

# Use Zoom videoconferencing in your courses

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Many UAF instructors rely on Google Hangouts or Blackboard Collaborate to facilitate synchronous sessions in their courses. There's a new tool on the block: Zoom Meetings. Let's run through what can be accomplished by meeting in Zoom, the new videoconferencing platform for UA.

If you haven't already, claim your Zoom account by logging in with your UA credentials at [alaska.zoom.us](https://alaska.zoom.us). Doing so now isn't necessary, but good practice. All UA courses currently relying on videoconferencing hardware will be migrated to Zoom by January 2020.

## TEACHING WITH ZOOM

Like Collaborate, Zoom gives meeting hosts a great deal of control. They can mute or remove users, and limit the ability for others to join the session before the host has joined. Zoom also features breakout rooms and a whiteboard. The whiteboard can be shared by all users, and breakout rooms can be configured to notify participants with a countdown letting them know they are about to rejoin the main room.

Zoom allows for recordings to the cloud that can then be shared. Unlike Hangouts or Collaborate, it can generate transcripts after the session finishes. Transcripts generated from cloud recordings are created within a few hours of the session completing and eCampus has found them to be about 97% accurate. Recordings can be configured to post automatically to [Kaltura MediaSpace](https://kaltura.uaf.edu) where features such as interactive quizzes and viewership data are available. Zoom also enables accessibility via captioning during the session. A participant can type captions themselves, or a paid third-party live captioning service can be integrated into the Zoom session.

## ZOOM IN BLACKBOARD

In addition to integrations with Google Calendar and Gmail, Zoom also integrates with Blackboard at UAF.

Once you have claimed your account, it's time to add a Zoom link to your course. The Zoom tool is available in all UAF Blackboard course shells but will need to be enabled for your course. Do this by going to Customization > Tool Availability > Zoom Meetings and checking the box.

Add it to your course menu by selecting the + icon in the top left menu while in Edit mode, select "Tool Link" and then "Zoom Meetings" from the dropdown.

To add it in a content area, select "Tools" > "More Tools" > "Zoom Meetings." This will create a link to the Zoom view of meetings scheduled for your particular course. Schedule meetings here and students can join directly from Blackboard.

## WHAT USERS SEE

From Blackboard, both instructors and students will see only the meetings scheduled for that course. Zoom meetings scheduled outside of the course will not appear. To see all of your Zoom meetings, log in with your UA credentials at [alaska.zoom.us](https://alaska.zoom.us).



## BEST PRACTICES

As with all video conferences, some best practices apply to Zoom meetings as well. Make sure your camera is at eye level, that you're well-lit and that you're using a good-quality microphone. eCampus can loan webcams and microphones to interested UAF faculty. Schedule a shake-down session the first time you use it in class, to introduce students to the technology and work out the kinks.

Here are some additional tips to make your video conferences more effective:

- Zoom switches between users via voice activation. Be aware that your video will be up front when you are speaking.
- Know how to mute and un-mute your microphone, and be aware that different meetings can have different default microphone settings for when users join.
- Minimize or avoid background noise (laptop computer fan, typing, mobile phones, dogs, children, coworkers).