**General Inclusive Practices for Virtual Meetings/Presentations**

Before your Virtual Meeting/Presentation:

* If you know an individual who will be attending has a visual, audio, or other ability impairment, check with that individual privately to see if there are specific communication or virtual practices that work best for them. If the meeting requires registration, ask if any accommodations are needed during the registration process.
* Schedule your meeting far enough in advance that individuals who use a captioning service have enough time to schedule the captioner.
* If not able to schedule far enough in advance for a captioner to participate, consider using [Microsoft Teams](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/use-live-captions-in-a-teams-meeting-4be2d304-f675-4b57-8347-cbd000a21260), [Google Meet](https://support.google.com/meet/answer/9300310?co=GENIE.Platform%3DDesktop&hl=en), or [Zoom](https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/207279736-Closed-captioning-and-live-transcription) as they have live captioning/subtitles features. Live Captioning in Teams requires the [desktop client](https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-365/microsoft-teams/download-app) and does not work when Teams is accessed through a web browser. Please note that these live captioning features are not a replacement for required accommodations but can provide more accessibility. Please note that Zoom requires the capability to be enabled by the meeting organizer.
* Provide slides and/or an agenda ahead of time if able. This also allows individuals who may use a captioner to share the documents with the captioner in advance, which may help the captioner be more efficient and effective. It also lets meeting attendees know what is to be discussed or expected, and also lets them know if there are documents or programs/tech they will need access to.
* If you have discussion questions, consider sharing them in advance so that individuals who answer best with time to reflect have time to consider the questions ahead of time.
* For Word documents, utilize the [Accessibility Checker feature](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/improve-accessibility-with-the-accessibility-checker-a16f6de0-2f39-4a2b-8bd8-5ad801426c7f) and the [Inclusive Language Filter](https://www.howtogeek.com/677694/how-to-check-for-inclusive-language-in-microsoft-word/#:~:text=From%20the%20%E2%80%9CHome%E2%80%9D%20tab%2C%20click%20Editor%20%3E%20Settings.&text=You%20can%20also%20access%20this,click%20the%20%E2%80%9COK%E2%80%9D%20button.) if available.
* If using PDFs or image files, consider using [SensusAccess](https://oit.colorado.edu/services/business-services/sensusaccess) to convert files to a more accessible format for individuals using screen readers.
* Zoom Specific: If you are the meeting organizer and schedule the meeting, update your Zoom settings to allow for non-verbal communication. Here are [two](https://blog.zoom.us/getting-audience-feedback-during-your-meeting/) separate [articles](https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/115001286183-Nonverbal-feedback-during-meetings) about these features. You can also set up your Zoom meeting to [accommodate live captioning](https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/207279736-Managing-and-viewing-closed-captioning) that meeting attendees could turn on if there is a dedicated captioner.
* Zoom Specific: If there will be a captioner for a meeting attendee, consider asking the attendee and captioner ahead of time if it would be appropriate to [assign the captioner as the Captioner within Zoom](https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/207279736-Managing-and-viewing-closed-captioning) for all meeting attendees. Keep in mind that if a Captioner is captioning for a larger group, they may spend extra effort being more precise rather than fast, so it might slow down the captioning for those who might need it.

At the beginning of the virtual session:

* Take time to explain any “ground rules” that are specific to your meeting/presentation (some examples follow).
* If the session is being recorded, remind participants that it is being recorded.
* Include a [Land Acknowledgement](https://www.colorado.edu/cnais/land-acknowledgment) before your meeting content begins.
  + Ex: “The Institute of Behavioral Science at CU Boulder acknowledges that the University sits upon land within the territories of the Ute, Cheyenne, and Arapaho peoples. Further, we acknowledge that 48 contemporary tribal nations are historically tied to the lands that make up the state of Colorado.”
* Note if people can rename themselves and include pronouns if they would like. Verify name pronunciation if you are unsure of a name (this can be done privately in the chat or beforehand).
* If people do not need to have their video cameras on, acknowledge that they are free to turn it off. Some people may not feel comfortable on video and video takes a lot of bandwidth on internet services. That being said, if anyone in the meeting has a hearing impairment, being able to see video could allow them to utilize lip reading, so it might be best to have individuals turn their camera on when they are speaking.
* If people do not feel comfortable going off mute, note that they can use the chat function. Utilizing the chat function for questions/conversation also allows individuals who may have hearing impairments to participate more fully.
* Encourage participants to raise hands during the meeting instead of people just starting to talk. This allows individuals who might not be comfortable interrupting to make it known that they wish to speak and also allows individuals who might have a slight delay due to captioning also be able to participate.
  + Zoom: Utilize the non-verbal feedback options (read more [here](https://blog.zoom.us/getting-audience-feedback-during-your-meeting/) and [here](https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/115001286183-Nonverbal-feedback-during-meetings)). Monitor to see if people raise their hands (it tracks in order). Explain that people can note “slow down” or other options, but also note that all participants can see what people put for their non-verbal feedback. You can also use the “Reactions” within a virtual meeting, however those generally disappear after a short period of time (whereas the non-verbal feedback setting allows them to stay until dismissed).
* Check to see if any participants are calling in, make sure that the meeting leads/presenters know there are people who are unable to see visuals. If possible, have the presenter describe relevant visuals to allow those who cannot see the visuals to still understand what is being shared.
* Allows space as needed for ice breakers, or breakout groups with directed questions, or other such ways to engage and include everyone.

For Presentations:

* Consider sending the slide deck to attendees in advance or have them available via the O365 cloud (SharePoint). You can also link to a cloud version on the first page of your presentation if people would like to access it that way.
* When using acronyms, please make sure the full name is displayed somewhere or is verbally said as well so that individuals who are not familiar with the acronym can know what you are referring to.
* For best visual practices, have increased contrast on any visuals (graphs, text) - you can check the contrast by using a Contrast Checker [like this one](https://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/). Note that best practice is to use a light background with dark text.
* Embed links (do not use full link texts such as [https://www.etcetcetc](https://www.etc.etc.etc)). This practice helps individuals who use screen readers so that then they will not have to listen to the whole web address being read. For more information about linking and other web accessibility issues, the [WebAIM](https://webaim.org/) organization is very helpful.
* Consider using [PowerPoint](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/present-with-real-time-automatic-captions-or-subtitles-in-powerpoint-68d20e49-aec3-456a-939d-34a79e8ddd5f) as it can transcribe your words as you present and display them on-screen as captions in the same language you are speaking, or as subtitles translated to another language. More information on live captioning is available on [CU’s AccessibleTechnology website](https://www.colorado.edu/accessible-technology/live-captioning), but please note that PowerPoint captioning will only caption the presenter’s audio content.
* If using YouTube videos in your presentation, you can make sure that Closed Captioning (CC) is selected so that it plays with closed captions during the presentation. [Here are brief instructions for selecting closed captions](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ngf8vgrvdz4).