FAQs for teaching with Zoom (and other synchronous platforms)

Updated 12/7/20

Contents

When I use Zoom, should I schedule class meetings from the app, the website, or from within Canvas?

We suggest that you launch Zoom from within Canvas, for two reasons:

1. Students will always have one stable place to find the link.
2. Non-students are less likely to discover the link.

Can I use Zoom to meet students for Office Hours or other meetings?

Yes, Zoom can offer you and a student a place for private interactions. We recommend that when you expect to engage in private conversations (e.g., about a student's performance) you use the Waiting Room feature of Zoom. Enabling the waiting room is useful for protecting privacy during meetings that have numerous participants. The Waiting Room does not allow a new participant to join until the host allows them access. You can also choose the option to 'Lock the Room' from the Security Panel.

How do I use the Waiting Room feature of Zoom?

Set up: When scheduling a meeting, select the "enable waiting room" feature.

How it works: When a participant joins the live meeting, there will be a notification in the "participants" list with the option to allow or deny the participant from joining. When you are ready to accept the participant, select allow and the participant will be connected to the meeting.

[For a video on how to enable the waiting room, watch here.](#)

Can I do group work in Zoom?

Yes, you can use the [Break Out Room function](#) to engage students in group work.

How do I use Break-Out Rooms in Zoom?

1. Start an instant or scheduled meeting.
2. Click breakout rooms.
3. Select the number of rooms you would like to create, and how you would like to assign your participants to those rooms: Automatically: Let Zoom split your participants up evenly into each of the rooms.
4. Click Create breakout rooms.

For more breakout room settings and tips, and a video overview on enabling breakout rooms during a live meeting, see this [Zoom Guide to Enabling Breakout Rooms](#).

How do students know what to do during a Zoom class?

Just as in your face-to-face classes, you set the ground rules and act as a role model. But meeting like this may be new for many of your students, so it's even more important that you clearly describe what students should do. Should students:

- Arrive early or just on time?
- Camera on, or off? (See our document on [Guidance for Synchronous Classes at College of the Canyons](#))
- Speak freely, wait to be called on, or raise hand (real or virtual hand)?
- Use the chat feature?

Can I create community amongst students using Zoom?

Research tells us that feeling connected is key to student success. Just as in your on-campus class, you can open Zoom a few minutes early and stay on a few minutes after class. Ask students how they're doing. Offer some prompts to get students speaking with one another.

What if a student doesn't attend a class session in Zoom?

You establish the attendance practices in your syllabus.

Formally, please see our [District Board Policy 4233 Attendance](#).

Informally, we encourage you to remember that this is a stressful time for students. Below are some examples of scenarios students may be experiencing which may make it difficult to attend your class session:

- If I am clinically depressed and my medicine has run out and my pharmacy is out of supplies due to supply chain interruptions from the pandemic, it's difficult for me to log on at the appointed time.
- If my parents have been arrested by ICE and I am frantically driving from government office to government office trying to locate them, it's difficult for me to log on at the appointed time.
- If my employer changes my shift at the last minute and I have to a 12-hour shift, and my employer will fire me if he sees me using my phone on the job, it's difficult for me to log on at the appointed time.
- If my home wifi has been disconnected because the people whose couch I'm sleeping on have lost their jobs and haven't been able to pay the wifi bill, it's difficult for me to log on at the appointed time.

Can students set their preferred names in Zoom?

Yes, and we bet that you're asking because you know research tells us that an effective way to make students feel welcomed in your class is to know their preferred names and to use them. You can even ask students to add preferred pronouns.

How do students set their preferred names in Zoom?

During a meeting, a participant may change their name by hovering over their name in the participants list. "Rename" will appear, and a participant may enter their preferred name.

How can I give students resources to use outside of Zoom?

Canvas is a great tool for placing all of your extras in one place! You can upload documents, links to websites, and embed videos inside of Canvas. With a discussion forum in Canvas, students can continue discussing what you covered in class. Canvas can hold all your course content and is also the recommendation for hosting the Zoom link for students to join your sessions.