



How Do I Engage Students in a Live, Synchronous Lecture via Zoom?

Be Present

Consider encouraging video as part of participation, because it is easier to engage with the class if you can see everyone. You may want to coach students on how to change the video layout to [Gallery View](#) so that everyone is visible to each other at the same time. Be mindful of student preference and [video presentation best practices](#). Remember to make eye contact!

Structure the Session

Engage learners by chunking lectures to include different activities such as:

- Start your class with an icebreaker.
- Deliver a mini lecture.
- Allow time for group work or a question-and-response session.
- Encourage reflection by having students summarize key points or engage in an exit activity, like “[muddiest point](#).”
- Invite a guest speaker.
- Invite students to respond to you using the chat or audio features.

Flip it Around

Have students take the lead! Ask students to facilitate discussion or [present on a topic](#). Presenting synchronously can allow students to demonstrate their knowledge in an authentic way.

Don't Forget about Accessibility

If there are any students with a documented accommodation, reach out to [Student Disability Services \(DSS\)](#) in advance of your scheduled session.

Use Tools Meaningfully

Purposeful use of tools supports meaningful interaction and activities.

- Using [raise hand](#).
- Bringing in some nonverbal tools—such as [polls](#), [whiteboard](#), and [breakout rooms](#).



Ideas for Activities in Synchronous Zoom Sessions

Duration	Activity	Details	Prepare
2 minutes	Muddiest point	Ask students to contribute to chat where they are still confused	Tell students how to bring up a chat box at the beginning of the session
2 minutes	Poll	Use the polling tool to ask a question that engages; use responses to foster discussion	Set up poll questions ahead in Zoom; for LiveTalk polls, set up from the LiveTalk page
5 minutes	Wrap-up	Summarize the session; set up expectations for follow-up activities	Display a PPT slide or document with key takeaways
5 minutes	Intro Whiteboard	On entry into the virtual class, have students think about a question and write their contribution on the whiteboard	Launch a whiteboard at start of session and add visible instructions
10–15 minutes	Debrief	Ask each group to appoint a representative to summarize main points of their discussion	Ask a TA to monitor chat and to type in relevant points; consider assigning TA as co-host
15 minutes	Mini lecture	Share screen, launch PowerPoint, and deliver mini lecture	Have the PPT file launched before the start of session
15 minutes	Breakout room activity	Assign students to individual breakout rooms for group work or discussion	Practice hosting breakout rooms

Source: adapted from Office of IT and Organization. (2020). Setting an agenda. University of Minnesota.