation. This limited use of "chat" will help ensure participants' focus on the verbal discussion and avoid distractions from reading the "chat."
- Look into the camera when talking to create an environment where everyone feels engaged and present in the conversation.
- When sharing materials, select the respective window or application, such as Power Point slides, Word document, PDF file, or browser rather than "sharing screen" as this function may reveal your personal information such as pop-up email, browsing history, or private messages.
- Signal the finish of your presentation or talk with a concluding remark, such as "Thank you for your attention," or "This concludes my presentation and I welcome your questions."
- Remember to sign out or "leave the meeting" when the session is finished.
- If you are hosting the virtual meeting, inform the participants when and how they may be able to access the link to the recorded meeting.

Adapted from: Montgomery, J. (2019). *Video Meeting Etiquette: 7 Tips to Ensure a Great Attendee Experience* at https://blog.zoom.us/wordpress/2019/11/27/video-meeting-etiquette-tips/
Accessed March 25, 2020.