

WEBCONFERENCE: Synchronous, many-to-many communication

Best for connecting people for meetings and collaborating

Planning for a webconference

- ▶ familiarize yourself with the webconference tool you will be using, ensuring you know how to:
 - ▷ share your screen
 - ▷ connect your webcam
 - ▷ mute and unmute your mic
 - ▷ hear the participants; for best results, use a headset
 - ▷ enable and disable participants' microphones and video
 - ▷ allow others to share their screens, if applicable
 - ▷ switch between views and sources
- ▶ send out a communication to potential participants with:
 - ▷ the link for the webconference and a teleconference call-in number if necessary
 - ▷ basic connection instructions
 - ▷ etiquette and procedural notes
- ▶ if you are booking a room for this, book it for at least 15 minutes in advance of the start of the conference
- ▶ bring a laptop with the webconference software already loaded and any necessary log-in information
- ▶ start to set up at least 15 minutes in advance of the start of the conference in order to ensure you are ready
- ▶ decide if the webconference should be recorded, and if so, where the recording should be posted



Typical webconference layout

What to expect during the webconference:

- ▶ be prepared to spend the first few minutes helping participants with technical issues, but don't do this for too long. If someone is, for example, having issues with their sound or video, ask other participants to assist via the chat
- ▶ if you are recording the session, inform the participants and let them know where it will be posted
- ▶ depending on the type of conference you are moderating,, be prepared to facilitate participants' sharing of screens and to turn on and off their mics as appropriate.



Each participant and the host is at their own computer, or in a meeting room with others at a computer

Participants can hear the moderator, may see and hear other participants, and can communicate via chat

Moderator has primary control panel; participants have a control panel with reduced functionality

The number of participants is often determined by the software used and/or the style of the conference

Participants may require technical assistance to be fully engaged

Audio and video quality may be lacking, as these are functions of each participant's equipment

Technical support is available at U of T from Discovery Commons for moderators, but off-site participants are responsible for their own technology

Can be recorded for later viewing on demand

Any computer source, such as website, Powerpoint, or other application can be shared

Participants may need to download an application

A variety of tools is available; some are free