



# Tips for Synchronous Sessions

*This document lists several tips for teaching/hosting an online virtual session using a synchronous tool such as Skype or Adobe Connect. More info and resources can be found under the support tab at: <http://online.sas.upenn.edu>.*

## PLANNING

### Tip 1

Plan the goals & outcomes of the session. Effective learning involves participation. An effective synchronous session may build on many hours of asynchronous preparation.

### Tip 2

For broadcast webinars, plan for awareness building, registration procedures, enrollment, ongoing communication and feedback.

### Tip 3

Be sure participants have information about date, time, and how to access the event, including a link and login detail.

### Tip 4

Learn all of the features and tools available in the synchronous platform.

### Tip 5

Practice makes perfect! Practice often, and schedule a dry run of the complete program / webinar before going live.

### Tip 6

If possible, have all presenters in same room (or connected in other ways) for ease in signaling problems, time, questions. Plan a strategy to manage or answer questions as they come in.

### Tip 7

Use an extra computer to "see" what participants see and ensure all is functioning well.

## CONTENT

### Tip 8

Create a strong opening statement, visual or poll. This will hook your audience and draw people into the session.

### Tip 9

Design in opportunities for the audience or learners to use feedback tools

### Tip 10

Look for creative ways to get your material across.

- Keep content visually appealing but not too busy with flashing graphics.
- Use simple builds to emphasize a process/point.

### Tip 11

Design content to be viewed on the screen. For example:

- Use images, graphics, charts to make a point
- Use large, clear fonts
- Use key phrases as bullets, not complete sentences
- Use no more than 5 bullets per page & 5 words per line (5x5 rule)

## LEARNER/AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

### Tip 12

If not using live video/webcam, post a photo of each presenter. The picture/webcam is important at the beginning for a social approach. But, ongoing use of the live webcam can also affect the quality of transmission.

### Tip 13

Attention spans for most people are very short! Try to create a break every 10-12 minutes. Try a change in style, method, or activity to keep people constantly engaged.

### Tip 14

Keep your audience engaged by asking them to do something every few minutes. This might be answer a Yes/No question, click a status icon, or take a poll.

### Tip 15

Use 2 or more voices to add interest and vary intonations.

### Tip 16

Ask for questions at the end of a segment. Allow participants to use microphones or type their questions.

### Tip 17

More ideas to engage learners:

- Ask learners to point out what is wrong -right with a photo or chart
- Assign student presenters to summarize readings
- Invite learners to use whiteboard "line-drawing" tools to match terms or draw connections and pathways.
- Use breakout groups

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Arts & Sciences Online Learning		
Dr. Jacqueline Candido Director	215-898-4970	<a href="mailto:candido@sas.upenn.edu">candido@sas.upenn.edu</a>
Benjamin Wiggins Assistant Director	215-898-5580	<a href="mailto:bwiggins@sas.upenn.edu">bwiggins@sas.upenn.edu</a>
<a href="http://online.sas.upenn.edu">http://online.sas.upenn.edu</a>		

### Office Location

Arts and Sciences Online Learning  
3624 Market Street, Suite 5W on Fifth Floor  
Philadelphia PA 19104