

How can I engage students in Zoom?

Teaching via Zoom, Meet, and other synchronous meeting platforms is still relatively new to most of us. We want to make the most of this precious time with our students, but how can we connect with a Brady Bunch screen of little empty tiles? We're here to help. In this guide, we'll explain how requiring cameras in the remote and online classroom can harm student success and we'll offer suggestions to create meaningful connections with students, no cameras required.



Internet bandwidth issues: low bandwidth makes camera use difficult.

Limited internet access: students may be accessing class by dialing in.



Access to equipment may be limited.

Camera use is an invitation into someone's home/current location; requiring the use of cameras can be disruptive to students' privacy and feelings of safety.



Expecting/Requiring students to use their camera assumes their environment resembles an "ideal" learning environment.

Expecting/Requiring students to use their camera also assumes academic performance and success looks a certain way.



Tips for Engaging Students

Set clear expectations for engagement. Examples:

- Teach students how to use meeting platform tools (raised hand or coffee cup on Zoom).
- Encourage students to edit their name on the meeting platform and provide a choice for camera use.
- Make your preferences clear and explain how camera use can aid in creating community.
- [Video Tutorials for Zoom Meeting Tools.](#)

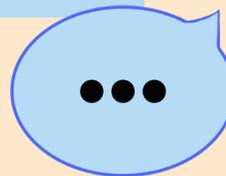
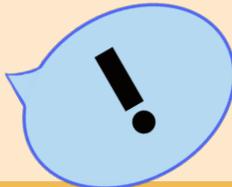


[Info for using Google Docs](#)

[Info for using Jamboard](#)

Use a Google doc, Jamboard, or other collaborative platform for students to contribute questions about lectures. Interactive discussion boards can increase engagement.

For Breakout sessions, use a group or self-assessment as a deliverable.



Use warm calling instead of cold calling. At the beginning of each class remind students of class expectations, that you will pause for questions and may call on someone. Clarify that your intention is not to put someone on the spot, but to promote an exchange of ideas (verbally or in chat.)



Incentivize formative assessments during class. In your syllabus, state formative assessments will be used during class and can be completed for points.

Example: “Each lecture will include five polls with two questions in each poll, completing all five polls (10 questions) earns you 2 points.”

[Info for using polls on Zoom.](#)