



# Strategies and Tips

## for Teaching in the Connected Classroom

### PREPARING FOR CLASS

- **Canvas site:** Your Canvas course site is essential for students in a connected classroom. Be sure to share ALL content in Canvas before class session because this is the shared environment for your students. Avoid last minute changes or additions so that students can be better prepared with the most current version of your information.
- **Presentations:** Your slides should use large font for display (24-point or larger) in a Sans Serif font (Helvetica, Arial, etc.) with no more than 50 words per slide. Use 'Notes' area to guide your discussion of each slide instead of putting all the words on the slide. Remember, "a picture is worth 1000 words" - use more images, fewer words to make your point.
- **Multimedia:** Share links to online videos beforehand, even if you plan to show video in class. Just to be sure, test the videos you intend to share prior to starting class.

*Note: Be sure to keep accessibility in mind with alt-text for images and transcripts or captioning for video. For more information, contact TLOS at [tlos@vt.edu](mailto:tlos@vt.edu) or submit a 4Help ticket (<https://vt4help.service-now.com/>) for quick referral.*

### DURING YOUR CLASS

**Start by confirming that students at all locations can see and hear you. Also let students know if your class session will be recorded.**

- **Cameras:** Be aware of your camera presence and stay in frame - use the confidence monitor to confirm proper placement. Make "eye contact" with camera when possible, because it connects you to your distance students.
- **Writing or Drawing:** Don't plan on using a whiteboard (or chalkboard) as the camera will not transmit this clearly for off-site students. Use the computer whiteboard or document camera to draw or write information to share.
- **Audio:** Be sure you can be heard from around the room if you intend to move. Talk to the room technician about the room microphone configuration. If you do move around the room, remember to switch to student view camera and frequently check your camera presence.

*Note: Be sure students are aware of microphones in your room and ask ALL students to use their mics when speaking, so that students at all locations can hear and be heard. Check to be sure that student questions or comments have been heard by all students. Just in case, make a habit of repeating student questions at your location before you answer them.*

**FOR MORE  
INFORMATION**

PLEASE EMAIL:  
[ledcontact@vt.edu](mailto:ledcontact@vt.edu)



Continued  
**ON REVERSE SIDE**



## TEACHING STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Remember ALL of your learners as you conduct the class. Know your students' names at all locations and call on them by name whenever possible. Promote open discussion between students at all locations and encourage them to use names as well. Hint: Pull roster with images from Hokiespa.

Zoom allows anyone with a webcam to enable it and transmit video through the connection. You can ask students at a distance to enable their webcams, to promote a personal connection with their fellow students at all other locations.

Consider “flipping” the class by creating/posting instructional content or videos in your Canvas site beforehand. Direct the students to read, review content, or watch videos prior to coming to class. Class time can engage in deeper learning, such as exploring professional case studies, describing their biggest take-away or most confusing point, or relating the content to current events or personal experience.

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### ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES INCLUDE:

- **Think/Pair/Share:** You can do this via Google Docs or Slides, in which your students can co-creating artifacts regardless of their location.
  1. You set up the student groups
  2. Students create and access their own group Google Docs or Slides
  3. They use the integrated chat feature to communicate
  4. They co-create the Google Docs or Slides for a set period of time
  5. You can then either request that they submit these through Google Drive in Canvas Assignments or you can access their artifacts via Google Drive directly and discuss them afterward.
- **Fishbowl technique:** You assign a certain group of students to be the “discussion leaders” for a particular topic. Other students in the course can contribute via chat or by “raising their hands,” either physically or virtually.
- **Student Presentations:** Students, individually or in groups, can share content and deliver a presentation either in the classroom or via Zoom (or a combination). Don't be afraid to incorporate this into your class - talk to your room technician for details on setting this up.

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### CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR WHEN YOU CAN'T HOLD CLASS

Finally, have a backup plan for how you can hold class if you can't teach in your connected classroom due to weather, technology issues, etc.

Direct students to your Canvas site for an announcement. You can establish a virtual meeting room in Zoom in which you and your students can meet. Post this information with instructions in your Canvas site and on your Syllabus.