



A Pedagogical Guide to Zoom Part 2: *Instruction on Zoom*

Zoom's variety of features allow for replicating face-to-face activities in remote or hybrid classes. Our Zoom pedagogical guide series offers practical advice for holding your synchronous Zoom remote or hybrid classes. Part 2 of our series, "*Instruction on Zoom*" offers suggestions and considerations on delivering your course content and keeping students engaged. For information on setting up your Zoom class, and holding office hours and conferences, see Part 1 of our series, "[Getting Started with Zoom](#)".

- 1. Content Delivery:** Providing a variety of formats for delivering the content of your courses in an online or hybrid environment will give students the opportunity to stay on task, engage with the content, and ask questions. Below are some suggestions for delivering the content of your course on Zoom.
 - ❑ **Lecturing:** Lectures may be delivered synchronously through Zoom; however, the lecture format may need adaptations to the remote or hybrid environment. Below are some considerations for adapting your typical in-person lectures to the remote classroom.
 - ❑ **Check-in Pauses:** Consider planning periodic pauses within your lectures to check on students. Using Zoom's quick [reaction and polling buttons](#) to ask students if they are following along could you give immediate feedback about the pace of the lecture.
 - ❑ **Active learning Pauses:** This type of pause ensures students are following along, and will provide opportunities for engagement with the content. These pauses are also a good opportunity for 'conceptual checkpoints'. Active learning strategies such as 'Think-Pair-Share' or 'Muddiest Point' are activities that provide opportunities for this type of pause (See our [BlackBoard Pedagogical Partnerships at BU site](#) for resources on the learner centered-classroom).
 - ❑ **Zoom breaks:** Depending on your class length, students may need a screen break. Allocate a couple of minutes for screen/stretching breaks. *Note: In the hybrid modality, be especially mindful of the online students who may need more breaks compared to the in-person students* (Read more: [Is Learning on Zoom the Same as In Person: Not to Your Brain](#)).
 - ❑ **Slide Sharing:** Consider using [Zoom's screen sharing feature](#) to share your slides, images, video or your computer screen (View [instructions on how to use your presenters' notes on your slides](#), while screen-sharing). You may use the [annotation feature of Zoom](#) to annotate your slides live on the screen or you may use the [whiteboard feature](#), and save the whiteboard as an image to upload on your class LMS. You may also screen share any interactive tools you may be using as a whiteboard (e.g. [Google jamboard](#), See also: [Whiteboard Alternatives Using Zoom](#)).
- 2. Discussion Strategies on Zoom:** Generating a productive and engaging discussion in a remote or hybrid class is critical to students' engagement and learning. Keep in mind that discussion sessions may take longer in an online environment due to the many variables instructors need to consider (e.g. technology, student comfort speaking online, etc.), so advanced planning and preparation is recommended. Zoom has a variety of features that allow for verbal or non-verbal whole-class discussion. You may find in certain instances, students will contribute more compared to the in-person class (e.g. on the chat). You may also find some students to be less vocal in an online environment.

We recommend that you vary your discussion methods throughout your lecture in order to provide equal contribution opportunities for both groups of students. Keep in mind that different class sizes may warrant different methods. Below are some suggestions for engaging students in a whole-class discussion on Zoom.

❑ **Whole-class Discussion**

- ❑ *Chat Box on Zoom:* Using the [chat box](#) in your Zoom session encourages synchronous discussion for all students. Think about when and how you use the chat during class. For example, you may divide your lecture into 10-15 min. segments, and plan deliberate 'chat points' throughout your lecture to provide an opportunity to engage in written discussion in the chat box. This will allow students to engage with the content and with one another, and it will provide a unique opportunity for instructors to gauge student comprehension, identify gaps in learning, and call on participants with diverse points of view to elaborate more.

You may also decide to ask students to contribute to the chat box *during* the lecture. Please note that monitoring the chat while lecturing may be cumbersome and distracting if you do not have a moderator in class. We advise discussing the chat box expectations with your students, and identifying moments in your lecture where you pause to check the chat. Keep in mind that you may [disable the chat](#) at various points throughout the lecture. We recommend you have the 'chat with host' enabled at all times in the event of students' audio/microphone problems. Consider [downloading the chat file](#), and uploading it on your class LMS for those students who may have missed the class.

- ❑ *Discussion in the main Zoom room:* Depending on your class size, you may decide to keep all students in the main room, and engage in an all-class discussion. You may ask for student volunteers to speak up by raising their virtual hand on Zoom or you may call on names (As the host, you are able to see a full list of participants by clicking on 'participants' on the lower Zoom bar. If students have virtually raised their hands, you will see a 'blue' hand next to their name in the order their hands have been raised).

You may also assign a few students to contribute to the discussion. Zoom's new participant window organization feature allows for [rearranging the participants' Zoom window](#) (Please note that all participants need to have version 5.3.1 or higher of Zoom installed). Using this feature, you may align the student contributors at the top of the screen, so they know the order in which they would need to contribute. For larger classes, especially, we recommend that you ask students to virtually raise their hands if they want to contribute to the discussion as the instructor or moderator may not be able to see all the participants at once.

❑ **Small-group discussion**

- ❑ *Break-out rooms:*

- ❑ Assigning students to Break-out rooms: There are a variety of reasons you may choose to [divide students into breakout groups on Zoom](#). For example, you may ask students to complete a problem set; work on a project; work on a presentation, etc. On Zoom, you have the option to create the teams manually or randomly. If creating the teams manually, we recommend you do this in advance as it will save time during your synchronous sessions. In the hybrid modality, consider pairing the in-person students with the online students in order to encourage cross-cohort

communication and provide a more inclusive learning environment. *Please note that you may want to decide early on if you will be varying your groups throughout the semester, or keeping the groups the same. While certain activities, such as preparing for a group presentation or working on a group project may lend themselves to keeping the groups the same, varying groups when there is an opportunity can help in building a stronger classroom community.*

- ❑ *Allow students to [choose or move in between break-out rooms](#): This Zoom feature allows you to set up break-out rooms in a way that allows students to move around. This is especially helpful for activities such short, simultaneous presentations, such as poster presentations or elevator pitches. For example, you may assign different presenters to different break-out rooms, and have students switch around to listen to short presentations or participate in discussions. *Note: You need to have Zoom version 5.3.1 or higher to have this feature.**
- ❑ *Visit break-out rooms, and engage with the groups of students: We recommend you let your students know in advance if you will be going around and visiting the break-out rooms, so the students are prepared for your check-in. You may also do regular check-ins or send students reminders by [broadcasting a message](#) to all the groups. Students may also ask for assistance by sending a message directly to the host when they are in their break-out rooms. You may also task 1-2 students in the group to provide a summary of the group's discussion when you join the breakout group. We recommend letting the students know in advance of this arrangement.*
- ❑ *Discussion through collaboration on a shared platform: You may ask your students to engage in collaboration and discussion on a shared platform. For example, you may share a PowerPoint slide, Google doc, [Google jamboard](#) or Padlet post with your students, and have them collaborate and discuss on that platform while on Zoom. You may ask students to do this quietly in the main room, and only engage in written discussion or you may have students in break-out rooms, and have them engage in discussion while contributing to the shared platform.*

3. **Polling on Zoom:** The use of student response systems and polling in classes facilitate active learning strategies and promote student-student and student-teacher interaction in class. Polling also allows for formative assessment throughout the lecture, and provides instantaneous feedback to instructors. In a face-to-face class, instructors often need to use a polling tool/program or a physical clicker to poll students; however, in a remote environment on Zoom, the tool is readily available. Below are recommendations on how to poll students on Zoom.

- ❑ **Zoom's polling tool:** The [polling feature of Zoom](#) can help you get quick student feedback, and ensure student engagement with the content. We recommend you [create the polls in advance](#) of your session, as spontaneous polls are not possible on Zoom. *Note: In order to use the polling feature on Zoom, you need to [activate the polling button on your Zoom toolbar](#).*
- ❑ **Non-Zoom polling tools:** Alternatively, for a more detailed poll, you may use other polling tools on Zoom by sharing your screen. Tools such as [Turningpoint](#) (BU-supported), [Kahoot](#) (non-BU supported), [PollEverywhere](#) (non-BU supported, but free for <40 students) and [Mentimeter](#) (non-BU supported, free unlimited questions for Basic version) provide more polling options and formats such as open-ended responses, word clouds, etc.