

Preparing Your Presentation for Desktop Recording

The following components are important to consider when planning a lesson. You may decide to include only certain components in the actual video (e.g. the introduction and content presentation), and include the rest in Blackboard. Dividing content this way allows you to leverage the tools available in Blackboard, such as the online test feature, discussion tool, blogs or wikis or the assignment tool. However you choose to deliver content, consider these key elements as you plan a lesson

- **Introduction:** What is the focus of the lesson? How would you introduce this lesson in a face-to-face environment? How would you engage the students? For instance, you might begin with an example, a thought provoking question or a discussion of how this content relates to their daily lives.
- **Learning Outcomes:** What are the intended learning outcomes after the student has completed this lesson? How will you evaluate whether a student has achieved these outcomes?
- **Readings:** What readings are relevant to the lesson? How and when should students encounter these materials?
- **Content Presentation:** What media are most suited for delivering and presenting the content of the lesson? Should you use a video, multiple videos or a combination of different media? For instance, you may provide a combination of direct textual instruction, a video, some additional instruction and a relevant link.
- **Assignments:** How do the assignments relate to the course goals, objectives and learning outcomes? Do you want to provide a short quiz, in addition to other assignments, to assess students' understanding of the content material?
- **Wrapup:** How can you tie together the lesson's content and activities to help students achieve the intended learning outcomes?
- **Closure:** Where can the student go to obtain more information? For instance, you might provide external links and additional resources. Before recording your video, it's helpful to have a strong idea of what you want to say and how you want to say it. While a script isn't required, planning what you want to say before you record your presentation will help your presentation run smoothly. Planning can help eliminate filler words (such as "um," and "uh") and keep your presentation focused on the material you are presenting. Consider these points as you script and prepare your presentation:
- **Flow:** Aim at making your script as conversational as possible. Even if you plan or script your presentation, you want to sound natural, not like you're delivering a speech. Remember, too, that when recording a video you will not have the face-to-face feedback that guides you in the traditional classroom.
- **Outlines:** You may want to develop a basic outline to guide you as you record the video. This outline might take the form of bullet points or a concept map. Or, you may want to integrate your outline in the actual presentation as a visual roadmap to help students know where they are in the presentation process.

- **Length:** Divide longer lectures into three to twelve minute segments for recording. Doing so will make the material more accessible to students, and can help you prioritize and organize the topics for the students.
- **Reusability:** Since the videos you create can be reusable learning objects, your script should avoid mentioning "time sensitive" information, such as the current term, and any due dates or assignments that may change from semester to semester. Since you're not presenting the material in a traditional classroom, you may want to take these additional steps to make your video more effective for students:
- **Gain Attention:** Do something to capture the students' attention at the beginning of the video. You might consider using interesting images, telling a relevant story or providing some interesting facts.
- **Included Learning Outcomes:** If you included the learning outcomes for the video lesson at the beginning, students can engage the material and retain the information more effectively.
- **Highlight New Concepts:** Use visual and aural clues to highlight new concepts in the video. Allow time in the presentation for students to process the information.
- **Make Connections:** When introducing new material, reiterate how it relates to other concepts already covered in the course. This strategy works best in a course where the knowledge builds in a "standard" format, so if you frequently rearrange concepts and course materials, you may want to make specific connections in the materials supporting the video presentation.

Using Visuals

Visuals are one of the most important components of your video presentation, so it's important to consider how they'll be used in the lesson. A few points to keep in mind:

- **Start strong:** Your first slide should be your title slide, which you can use to provide some preliminary information about the structure and scope of your presentation.
- **Minimize text on the slides:** A text heavy slide will cause your audience to read the slide instead of listening to your narration. Visuals are better accompaniments to your narration.
- **Avoid reading from the slides:** Nothing is more boring than listening to someone read to you what you can read for yourself.
- **Use good slide design:** Use standard fonts, and use different font sizes for main points and secondary points. Limit the number, color and sizes of fonts in your presentation. Use proper capitalization and punctuation, and proofread your slides carefully. Limit or eliminate the use of slide animations and transitions.
- **Incorporate effective graphics:** Use instructionally effective graphics (e.g., charts, diagrams and images), and avoid decorative graphics that don't add to your content.
- **Use branding when appropriate:** Make sure to incorporate any branding for your course or department, but try not to make the branding so specific that you can't reuse the presentation in different semesters and years.

- **Determine your own best practices:** If your presentation will become part of a larger library, consider the standards you want to incorporate into each video for unity and consistency (e.g., consistent title slides and review sections).
- **Preview your presentation:** Record your narration for the entire presentation as if you were presenting it. Then, run your presentation, and sit back and listen. You'll gain an entirely different perspective when you pretend to be the audience. Listening to your passages and boring spots in need of revision.
- **Provide students with a downloadable, printable version:** Use the "Print Handouts" option to create a PDF handout students can print and take notes on while listening to the presentation. You might even consider leaving some information blank on the printout to encourage note taking.
- **Determine when and how many animations to add to the slides:** If you include animations in the slides, it's important to consider when to add animations and how many animations to add. Include only the types of animations that will make an impact on viewers not animations that could be distracting.
- **Use animations and visuals consistently:** For a visually consistent presentation, limit the number of different animations you apply

Delivery

You don't need to be a professional speaker or a seasoned movie star to record an effective presentation. Consider these suggestions when producing your video:

- **Be an engaging speaker:** Vary your intonations, use humor and a conversational tone, and remember to smile and be yourself! Your main goal should be to keep your listeners interested and focused. Pretend you are actually talking to a live audience. It may help to place a photograph of your family or a pet near the computer and pretend you're talking to them.
- **Don't worry about small mistakes:** If you feel that you jumbled a phrase, don't restart the recording. You can always say, "Let me say that again," and then restate your phrase just as you would in a traditional classroom. And you can EDIT
- **Use strong voice inflection:** If you do not use a camera in your recordings, your students can't see your hand gestures or facial expressions. Use strong inflection or repeat the content to emphasize and draw attention to key points.
- **Avoid excessive verbal pauses, such as "um":** Do a dryrun of the presentation, or practice reading the script several times to help eliminate distracting verbal pauses.
- **Check your sound quality:** Use an external microphone or headset to achieve a clear, consistent sound.