

Guide for LAs of MAE 1117 on remote classes

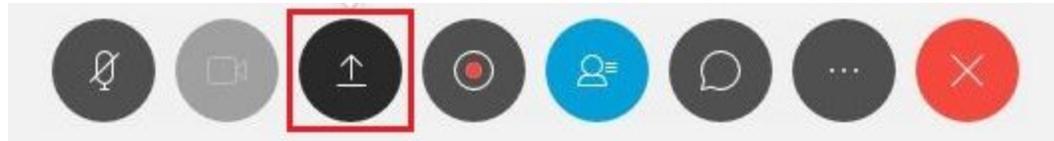
Starting on 23 March (return from Spring break) and until the end of semester, the University will carry out all instruction online. This will be a challenge to all of us, but especially for the students.

Effective time management is a skill that takes time to develop, and students struggle with this even in the structured setting of on-campus learning. It will be a lot harder with our teaching moved online.

So, we need to make concerted efforts to help students keep focus and persevere under these very challenging conditions. I've written this guide to help you help *them*, using the modern tools we have available.

1. **Take care of yourself.** We are all anxious due to the drastic changes in our lifestyles and the worry about our loved ones getting sick. You may find it more difficult to concentrate and have less drive to work and study. Acknowledge it, talk to others about it, and be patient. If you get sick, let me know. If you're too distracted to work, let's talk about it. Ping me in Slack.
2. **Schedule your office hours on Webex.** You will use GW's Webex subscription to hold virtual office hours. Go to <https://gwu.webex.com/> and log in with your GW credentials.
 - a. On the left navigation menu, go to "Preferences" and click on "My Personal Room" to take note of your URL for meetings. You can share this URL with students (or anyone) to join you in a virtual meeting. (*Optional:* Go to "My Profile" and upload a photo of yourself to appear in meetings instead of your initials.)
 - b. "My Personal Room" on the left menu leads you to a page with the big green "Start Meeting" button. Go there any time to start a meeting. To schedule a meeting ahead of time, click "Webex Meetings" on the top navigation (next to "Home"), and select "Schedule a Meeting," pick the date on the calendar for your next office hour, the duration, and give the meeting a name (e.g., MAE 1117 LA office hour). I will send you the student emails for you to paste in the "Attendees" field. Above the green "Save Meeting" button, a link "Save as template" will allow you to save the meeting settings to more quickly schedule future office hours. Now save this meeting. This will trigger an email to you and to all attendees that includes a calendar invitation (an .ics file that adds the meeting to your calendar when you download it and double click it).
 - c. Webex will send you a reminder email before the start of your office hour, which includes a green "Start your meeting" button. It also sends a reminder to all attendees, with the link to join. The link is also in the saved calendar entry.
 - d. When you are conducting the virtual meeting, and a student has questions on homework problems or something else, tell the student to share their screen (round button with an arrow pointing up; see screenshot below), and show their

work while they explain their problem. If more students are in the call, remind them to mute themselves when not speaking. The Participants pane includes a feature for clicking to “raise hand,” so keep an eye on that. On that pane, you can also mute someone who is causing noise in the call.



- e. While someone else is sharing their screen, you can click on “Annotate” to get some tools to annotate on a screenshot while explaining something. When you click “Done,” the annotated screenshot is saved in your “Whiteboards” and you can then share it.
 - f. Remember that the chat history goes away when you close the meeting. If you want to use text chat with the students, you could use Slack instead.
3. **Offer additional help by appointment.** You can open some slots in your calendar for students to jump on a call with you to get additional help. Use the Calendly service, <https://calendly.com>, to set up some 15-min slots that are convenient to you, share the link with students on Slack, and they can schedule themselves into one of those slots. Calendly will send you both a calendar invite, and even a reminder before it’s time (it takes care of time-zone differences). You can include your Webex URL in the Calendly entry.
 4. **Join our class meetings and host breakout groups.** In our regular class times, you can join my Webex meeting, and also keep an eye on Slack. Help me keep an eye on participants who “raise their hand” in Webex. At times during class, we may have an exercise or small-group discussion, and I will use the Webex breakout functionality, assigning each LA and the TA to different breakout groups.
 5. **Be friendly.** Ask students a thoughtful question (are things too crazy where you are? is everybody healthy?), post a note on Slack inviting students to use your office hours and help-by-appointment, remind them you are there, and make lavish use of emojis 🙌
 6. **Be patient.** We’re all in this together, and many of your instructors may also be teaching online for the first time. Try not to get frustrated if the technology fails, or things are awkward at first. Ask for help! Ping me or Pi-Yueh on Slack.

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