

How Do I Teach Using Videoconferencing?

Overall: While videoconferencing (VC) is a powerful technology for distributed education, it presents challenges to teachers to tailor instruction to several audiences while maintaining engagement for all.

- It is essential that each teacher receives training in VC, is familiar with camera locations and video monitors and understands how students will ask questions using the installed “push-to-talk” technology. **STC offers such tailored training** for all teachers;
- It is most important that the VC teacher understands that visual and audio communications is not instantaneous. Because of transmission time, **it takes additional time** in VC to make sure that everyone is ‘on the same page’ particularly when questions are asked and answered;
- **You will be able to do less teaching** during your session than you are used to. Plan your content accordingly - see sheet #5;
- Design your teaching session and, in your introduction, **make your plans and expectations clear**: e.g.: *“I plan to break my session into 3 parts. Each period of me talking will be followed by a question period. OK?”*
- Encourage students to ask questions by “buzzing in”; ensure the student questioner uses her/his microphone so that the question/comment is heard by all;
- **“Chunkify”** your instruction. Intersperse straight lecturing with periods of discussion, video clips, case presentations, demonstrations etc. See sheet #4;
- **Speak slowly and pause frequently**. It is particularly important to pause after asking a question as the slight time delay in transmission may cause you to interrupt someone responding from the distant site;
- **Frequently engage the distant site** and bring those students into the discussion especially if interactions are occurring mostly at the local site;
- Be aware that a part of normal VC etiquette is that students may interrupt at any time to indicate technical difficulties: *“we cannot hear you”*; *“we cannot see the slides”*;
- **Train yourself** to look periodically at the camera. This is the only way in which it will appear to the “distant” students that you are teaching to them;
- Be trained in and use slide annotation to highlight portions of your PowerPoint and the VC document camera to view documents, objects etc;
- Be mindful of where to stand and try to **limit sudden movements** which may be a distraction to your VC audience;
- Wear solid colours and avoid too much white, black, red or checkerboard clothing;
- Avoid reflective jewellery and remember that any sounds you make (e.g. tapping or touching the mic) will be transmitted inordinately to the distant site;
- Assume you are always “on camera” even when not speaking;
- Arrive early for your VC session so that you can **start on time** and **finish on time** (including questions) so that the schedule is adhered to;
- Remember that all materials used for your VC teaching sessions **must be submitted in advance of the teaching date** to ensure they are compatible with the VC system: PowerPoint, electronic documents: **1 week** beforehand; additional video / audio files: **1 month** beforehand.

Please address any concerns, questions or requests for support to:



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