

DVC Camera-optional Recommendation

The Distance Education Committee recommends instructors adopt a flexible, camera-optional policy in routine online sessions, where video participation is encouraged but not required. This opt-in, inclusive approach:

- provides equitable access for students without the technology or internet bandwidth to participate in virtual sessions with cameras on
- respects student concerns around privacy, safety, disability, and religious strictures

If a course or assignment is based on visual performance, such as a public speech, presentation, or demonstration, live camera participation may be required, but needs to be outlined clearly in the course notes and syllabus, alongside instructions on how a student can communicate concerns/challenges to the instructor.

For exam proctoring recommendations, please see [Online Proctoring Recommendations](#).

A special note on FERPA and class recordings:

If an instructor records a Zoom session, steps must be taken to protect student privacy in accordance with the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#). Recordings with identifiable student information are part of students' protected educational record.

- Let students know you are recording the session and where that recording will be provided.
- Allow students to opt-out from identification in recordings by modifying their screen name, muting their audio, and/or disabling video.
- Faculty can modify Zoom Recordings settings to disable local recording, disable record gallery view, disable display participant names, and enable recording disclaimers
- Learn more about FERPA and how to change Zoom recording settings in [@One Guidance for Recording Class Sessions on Zoom](#)

Tips for encouraging participation without cameras:

- [Leverage the chat](#) - encourage students to provide feedback occasionally through chat
- [Use Zoom polls](#) to solicit feedback or check for understanding
- [Encourage non-verbal participation](#) (thumbs up, yes, no, go slower, etc)
- [Use breakout rooms](#) that encourage student-to-student discussions
- Encourage students without video to [add a profile picture or bitmoji](#) to their Zoom profile to help show presence
- Hold a conversation with your class (or survey, discussion board, etc.) on what would help encourage camera participation
- Contact our [Distance Education support team](#) for support or additional tips.