

TEACHING ELEMENTS

ADOBE CONNECT

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WHAT IS IT?

Would you like to host an online web conference for class activities, including screen sharing and text-based chat?

Adobe Connect is a **web-based communication tool** that allows faculty and students to collaborate over the internet in real-time. This real-time interaction is also known as "**synchronous learning**."

- Connect does not require any special software. It's a web application.
- Connect can serve as an online version of a live classroom, with options for showing slides, videos, or documents.
- Connect sessions can be recorded for later viewing.
- Within Connect, students can "raise their hand," ask questions, and collaborate on a virtual whiteboard.
- Connect sessions can be live captioned for deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE THAT ADOBE CONNECT HAS A POSITIVE IMPACT ON LEARNING?

Research in the effective use of synchronous web-based communication tools, such as Adobe Connect, has shown:

- Web conferencing enables additional contact hours outside the classroom, as well as continuity of instruction in the event of bad weather or an emergency. (Bentley & Collins, 2007).
- Web conferencing enables students to give live presentations, and easily record them for later review. (Bentley & Collins, 2007).
- Students appreciate the flexibility in access afforded by web conferencing. (Gosper, 2008).
- Certain tools in web conferencing support specific pedagogical goals. For example, polling encourages active learning, and text chat supports student-student cooperation. (Shi & Morrow, 2006).

ADOBE CONNECT IN ACTION

There are many ways to use Adobe Connect in our teaching and the following list includes some of the most effective.

- Provide opportunities for students to interact with outside experts who cannot visit the campus
- Record "profcasts"— mini-lectures for on-demand viewing
- Allow students to demonstrate "live" content mastery in a distance learning environment
- Bring together geographically-dispersed students in one "room"
- Deliver lectures with live class discussion

- Conducting “office hours” in an online setting
- Demonstrate software or a procedure
- Allow students to present or show their work and receive feedback from their peers
- Using poll questions to gauge students’ understanding of concepts, as well as to determine which students are engaged

During a Connect session, the instructor and each student are geographically separated. This requires some planning from instructors in order to keep students engaged and ready to learn. The list below provides some general preparation tips.

- Practice setting up your connect session with a colleague before the “real” session.
- Consider recruiting a co-facilitator to help manage the session, especially if you are using several Connect functions simultaneously (discussion, presentation, etc.) or conducting ongoing discussions with large groups.
- Schedule appropriate break times for the length of the class.
- When setting and communicating a meeting time, take time zone differences into account.
- Provide explicit instructions and expectations for how students will ask questions, participate in the discussion, and tell you if they need you to slow down or speed up.
- Consider limiting the number of students to a manageable number, with breakout rooms or sessions at different times.
- Provide captioning for any activity that includes audio. [Real-time captioning is available](#) for class meetings, given sufficient prior notice.
- Build in some time during your first meeting for you and your students to get used to the synchronous format.
- Provide your students with the [Troubleshooting Guide](#) in advance of the first Connect session.

WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

How to get started

- Online Documentation ([link](#))
- Consultation Request form ([link](#))
- Attend an overview session ([link](#))

Potential Applications

- Online class meetings
- Virtual office hours
- Self-recorded mini-lectures

Accessibility

- Live captioning is available
- Supports screen readers for low-vision users

Related resources

- The Synchronous Trainer's Survival Guide, Jennifer Hoffman
- Live and Online! Tips, Techniques, and Ready-to-Use Activities for the Virtual Classroom, Jennifer Hoffman
- 101 Tips to Motivate the Online Learner ([link](#))

- Connect Users' Forum ([link](#))

REFERENCES

- Bentley, K. & Collins, C. (2007). The Evolution of Web Conferencing. EDUCAUSE Evolving Technologies Committee. Retrieved from <http://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/DEC0705.pdf>
- Gosper, M., Green, D., McNeill, M., Phillips, R., Preston, G, & Woo, K. (2008). *The impact of web-based lecture technologies on current and future practices in learning and teaching*. Australian Learning and Teaching Council. Retrieved from <https://www.mq.edu.au/ltc/altc/wblt/research/report.html>
- Shi, S., & Morrow, B. V. (2006). E-Conferencing for instruction: What works? *EDUCAUSE Quarterly*, 29(4), 42-49.