Best Practices for Webinars

Below are tips we have put together should you choose to run a webinar on your own. We do have a limited number of spots in our Mohr Career Services Weekly Webinar Series where we can help you with logistical needs. If you are interested in being in this series, email us at hirebizducks@uoregon.edu

Use a hardwired connection rather than Wi-Fi, if possible. Disconnect from any corporate remote VPN's your computer may have. Close down all programs besides your web browser. Ask others sharing a network to stop streaming services (internet games, video, and music).

Test the strength of your bandwidth in advance of the webinar. If you are experiencing lag time between sound/image, we recommend being as close as possible to your router or modem to get the strongest signal possible.

Use the latest version of Firefox, Chrome or Safari internet browser to optimize video platform.

Speak clearly – Using headphones with a microphone is strongly recommended to help minimize echoing and feedback. Minimize background noise and outside distractions (turn TV, cell phones, etc. on silent), make sure your location is free from a lot of outside noise etc. Be aware of sounds like loud typing or shuffling papers, during the presentation.

Practice, Practice, Practice. Set up a practice webinar to test out all the functionality of the video platform including chat, Q&A, screen sharing, sounds settings, polls etc. If possible, have someone help moderate the webinar to include introducing you and your topic, helping you field questions, helping the audience with any tech issues, etc.

If using slides, prepare in advance and leave room for Q&A after every 4-5 slides. It can be great to interact with your audience through Q&A and Polls.

We suggest setting for participants to be automatically muted and camera's turned off. This will help reduce any background noise or distraction during your presentation. Using the chat and Q&A functions will be the best way to interact with your audience. If you do want to have video or audio interactions with your audience, it will be even more important to have someone who can help moderate to turn off/on video and audio.

Look at your camera, not at the screen. Looking at your webcam while speaking gives the feeling of eye contact to the audience.

Be aware of your lighting, positioning, and background. Pay close attention to how you look during setup. Ideally, place a source of light in front of you, and avoid sources of bright light (i.e. windows) directly behind you, as this can make it hard to see your face. Be aware of items that are visible behind you.

Don't use webcam the whole time: it can be very strange to talk into a webcam for a long time and you may also want to switch to your slide deck. Video platforms usually have an option for both—a webcam video of you up in the corner, while your screen share is showing the slide deck as the main focus.

Pro Tip: webinars can be recorded and sent to us to share with students online

Here is a quick rundown of some common controls available in most video platforms. We encourage you to try all of these out during the practice webinar.

- **Mute/unmute**: this allows you to mute your microphone (the host can mute/unmute others, as well)
- **Audio controls:** change microphone and speaker, use computer audio or telephone audio, access other audio options in the settings
- **Start/stop video:** Start or stop your own video
- **Participants:** a window that shows panelists and attendees in your webinar, lets you manage things like mute, stop video, promote to co-host or panelist, demoting panelists to attendees (Panelists and Attendees have different levels of interaction)
- **Q&A:** opens a window for participants to leave a question and for hosts or others to answer
- **Polling:** create and launch a poll for attendees to vote in real-time
- **Share screen:** a very important button, when you're ready to share your computer screen/presentation deck
- **Screen share controls:** host can select who can share screens in the webinar
- **Chat:** a separate window designated for chatting. You can either chat with all attendees, just the panelists, or an individual. Check your options!