

TIPS on using Web Conference tools for teaching online

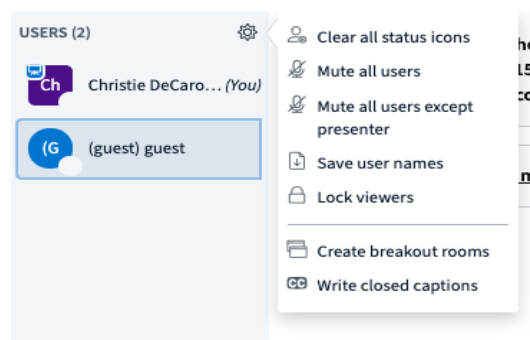
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Before the virtual lesson/Web Conference...

- **plan** ahead for the lesson and gather any resources needed,
- make a **small script** (storytelling) for the session,
- ask Students to do some **preparatory work** by reading some materials or watch videos - readings, extended listening or watching videos would be best done prior to the class,
- **use these meetings** to discuss topics and exercise tasks, practicing what was learned; the emphasis in these sessions should be talking, listening and responding rather than reading or writing more than just a few words.

Start your Web Conference

1. **Inform students:** inform Students about the date and time of the sessions; also let them know *before* the Web Conference class:
 - if you'd like Students to use a microphone or join "audio only",
 - to leave their webcams off and to turn them on only when speaking; after their intervention, Students should turn them off again.
2. **Set up early:** start/join the session some 10min before the start time, to
 - ensure everything is working properly – sound and camera,
 - test your webcam: adjust the view, check the light source and the visible background,
 - upload slides/documents for your presentation ahead of time.
3. **Start recording:** click the "Start recording" button, top-center of the screen, to record the meeting for later playback.
4. **Mute users:** after starting the meeting, "*Mute all users except presenter*" to prevent audio feedback – in BBB, click the Gear icon in the left column:



5. **Confirm that users can hear you before you start:** ask Students if they can hear you well (they can type "yes / no" in the text Chat box) and if they can see your presentation (if you've uploaded any).
6. Consider having **another Moderator** (Teacher) that may help you with the Chat and the notes posted by Students during the session.

Best practices during your Web Conference

1. **Webcams:** to preserve bandwidth turn off as many webcams as possible. Ask students to turn their webcam on only when speaking.
2. **Recording:** Remind Students that the session is being recorded for later viewing.
3. **Breakout rooms:** use these Rooms to encourage small group discussions and for collaboration and cooperation amongst Students working on a topic.

Do not forget - after visiting Breakout Rooms, going back to the main Room you may need to check and reconnect your audio.

4. **Questions and communication with Students** - use
 - **Polls** to make your session more interactive and engaging;
 - Public and Private **Chat boxes**, where Students can ask questions.
Note that the Text Chat is not recorded:
if you reference questions or comments found there, someone watching the recording later will not be able to see them.
If you are going to address a question/comment in the text Chat, be sure to read it aloud first: “John asked in the Chat, ‘I’m not sure I understand how...’”;
 - **Nonverbal** communication symbols – emojis, raise hand etc,
 - **Audio** - Students can **unmute their microphone** and ask a question using audio.
In large classes, its best to ask Students to type for ex. “I have a question” in the text Chat, and ask them to wait for you to call on them;
then, they can unmute their microphone and ask their question.
- ✓ *Be prepared for something to go wrong. Start another Web Conference system or use Facebook, Skype, Google Hangouts or eMail or yet another way to send a quick message to them all*

How to end the conference:

Make sure to end and close the Web Conference session properly.

If using **BBB** (BigBlueButton):

- click the “**Stop recording**” button at the top-center of the screen,
- click “**End meeting**” in BigBlueButton (3 dot menu, top right of the screen),
- go back to the moodle activity and click the “**End session**” button.

Notes from:

<https://www.cambridge.org/elt/blog/2020/03/16/using-video-conference-platform-teaching-online/>
and
<https://idt.camden.rutgers.edu/2020/03/13/tips-for-teaching-via-web-conference/>
and more...
