Welcome to my online classroom – synchronous sessions

**Shared documents**

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**Summary of question and answers from the chat**

- How to set-up and create breakout rooms:
  - Facilitating a breakout room
  - Example of a follow-up discussion after a breakout room

- To make breakout rooms, I click:

- How large is one hour of video time?
  - Today’s recording (80 min) was 250 MB, before editing
  - Someone else mentioned their 1.5 hour class was always <600 MB

- Sometimes takes a long time to process a long lecture—how to speed up?
  - Record shorter videos (easier for students and to find things later)
  - Shrink file size: [https://handbrake.fr/](https://handbrake.fr/)

- Can students get the control over grouping themselves into Breakout Rooms?
  - Not yet, but I’m hoping that will come soon
  - Right now: ask them to tell you what room they want to be in (e.g., out loud, ask them to change their zoom name to their desired room name); then you manually assign them

- Does the university have a license for zoom
  - Not yet but it’s being investigated

- So we are under no obligation to Zoom or Teams or Connect, right? We could use Google Meet or Cisco WebEx or whatever, right?
  - True
  - Recommendations to be mindful that students have to learn more tools
  - Recommendation to be mindful of the technical support

- Have you ever captured chats to assess participation?
  - I haven’t—the chat exports at a list so I think it would be hard to organize in the current format

- What do students think?
Please see survey responses on our Slack page (email invite sent early the week of July 13). I’m not sure if the results are meant to be public, hence the reason for not sharing here.

- **How to involve TAs in the course**
  - Running DGDs (tutorials)
  - Facilitating synchronous sessions (taking charge of the chat, traveling through breakout rooms)
  - Asynchronously: facilitating discussion forums, chatting with students

- **What makes a good activity?**
  - Simple
  - Fits with course goals (e.g., learning outcomes and community-building)
  - Ask students to prepare ideas
  - Don’t try to do everything the first time. Great courses take years to build
  - Do what fits for you and students

- **How to get more immediate feedback from students:**
  - Ask them to let you know in the chat how things are going
  - Ask for thumbs up/down, faster/slower/same
  - Anonymous polls before/during/after the course

- **How to run role plays online**
  - Very similar to in-class, especially if breakout rooms are needed
  - Especially if on a sensitive topic
    - Establish a “safe word” that people can use to come out of character
    - Make sure people know how to leave a breakout room (do a practice beforehand)
    - Set or co-set boundaries
    - Explain how to call a prof/facilitator/TA to enter the room

**Summary of resources suggested during the session**

From everyone in the room

- **Tools used in the session**
  - Videoconferencing: [Zoom](https://www.zoom.us) (not yet available through uOttawa)
  - Survey tool: [Menti](https://www.menti.com/fr67bf6o3a)
  - Collaborative whiteboard: Miro: [https://miro.com/app/board/o9J_kpQwWx4=/](https://miro.com/app/board/o9J_kpQwWx4=/) (Alison uses the free version). Other options are Mural, ExplainEverything, etc.
  - Presentation made with keynote

- **Suggested software**
  - Transcription: Otter.ai (checking how well it works for French; it’s good but not excellent with English)
  - Shrinking video sizes: [https://handbrake.fr/](https://handbrake.fr/)
  - Low bandwidth teaching and learning: [https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/kylemackie/](https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/kylemackie/)
Summary of other ideas

- Reaching students internationally
  - To reach students globally, 8 am / 8 pm is a reasonable time
  - Students across the world: can’t always do synchronous. A 2-day discussion could become a 4-day discussion, so that people have time to post in different time zones. Someone may not see it for 12 hours. Keep video.
  - Importance of having the mix of synchronous and asynchronous, or even only asynchronous—can still be very engaging. Important to record synchronous sessions
- Keep videos short: attention drops off after 6–7 minutes
Which activities/tools have you used in synchronous classes, if any?

- QuickPoll
- Poll Everywhere
- Draw on screen/hide
- Breakout rooms
- Whiteboards
- Collaborative documents
- Other

Course plans

For my course(s), I am focused on:
- Synchronous methods
- Asynchronous methods

36 responses