

# **From Advising to Increasing Engagement in Courses: Enhancing Your Online Programs with Web Conferencing**

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# Engagement and Learning

“Effective engagement strategies can increase student focus, motivation, and higher-level critical thinking, and can encourage community in the virtual environment, as well as promote greater, more meaningful learning experiences” (Kelly, 2015).



# The Criticality of Successful Online Interactions in the Learning Environment

Meaningful online interactions can promote higher engagement between learners, instructors, and other personnel (i.e., advisors, trainers, mentors).

Web conferencing, when purposefully structured and managed, is a powerful online, interactive learning and teaching tool that can promote greater understanding and community building amongst participants, thereby influencing higher chances for student success.

This session presents recommended best practices for supporting both facilitator and student success via a web conferencing tool. Use examples from industry and education are included.

# What Participants Say About Web Conferencing in Education and Industry

## Benefits:

- Immediate interaction and feedback
  - Forged connection, virtual cohesiveness
  - Increased student/trainee comfort
  - Felt that the instructor/advisor “cared”
  - Instructor/advisor is engaged in conversation
  - Ongoing learning/training
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- Convenient (no travel)
  - Reduced time and money expenses
  - Accessible, ADA compliance, UDL
  - Skills reinforcement
  - Ideal for information sharing (project status, presentations)
  - Promote increase in communication skills
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- Variety of helpful tools (chat, emoticons, microphone, video, screen share, polling, breakout rooms, whiteboard)
  - Record, review, archive
  - Promote comfort in the technology for later professional use
  - Mobile capabilities



# What Participants Say About Web Conferencing in Education and Industry

## Areas for improvement:

- Software problems
- Layout of screens
- Incompatibility between devices
- Installation requirements
- Tone of others in chat box
- Instructor unprepared
- Time not used well
- Background noise distracting
- Navigation confusion



# The Web Conference Facilitator

During a web conference, the leadership role of the virtual facilitator is powerful, from encouraging community among participants via purposeful discussions, to facilitating high levels of thinking and knowledge construction.

The online web-conferencing facilitator must consider two things:

- How to engage the participants with a purposeful, structured session (e.g., instructional lesson, office hours, advisor/mentor meeting)
- How to facilitate the session by managing the web conferencing tool itself



# Why Advise via Web Conference?

## In Education

- Online orientation
- Online office hours
- Student presentations
- Guest speakers from the field
- Cohort meetings
- Advising/Mentoring
  - One-on-one
  - Group
  - FYE (First Year Experience)



# Virtual Advising in Education

- Allows for meeting distance students in a face-to-face environment
- Can replicate an in-person advising session
- Facilitates the perception of the advising session as a thoughtful and individual process
- May help students avoid distractions that come with phone calls

## **Advisors and students can:**

- become familiar with each other
- benefit from visual cues (welcoming office, family photos)
- collaboratively review documents such as degree audits, navigate resources, and troubleshoot problems such as registration error messages.

# Why Advise via Web Conference?

## In Industry

- Online orientation/onboarding
- Presentations, proposals, pitch practice
- Role play
- Subject Matter Expert (SME) meetings
- Refresher training
- Team/project meetings
- Mentoring
  - One-on-one
  - Group



# Virtual Advising in Industry

- Allows for meeting trainees from other regions in a face-to-face environment
- Cost-efficient
- Can replicate an in-person mentoring session
- Facilitates the perception of the training/mentoring session as a thoughtful and individual process
- May help trainees avoid distractions that come with phone calls
- Allows for ongoing training sessions

## **Trainers/Mentors and trainees can:**

- become familiar with each other
- benefit from visual cues (facial expressions, communication, body language)
- collaboratively review documents such company collateral, presentation materials, and troubleshoot problems such as registration error messages
- allow for role-play, presentation practice in a low-pressure environment
- self-critique

# Engagement Strategies to Enhance Learning

## Before Session:

- Send clear, concise announcement prior to conference, include:
  - Agenda overview (i.e., a few points on what will be covered, may mention that first few minutes will include “troubleshooting” time)
  - Instructions about the web conferencing tool (i.e., link to tool’s website)
  - Protocols and netiquette reminder
- Invite a co-facilitator or participant to take notes, manage chat room, etc.
- Hold “test” session

## During Session:

- Welcome/acknowledge participants, provide agenda, reminder of “netiquette”
- Share screen, microphone, or webcam when appropriate
- Provide structured session, stay on target with time, topic, and discussion
- Watch chat area, answer questions, recognize participants by name

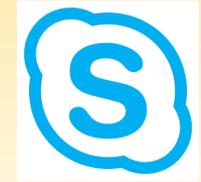
## After Session:

- Follow up
- Solicit feedback

Note: See accompanying “Tips & Tricks” handout for additional suggestions

# Conferencing Tools

Adobe Connect



Canvas Conferences Tool (Big Blue Button)

Lync Skype for Business



Google Hangouts



Zoom



BlueJeans



WebEx



Facebook Live



GoToMeeting



Periscope

# Organization Uses

## Wyndham Vacation Ownership



## University of Central Florida



## Nemours CareConnect



## Palm Beach Atlantic University



# Considerations

## Education

- Organization/University Policy on Third Party Tools
- Accessibility
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- UCF's Syllabus Statement

## Industry

- Local and state laws
- Time zones
- Company policies (i.e., hours, wages)
- Full disclosure (i.e., recording session)

## Other Considerations

- Fair Use Guidelines
- Consent of participants (End User License Agreement)



# UCF Syllabus Statement

## Third-Party Software and FERPA

“During this course you might have the opportunity to use public online services and/or software applications sometimes called third-party software such as a blog or wiki. While some of these could be required assignments, you need **not** make any personally identifying information on a public site. Do not post or provide any private information about yourself or your classmates. Where appropriate you may use a pseudonym or nickname. Some written assignments posted publicly may require personal reflection/comments, but the assignments will not require you to disclose any personally identity-sensitive information. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your instructor.”

# Resources

[7 ideas for enhancing #sales training with web conferencing](#)

[E-Advising Excellence](#)

[Advising Online Students](#)

[Using Skype to Meet with Students: Advisor's Guide](#)

[Best Practices for Teaching with Web Conferencing](#)

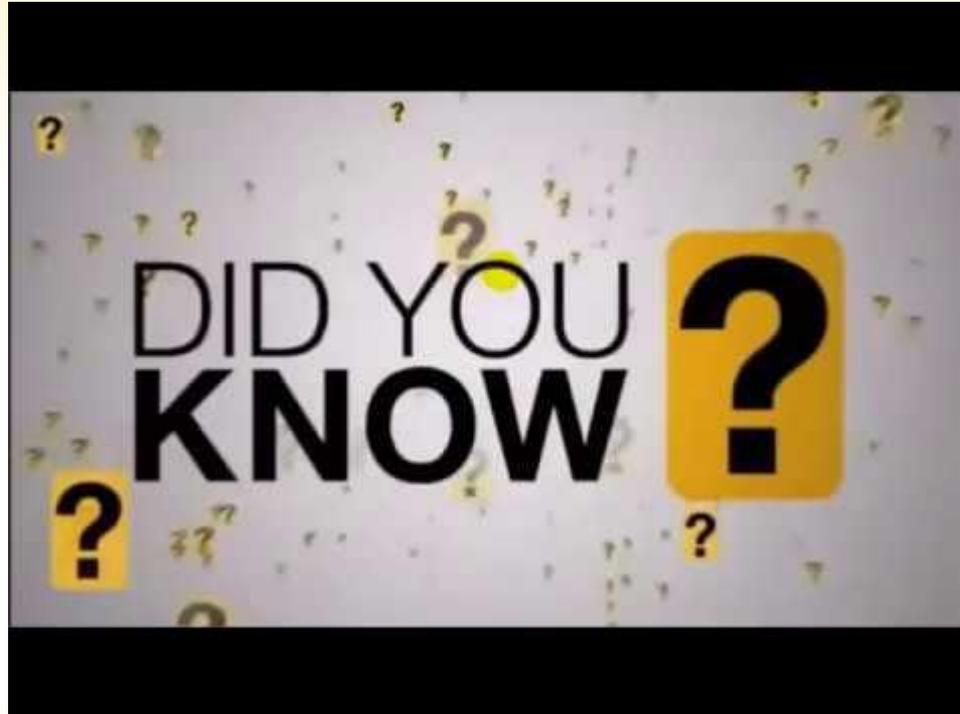
[Skype for Business \(Lync\) - UCF](#)

[Reimagining the Role of Technology in Education](#)

[G2 Crowd - Review of Web Conferencing Software](#)



# Questions?



# Contact



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