

## Best Practices to Ensure a Good Live (Synchronous) Experience

- **Try out the web conferencing tool (e.g., Virtual Classroom, WebEx, or Zoom) ahead of time** (at least a day before). This will help to ensure the technology works so that you have time to get technical help if necessary, especially if this is your first time using a web conferencing tool.
  - Make sure your **hardware** (i.e., mic, sound, webcam) works.
  - Make sure your **browser** (i.e., Edge, IE7+, Firefox, Chrome, Safari5+) is up-to-date.
  - Ideally, complete a test run using a web conferencing tool before you are going to use for the actual online session to check for other environmental factors, such as **internet access** and **bandwidth** (e.g., 600kbps/1.2Mbps (up/down) is recommended for high-quality video during group video calling).
- If you are using the computer's audio systems, many browsers will ask you to **grant permission** for the sessions. Be sure to look out for prompts and allow your web conferencing tool to gain access to your audio system.
- **Mute your phone** when you are not speaking. There is nothing worse than hearing the sound of someone typing away, letting everyone know that they are only half-listening. Avoid cell phones and speakerphones when possible.
- **Use a webcam** to increase your virtual presence. Be sure you are comfortable with the **room background** you show to session participants. Make frequent eye contact with the camera to help the remote participants feel more a part of the meeting.
- Keep in mind how **your actions/body language** will translate over the web and engage your audience.
- If you are only using audio, don't forget to still use **facial expressions**. Facial expressions affect the tone of voice.
- To **ensure good quality audio**:
  - a) Use headphones and microphones. Never enable audio/video in more than one computer in the same room unless headsets with microphones are being used. Otherwise, the audio from the computers will create interference.
  - b) Keep the background noise to the minimum.
  - c) Speak clearly into the microphone, and refrain from shuffling papers, typing loudly, or talking among themselves.
  - d) If your meeting involves many people sitting together sharing the same dial-in, place the microphone near the participants who are talking.
  - e) Choose an external microphone over a built-in one for better sound quality.
- Use **chat** to ask questions and share responses.