

Guidance: Physical Set Up for Online Meetings

The physical set-up helps to create a space that is conducive to a productive online engagement.

LIGHTING

- Good quality lighting makes a difference and allows participants to see you clearly.
- Set up at least two light sources pointing at your face.
- Avoid being backlit. If there are windows behind you, close the blinds/shades that can create shadows across your face.

CAMERA ANGLE

- Correct camera framing and angle help participants feel like you are speaking directly to them.
- Position the webcam at eye level.
- Position the webcam at a distance that will show your head and shoulders. You don't want your whole face to take up the video, nor do you want to be so far that you cannot be seen clearly.

BACKGROUND

Don't forget the space behind you.

- Consider a background that helps with "legitimacy" and is not distracting.
- Set up a wall with simple art or sit in a space with a bookshelf behind you.
- Some online meeting platforms such as Zoom, offer virtual backgrounds, while others such as Skype allow you blur your background.

FOREGROUND

Don't forget the space in front of you.

- What might distract you as a presenter?
- What might you need in front of you to encourage you, keep you regulated and energized?
- Do you need to have a closed door?
- Let others in your shared space know that you cannot be disturbed for a period of time.

ATTIRE

- How you present yourself and what you are wearing influence nonverbal communication.
- Dress professionally, but be comfortable.
- Avoid wearing busy patterns, such as stripes or polka dots.

MEMORY AIDS

- Have your notes readily accessible.
- You can tape talking points near your webcam, on a bookstand, or have your notes on the screen. This will help you maintain eye contact with the webcam, rather than looking down at notes.

OTHER SUPPORT

- Have other key essentials within reach, like a glass of water, reading glasses, tissue, etc.
- **If your phone is near you, make sure that your phone is also in silent mode.**

Adapted from Hibber, Garber, Kerr, Marquart (2016) The Human Element: Fostering Instructor Presence through Online Instructional Videos. In Creating Teacher Immediacy in Online Learning Environments. Ed D'Agustino, S.