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Tips for Virtual Review Visits

Program Review is an important evaluation for departments to think strategically about their futures and to receive guidance from external experts serving on the review team. Typically, these reviews occur on campus, but given the current pandemic, units will be engaging in virtual visits. The following information provides guidance for units as they prepare for an effective virtual visit and plan the itinerary for their reviewers.

Scheduling

- **Meetings:** Set up individual meetings for each session, so the next session cannot login early and hear the previous session. For tips on setting up Zoom meetings, including safety suggestions, go to this [link](#).
- **Setting up Zoom:** Include more than one “host” in Zoom for each meeting, so one person is always assigned as a host even if the person who set up the meeting cannot be there. Be sure to create a password; this will help prevent Zoom-bombing. Set up the meeting so people are muted when they enter.
- **Creating the Itinerary:** Consider using more time on the second day, since the reviewers will not have travel time.
- **Breaks:** Give reviewers about a 10-15 minute break between meetings. The meetings that go to the hour and then have another start at the next hour are a challenge, especially for the reviewers. Give them a chance to move around between meetings.
- **Time zones:** Keep in mind that reviewers may be in different time zones particularly when you are scheduling early morning meetings.
- **Itinerary:** Share a schedule that includes all zoom links, meeting IDs, and passwords with the meeting information, as well as contact information for technical support.

Meeting Support

- **Meeting Host:** Consider having a person for each meeting who can give a quick overview of Zoom and how it will be used for the meeting. Consider having more than one person who could serve as a host over the course of the visit to avoid host burnout. This role may only be needed for the first couple minutes of a small sized meeting. Where structure is needed, in large meetings, a host is vital.
- **Host identification and introductions:** The host should introduce themselves and their role in the process. Ideally the host would *not* be someone with a direct affiliation with the unit, so that the participants feel comfortable responding. In smaller meetings where everyone should be introduced, the host can help facilitate the introduction process. The host should know the participants well enough to call on them if needed to answer questions.
- **Manage structure:** The host can introduce the structure of the meeting in Zoom, by:
 - asking participants to not use video if you have a large group where video may cause technical problems;
 - explaining the raise hand function to ask questions, which may not be needed for smaller meetings, but may make larger meetings more effective. The host can call on the person who is requesting to talk and can help mute or lower hand after question is asked. This role could be managed by the review chair;
 - showing participants where the unmute button is located, and then relaying that all the participants should remain muted if they are not talking;
 - notifying participants that they can use the chat function to contact the host if they are having technical problems. At that time, the host can troubleshoot the issues.
- **Tech:** Consider having a tech person log onto Zoom for the first five minutes (more or less as needed) to ensure everyone has entered the meeting and everything is working. Keep tech people on-call in case something is needed quickly.

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Meeting Preparation

- **Messaging:** Send a message (such as the draft message below) that can be sent to the participants (a similar but different message can go to reviewers) to instruct about the meeting and the technical information.
- **Communicate with the review chair:** Find out how comfortable the chair is with Zoom, their preference on a host or not for meetings, and how they want to handle the meetings.
- **Testing Zoom:** Test Zoom with reviewers since not all of them may have used Zoom before. Notice the guides for Zoom in the message below, feel free to use.
- **Meeting Preparation—Tech:** Consider having a time early on the visit days where people can login to Zoom and check that the technology works. Have a technology support person there to troubleshoot as needed.

Meeting Etiquette

- **Video/Audio:** With large groups, video may cause lagging, so consider only using audio.
- **Names:** Ask everyone to use their full name upon logging in to Zoom, so that the reviewers would know who they are and would be able to call on them.
- **Mute:** Ask everyone to mute when they were not talking.
- **Chat:** Use the chat function as necessary to share additional resources and examples as they come up in the discussion. The chat can be downloaded and shared with the reviewers.

Suggestions

- **Virtual tours:** Create videos that can be sent to the reviewers, where they can see the labs, facilities, classrooms.
 - Consider stabilization hardware. Note that The Library Media Commons rents gear, such as the [DJI Osmo Mobile 2](#), which works to hold smartphone and provide smooth, gimbal operation, gear for [smooth GoPro shooting](#), and [360 camera loaners](#). Both Youtube and Mediaspace accept a 360 file upload which would provide viewers control over where they look on a video walking tour.
 - Have two people shoot the videos allows for a camera person and a tour guide.
- **Virtual student work:** Consider if you want to introduce reviewers to the type of work that students are doing, such as videos of dance or music performances, lab safety protocols, or short (five minutes or less) research presentations.
- **Create a box.com folder:** To keep all of the materials for the review, from those shared prior to the visit as well as requests from the review team.

Resources and information about the University of Illinois' Academic Program Review Process may be found here: <https://provost.illinois.edu/assessment/academic-program-review/>.

Contact, Dr. Staci Provezis, Associate Provost for Academic Effectiveness, at 217-333-6677 or sprovez2@illinois.edu, for additional information.

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SAMPLE MESSAGE TO REVIEW PARTICIPANTS:

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for holding your calendar for the Program Review meetings. The University has approved for us to have a **virtual visit**.

Listed below are a few key technical things to know:

1. We will use **only** the audio function of Zoom (**not** video conferencing) as a way to create a more stable system for the meetings. Note that using the direct phone-in option is not working for many users, so you will want to use your computer.
2. Sign in with your **full name**.
3. Log in at least **5 minutes early**, so the meeting can start exactly on time.
4. **Mute** your microphone when you are not talking.
5. We will have a host for each meeting, so “**raise your hand**” if you want to respond to a question, and the host will call on you.
6. Please **upload a picture** to your Zoom profile to make the experience more personal.

For additional Zoom instructions, see this documentation created for these meetings: Desktop App: <https://go.illinois.edu/ZoomGuide> or for Web Browser: <https://go.illinois.edu/ZoomBrowser>

See this box folder (insert link) for information about the visit, including:

- Self-study and appendices
- Schedule
- Names and affiliation of the reviewers

If you have questions about the review, please contact me or _____

Thanks, again, for participating in the visit,

Department Head