

# Introduction: The Power of Asynchronous Video

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, instructors taught courses either fully or partially online, using a wide range of tools to teach and connect with students. When the pandemic abruptly curtailed most in-person learning, the number of courses being taught online grew exponentially. Many instructors turned to videoconferencing tools to facilitate their teaching, perhaps because they offer the most obvious approximation of an in-class experience. Videoconferencing tools allowed instructors and students to engage in real-time interactions while maintaining the same class schedule as before the pandemic. Features such as polling and breakout rooms allowed students to engage in interactive and collaborative activities similar to what they would have done in person. For many instructors and students, synchronous interaction using videoconferencing tools felt comfortable, and for some online learning activities, synchronous video was a good solution.

But many instructors and students quickly recognized that video conferencing came with limitations. Instructors found it was more difficult to engage students prone to distractions. Both instructors and students encountered new technological issues and Wi-Fi limitations when multiple people in a household were simultaneously attending videoconferences. "You're on mute" became the quote of the year, and instructors and students commonly left class feeling exhausted, complaining of ["Zoom hangovers."](#)

Asynchronous video can help address several of the challenges that instructors and students encountered in videoconferencing. Having worked in online teaching for more than a decade, we have used countless tools and have learned important lessons along the way, particularly in the area of asynchronous video. We have also conducted research into the effectiveness of asynchronous video to promote greater online social learning. In order to assist teachers with incorporating some asynchronous strategies into their teaching, we developed a set of resources to help instructors understand how the benefits of asynchronous video can improve their online, blended, or in-person courses. These resources range from high-level discussions of asynchronous video activities to specific tips on lighting, sound, and the effective integration of video into teaching. These strategies are described in the following chapters.



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