

The Videoconferencing Classroom: A Student Perspective

What is videoconferencing? Videoconferencing is audio and video technology that connects at least two geographic locations and allows everyone to see and hear each other. The technology includes cameras, television monitors, microphones and document cameras.

Arrive early. Videoconferenced classes are scheduled well in advance and begin and end at a specific time. Try to arrive at the class location early and take your seat prior to the beginning of class. Remember that if you arrive late you may disrupt class by walking in front of a camera.

You're on camera. At some point in most videoconferenced class sessions the camera will be pointed in your direction. Be sure to sit in view of the camera so that faculty and other students can see you. This is like being on television but with a limited audience. After a few class sessions using videoconferencing everyone will have had a chance to practice and get used to the technology.

Remember that the camera may be pointed at the room you are in which means that everyone at the opposite location can see you.

Speak into the microphone. Both the broadcast room and the receive room will be equipped with microphones to pick up your voice. Whichever location you are in you must speak into a microphone or your classmates at the other location will not be able to hear you. **Remember** that when the microphones are turned on everyone at the other location will be able to hear you. **Be polite** and don't engage in conversation during class time as the microphones may pick up what you say.

Come to class prepared to participate. Your faculty will provide you with handouts and guides, much of which will be available on eCollege. Please bring the appropriate material with you when you come to class. This will save time for everyone and you will be better prepared to follow the discussion.

Know how to handle problems. Technology is not perfect and you may experience problems with connections and video or audio quality. Know what the backup plan is for your class. Be willing to be flexible if there are problems. Being a student in this new environment requires a few new skills and patience. Just like in the traditional face-to-face classroom remain polite and courteous and rely on your class backup plan. Finally, be sure to speak up if you are experiencing technical trouble.