

# Belfast Senior College

## Zoom Guide

### Introduction

This guide is offered to all Instructors, hosts and participants who will be involved in courses using the Zoom remote meeting service. Even if you are experienced with Zoom we encourage you to read through this guide so you will understand how Senior College plans to make use of Zoom and what is expected of you. Please note: most classes will be HOSTED by a tech-savvy person and TAUGHT by the Instructor, so in this guide Host will be used to describe the tech-savvy person and the Instructor will not be the Host!

### Overview of Zoom's Service

Zoom provides a service that mediates audio and video connections between computers and mobile devices so that people can conduct remote meetings across the internet. Each meeting is initiated by one person who Hosts the meeting and is in overall control of it (Host). Others can join that meeting using a Meeting ID and passcode that the Host shares with all participants.

Zoom uses an app that installs itself on your computer or mobile device. If you are Hosting a meeting you will also need a Zoom account. Zoom offers free accounts with some restrictions on the meetings you can Host. Paid accounts offer fewer restrictions and additional features.

To participate in a meeting, you do not need a Zoom account, not even a free account, but you do need to allow Zoom to install its app on your computer or agree to join using a browser.

The easiest way to join a meeting is to use its specific web link that was sent to you. You can also join a meeting without using a link if you know the Meeting ID and passcode. These you enter directly into the Zoom app.

Most people use the video and audio built into their computer. However, you can also connect to just the audio portion of a meeting by making a phone call to a Zoom phone number and entering the meeting info using your phone. When a person joins by telephone, only the phone number will appear with a blank screen. The Host should confirm the person's identity and then use the "more" button on their entry in the participant list to change the phone number to their name.

If a participant tries to join a meeting not yet started by the Host, Zoom notifies them that the meeting will start shortly. The participant can then leave the Zoom app running and wait for the meeting to start. Once the Host starts the meeting, Zoom notifies each participant who is waiting.

Some meetings use a “waiting room” for newly joined participants. The Host then admits people individually or as a group from the waiting room into the actual meeting. In the event that a non-authorized person manages to get as far as the waiting room, the Host can communicate with them through the Chat window and determine whether or not they should be let in.

Hosts should familiarize themselves with the features available in the Participant List window.

Once a participant has joined a meeting, they will see all other participants in small windows arranged in a grid pattern within the Zoom window. The arrangement of these participant windows will change during the meeting, but each participant has some control over the arrangement they see. These *views* are available by clicking on the View icon and choosing Gallery View or Speaker View.

It should be noted that the location of the Zoom menu functions varies by the type of device being used. Moving the cursor or tapping the screen will reveal the location of the menu.

## Key Aspects of Zoom

Senior College uses Zoom accounts obtained through the University of Maine. These have all available Zoom options.

If you have two or more participants who need to join the meeting from the same room or close to each other in a house, only one of them can play the audio. The others will need to mute the speakers on their devices to avoid a feedback loop. If the participants are very close, it may also be necessary to mute all but one microphone as well. These feedback loops are *really annoying* and significantly interfere with the Zoom meeting.

Zoom has a “raise hand” feature to enable participants to request to speak during a meeting. Hosts and Instructors should watch for when participants raise hands, there’s a little raised hand icon in the person’s window. It helps keep the meeting orderly by avoiding audio interruptions.

Zoom also has emojis & icons that allow participants to react silently: thumbs up, clapping, heart, etc. These reactions be activated from an icon called Reactions. They are ways of expressing positive feedback. Zoom does not provide a way of expressing negative feedback, although the open-mouthed surprise face is often reserved for negative reactions.

Zoom also has a Chat function which enables participants to write short text messages to the whole class or to an individual. Chat messaging to one individual is like passing a written note in class as no one else can read it. A participant who is having some technical difficulty might private-Chat to the Host, for example. Note: Chat messages are often

saved onto the Host's computer. Private messages that do not include the Host are not included in the Chat history.

Polls can be enabled for Zoom meetings so that the Host can collect data from all participants during a meeting. This can be a very efficient mechanism for taking the temperature of the class. Poll questions can be setup before class and invoked at any time during the class. Ad hoc poll questions can also be created during class, but this takes a bit more work and can distract from the overall class flow.

Breakout rooms are available in Zoom. These allow participants to move to a separate but digitally connected Zoom meeting for a certain time period while the overall meeting is still going on. There are options to let participants choose which breakout rooms they will join or to have the meeting Host assign breakout rooms. A breakout room can also be used by any participants who need one-on-one technical support during the meeting. The Host can then join participants in that breakout room and communicate with them separate from the main meeting, so their troubleshooting does not interrupt the main meeting. Instructors and Hosts should pre-plan use of breakout rooms and expect to introduce them to the class with a brief practice session.

Zoom meetings can be recorded for playback. Senior College generally does not do this, but it can be done if all participants agree to it. Because of liability issues written or recorded consent must be obtained for recording. Any participant not wishing to be seen in the recording can turn off their camera.