

Synchronous Session Strategies

Source: Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning



Presenting Information:

1. **Talking on screen**-- See our tips for setting up your screen presence (on reverse)
2. **Sharing your screen to display visuals**-- Test before your session and see our tips (on reverse)
3. Use the **Virtual Whiteboard Tool** in Zoom to create visuals in real time.

Presenter-Participant Interaction:

1. **Polling Tool in Zoom**-- Get real time responses visible to everyone.
2. **Response Tools in Zoom**-- ask participants to raise their virtual hand, signal in participant list, or add to virtual white board
3. **Chat box**--create a back channel for participants to ask questions without disruption
4. **Visual or verbal responses**-- ask participants to physically signal in video or unmute
5. **Share Screen & Use Other Tools** like Padlet, Google Documents, etc.



Participant-Participant Interaction:

1. Use **virtual breakout rooms** to create smaller groups of 2-4 participants for more manageable peer-peer conversation
2. Use the **chatbox as a backchannel** so participants can share resources, ask questions, or respond to the whole group or 1-1
3. Use **add-on interactive or annotation tools** (Padlet, Google Doc, etc.) by posting link/using screen share



Screen Presence Tips:

1. **Have your camera at eye level**– This provides a more natural face-to-face view
2. **Consider your background**– What do you want your audience to see behind you? Perhaps you want to use one a virtual background instead? (See our website for instructions on adding virtual backgrounds.) Lighting also matters: have a light in front of you rather than overhead and avoid sitting in front of a window
3. **Consider your outfit**– our friends at GMU TV tell us that solid colors (rather than small patterns) are better for the camera technology



Tips for Sharing Your Screen:

1. **Be aware of what you are sharing.** Zoom allow you to choose to share your desktop or specific applications. Sharing the desktop view affords quicker transitions if you plan to go between multiple sources, but does allow participants to see your desktop items, background, and alert notifications. We recommend sharing a specific application (this shows participants only that application window).
2. **Test and Practice.** Find a friend to do a practice Zoom session with so you can practice your sharing options--have them send you screen shots so you know what the participants will see.
3. **Screen sharing changes your Zoom view.** Test and practice screen sharing so you feel comfortable navigating Zoom while you are screen sharing. You don't want to go into your live session and get flustered finding your participants or the chat box or how to exit screen sharing when you share your screen.