

Tips for holding a remote/virtual defense (Spring 2020)

[Microsoft Teams](#) / [Zoom](#) / [Skype](#) / [YouTube](#) are some of the possible videoconferencing /streaming options.

Tips/advice:

- Practice using the videoconferencing platform that you will use for your defense.
- On the day of your defense, set up the connection early and ask the committee members to check in so that you can troubleshoot potential problems.
- Start with a title slide saying that the presentation will start soon and asking everyone to mute their microphones. If you have someone helping you, they can mute everyone. Ask the audience/committee to find the chat box. If you have bandwidth issues, ask the audience to turn off their video
- Share an electronic copy of your presentation with your committee prior to the defense.
- Consider a backup option such as a conference phone line.
- Try two monitors – one to see participants and one to see your presentation...gallery view on zoom.
- If possible have someone else manage the videoconferencing so that you can focus on your presentation.
- Determine how you will field/answer questions. One option is to use the hand raise/chat to avoid Q&A confusion with multiple folks speaking at once. Make sure to monitor the participants to see who has hand raised or the chat window to see who is waiting to ask a question.
- Committee chair: Have a plan for having the student step out of the room for discussion. One way is to create a breakout room for the committee to talk and then return to the main room when done. Another way would be to put the student “on hold” or schedule a separate meeting without the student.
- Committee members- use your video during the defense (if it doesn't cause connection issues). This can help the student feel more comfortable or connected during the remote defense.

UH Approval Form- Electronic signatures are accepted on the final thesis/dissertation approval form.

References

Some tips from Ethan White (@ethanwhite)

<https://twitter.com/ethanwhite/status/1240336385896316928?s=21>

How to stream your PhD Defense on Youtube- Ben Ackerman

<https://www.benjaminackerman.com/post/2020-03-14-youtubedefense/>

Zoombombing and how to avoid it:

- <https://www.insidehighered.com/quicktakes/2020/03/30/dissertation-defense-zoom-interrupted-racist-attack>
- <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2020/03/26/zoombombers-disrupt-online-classes-racist-pornographic-content>

Some info about how to manage the Zoom meeting/presentation:

- <https://blog.zoom.us/wordpress/2020/03/27/best-practices-for-securing-your-virtual-classroom/>
- <https://blog.zoom.us/wordpress/2020/03/20/keep-the-party-crashers-from-crashing-your-zoom-event/>