

# Strategies to Prevent and Manage Issues Related to Technology

2020 Online TA Institute

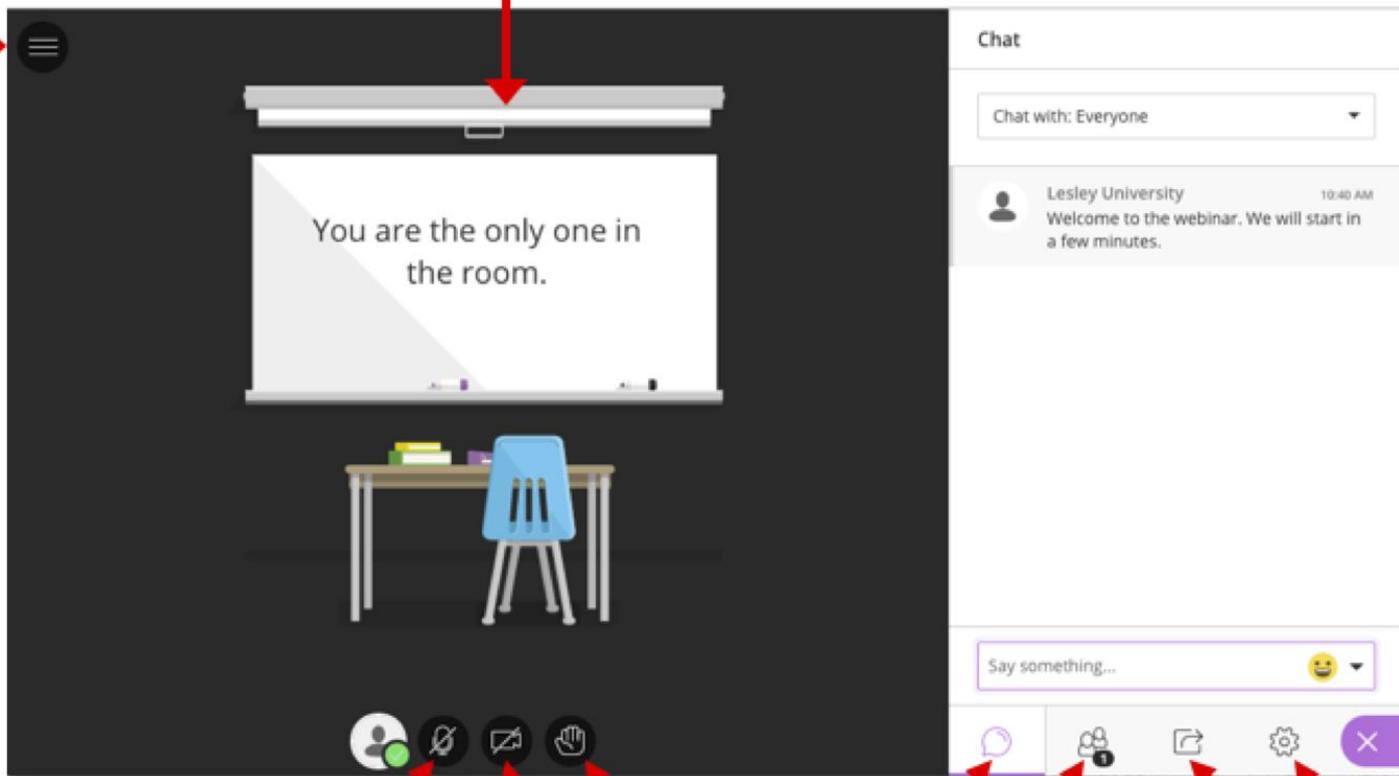
Jonathan Agyeman  
Jens Vent-Schmidt

## Session Menu

(Recording, call in by phone, get help)

## Media Space

(Webcam, whiteboard, shared content)



Microphone on/off

Webcam on/off

Raise hand

Chat

Participants

Share content

Settings

# Consider your relationship to the land you are on.

After sharing your current location, go to [native-land.ca](https://native-land.ca) to learn about the traditional territories you are on.

Please share these in the chat box.

As you observe your peers sharing, reflect on your relationship with the land you are on.

# Important notice...

- We are offering advice from the perspective of graduate students at the university, and are not interpreting the TA Collective Agreement in this session.
- If you have any questions about the CUPE 2278 Collective Agreement as a TA, please contact your department Union Representative. If you're unsure who your Union Rep is, please contact CUPE 2278 directly at [president@cupe2278.ca](mailto:president@cupe2278.ca)

# Learning Objectives

By the end of this workshop, you will be able to :

- Identify common barriers/challenges related technology faced by online teaching TAs
- Discuss commonalities between those barriers/challenges
- Plan strategies to prevent and/or overcome these barriers/challenges

# Share your expectations/goals for today using annotate

What to do if a call/online class drops/has internet connectivity issues

Learn about video sharing and quick fixes during a lesson/seminar

At what point should we contact ubc it for help versus the help lines for each program

Is there a CTLT or UBC IT technician available for help?

learning to switch back and forth between tasks in Collaborate Ultra (smoothly)

Potential challenges that I couldn't think of

Being aware of some common tech issues and how to manage

How to effectively deliver content if/when technical difficulties occupy some or significant portions of class time

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# Activity 1

Go to this Google Jamboard: <https://bit.ly/202007TAIJam>

- Share challenges/issues/barriers related to technology you anticipate happening while you TAing
- Create one sticky per challenge/issue/barrier
- As your peers share their challenges/issues, we will sort these into common themes
- In the next activity, you will discuss these challenges/barriers in breakout groups

# Activity 2

- I will move you into breakout rooms, one challenge theme per room
- Go to this Google Slidedeck: <https://bit.ly/202007TAISlides>
- In breakout rooms, discuss and summarize on your slide:
  - How does this challenge affect me vs. my students?
  - How can I ask the course instructor for support with this challenge?
  - What can I do independently to prevent vs. manage this challenge?
- Timeline
  - 15 min working on slides in breakout room (I'll keep the time)
  - 10 min break + “gallery walk”: look individually at other group's slides
  - Brief slide presentations + discussion as a large group

# Challenge Group 1 - [Moving through Breakout groups]

How does this challenge affect me vs. my students?

As a TA you need to move between each breakout room in order to oversee the Discussions

What to do as a student when your 'group mates' end of leaving the session and you are left in a break out room by yourself - can you message the ta to be moved into another group? - Yes, you can invite your students to send a private message. Also, you would see how many students are left in the group in the breakout group view

How can I ask the course instructor for support with this challenge?

Is it possible to create a practice session for TAs to practice making and managing breakout groups? Yes, you can ask the course instructor to set up a practice session or do that yourself if you have teacher status on you canvas course

What can I do independently to prevent vs. manage this challenge?

Are students able to access the chat/raise hands to indicate to the TA that they would like the TA to join the breakout group for assistance? Yes, they can use the everyone chat and the hand-raise icon is visible for the moderator (=TA)

# Challenge Group 2 - [Engaging learners and lack of response]

How does this challenge affect me vs. my students?

-Students may not learn as much, TA might become frustrated, we might not be able to cover as much material as we planned, students may become unmotivated/uninterested

How can I ask the course instructor for support with this challenge?

-Provide pre-recorded videos, make discussions graded, arrange small group discussions



I would add that the videos should be kept short, like a minute or two, to introduce a concept and then get back to the synchronous discussion, students are more likely to actively watch the video if they know they are coming back to the virtual classroom being ready to discuss something from the video

What can I do independently to prevent vs. manage this challenge?

-Use polls in Zoom or Collaborate Ultra, use chat, use Jamboards, use reactions (emojis, thumbs up, etc) ask students to write answers before saying them, plan for breaks

# Challenge Group 3 - [Technical Support]

How does this challenge affect me vs. my students?

- MS Word kicking you out.
- Proctorio problems
- Internet connectivity issues
- Creating online exams and lectures

How can I ask the course instructor for support with this challenge?

- Create a help and support section with necessary links for the students
- Ask prof before emailing IT to save time

What can I do independently to prevent vs. manage this challenge?

- Connect with UBC IT
- Ask other TAs or your instructor
- Contact CTLT LT support
- If you require additional tech training, this is part of your TA hours and you should track hours spent

# Challenge Group 4 - [Connecting with students in different time zones)]

## How does this challenge affect me vs. my students?

- There may be a majority in one area, and I may or may not be in the majority. Alternatively, there may only be one or a few students disproportionately affected. Yes, only a student or two may be disproportionately affected, but from my experience, they still need to be accounted for. Hence, the need to find a way to resolve the issue, still.
- As the TA, I may be tasked with assisting students “left behind,” which may cause time management complications for me. This is a very valid point.
- Making sure students are attending the class on time.

## How can I ask the course instructor for support with this challenge?

- I may inform the instructor in case of specific concerns by individual candidates as regards issues with time zone, and allow us to brainstorm, before the class starts
- Send a secure message through FSC (SSC) to alert students to a pre-course survey to help facilitate connectivity, time zone, or other technological barriers (ex: expected time conflicts w/ synchronous activity, exam times, etc.). This is a step in the right direction, and students can also be sent messages individually via the canvas portal. Note: students may not have notifications for communication in Canvas before the start of the term; the communication from the prof through the SSC circumvents their Canvas preferences/setup. Mhm...good point!
- Have common calendar on the platform, announce time zone per meeting; where synchronous activities are required, consider reassigning students to sections that facilitate their time availability, even if it exceeds the course seating limit - will require assistance from the department.
- Check in questions at the start for specific moments during the lesson will help recognize who might be missing
- Request the instructor to make an announcement regarding attending classes on time and its affect on students' participation
- Keeping a track record - track students' and TA requests/needs, mark as “done” when solution is achieved
- I would facilitate tracking the different time zones, to know what time of the day a class is, at the students' ends

# Challenge Group 5 - [Teaching through multiple modes]

How does this challenge affect me vs. my students?

- Challenges our ability and agility with multi-tasking
- Can feel silly / frustrating like you're the only one not keeping up
- Resist the urge to have only point form responses to questions about different modes, show a clip or bring in some images



How can I ask the course instructor for support with this challenge?

- Might need to ask for additional tools (i.e. extra monitor)
- Discussions around ways to revisit process design / subject matter delivery to be more conducive to virtual formats (what is synchronous vs asynchronous)
- ~~More \$ for all the additional stress HAHAHAAA~~
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What can I do independently to prevent vs. manage this challenge?

- Acknowledge that we are all new to the challenge of distance learning.
- Go more slowly.
- Shorter tasks.
- Invite the students to communicate their difficulties and concerns to find a solution together.
- Engaging students in small group activities so that they don't get bored

# Challenge Group 6 - [Equitability in teaching]

How does this challenge affect me vs. my students?

How can I ask the course instructor for support with this challenge?

What can I do independently to prevent vs. manage this challenge?

For answers, see slide 16 notes section

# Short Break + Gallery Walk

Take some time individually to look at the other groups' slides

- Reflect on anything that seems helpful or relevant to you
- Add comments where you see fit, or take private notes on your reflection

Also a great time for a quick bio break -- please be back by \_\_\_\_\_

# Large group debrief - common themes/root causes

How does this challenge affect me vs. my students?

See notes section

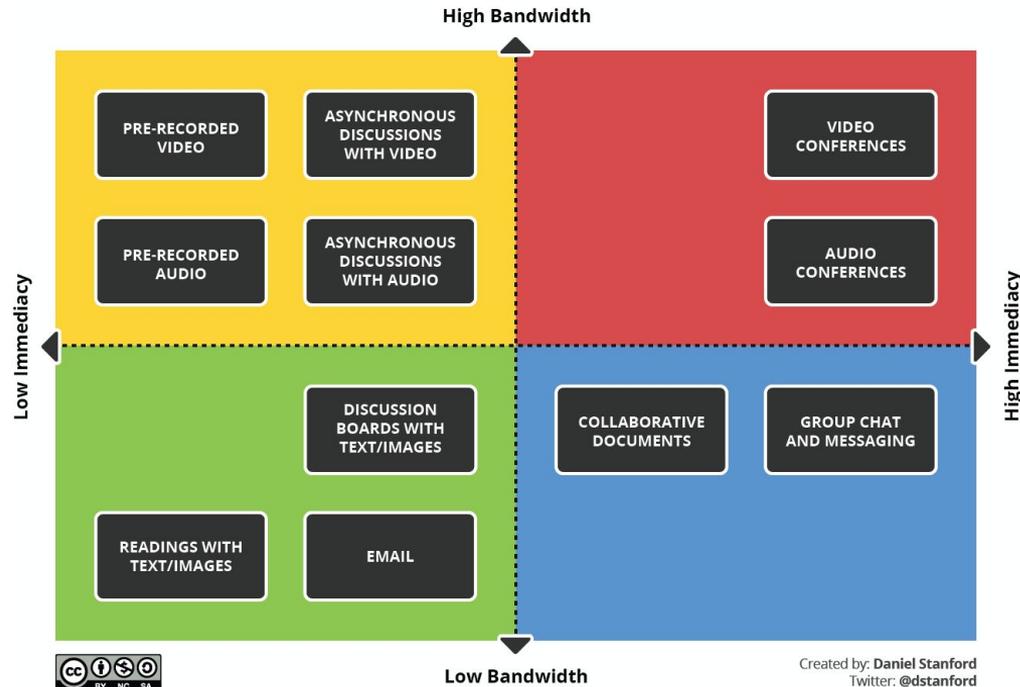
How can I ask the course instructor for support with this challenge?

What can I do independently to prevent vs. manage this challenge?

Other take-aways?

# Design considerations to minimize tech challenges:

Offer course content and activities using low bandwidth, low immediacy media?



Combine multiple technologies for

- content delivery
- learning opportunities

Alternate asynchronous and synchronous delivery?

Provide choice, apply Universal Design for Learning UDL principles

# Resources

UDL: <http://www.cast.org/>

UBC OTP: <https://ctlit.ubc.ca/programs/all-our-programs/online-teaching-program/>

UBC keep teaching: <https://keepteaching.ubc.ca/>

CIRTL: Tips for Support Staff and TAs: <https://www.cirtl.net/events/874>

July 2020 TA Institute: <https://institute.ctlit.ubc.ca/ta-institute/july-2020-ta-institute/>

Resources from 2020 Online TA Institute:

[https://wiki.ubc.ca/Documentation:CTLT\\_programs/CTLT\\_Institute/2020-May-Online-TA-Institute](https://wiki.ubc.ca/Documentation:CTLT_programs/CTLT_Institute/2020-May-Online-TA-Institute)

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Q&A