

Guidelines for Video Conferencing

Northern New Mexico College does not have a policy mandating that cameras be on during video conferencing. While a default expectation of having cameras on is not in place, **having cameras on is encouraged** for the following reasons:

- **Facial cues improve communication and build trust:** One of the primary benefits of keeping cameras on during virtual meetings is the ability to pick up on facial cues. This plays a significant role in how we understand and interpret others' emotions and intentions. Visual cues allow employees to better understand each other and build stronger relationships.
- **Better accountability and focus:** A message is conveyed to everyone that the meeting is an important and serious matter, and that everyone is expected to be fully engaged and focused.
- **Reduces distractions and multitasking:** Team members are less likely to feel tempted to get away with distractions or multitasking, as their faces and bodies are visible on the screen.
- **Improves engagement:** It's easier for team members to connect with one another and feel more invested in the meeting. This, in turn, can lead to improved outcomes for the company.
- **Shows respect:** It sends a signal that everyone fully respects the meeting and values everyone's time. This helps in building trust and camaraderie.

General Guidelines

- Cameras should be on if the meeting involves high-level executives with significant decision-making taking place.
- Cameras should be on if the meeting requires collaboration on important issues.
- In smaller meetings, have your camera on if you are speaking.
- In larger meetings, the main presenter(s) should be on camera.

Video Conferencing Etiquette

- Send a calendar invite, via Outlook or similar, to all attendees to allow your attendees to accept, reject or reschedule.
- Behave as you would in person.
- Arrive early.
- Wear professional attire.
- Test your connection, screen, and equipment before the meeting starts.
- Take note of your surroundings. Blur your background or use a professional background, if need be. Avoid too much background noise.
- Come prepared.
- Mute yourself unless you're talking.
- Keep your hands off the keyboard. Avoid typing constantly.
- Look at the camera and speak clearly.
- Don't eat during a video conference.
- Don't interrupt people.
- Avoid multitasking.
- Chat can prove a very useful function in online meetings, whether that is asking a quick question or sending notes. However, spending a large amount of time chatting with your colleagues instead of watching the presentation is inappropriate.