Berkeley Haas | **TEACHING TIP OF THE WEEK**
Online Teaching Strategies

Tip of the week: Best practices for online classes with virtual guest speakers.

Remote instruction has made bringing guest speakers into the classroom much easier. Inviting guest speakers to class can give students the opportunity to meet subject-matter experts and practitioners who are passionate about relevant course topics, and who can potentially guide or mentor them. Here are some tips to make the most of your online sessions that include guest speakers.

- **Plan ahead and provide guidance before the class session:**
  - Solicit input from students about guest speakers that they would be interested in learning from. Ask Haas Alumni and Development staff for ideas of guest speakers who are experienced and interested in visiting with our students. EGAL is also a great place to learn about diverse guest speakers.
  - Reach out in advance to your guest speaker, share the learning objectives, your class syllabus, some information about your students and their style (e.g., they are inquisitive and will ask questions right from the start), and follow up to answer any questions prior to the class.
  - Review the guest speaker's plans for the session with her. Most guest speakers find it challenging to calibrate their timing so it is important to give them detailed time parameters that align with your class session objectives (e.g., 15 minutes for a description of a live case, 15 minutes for the students to discuss the case with one another, 15 minutes for Q&A). Also, determine if your guest speaker will use slides. Would she like for students to have read certain materials before the session? Will she invite and monitor the discussion herself? Above all, ensure that your guest speaker can bring in vivid examples that illustrate specific class topics.

- ○ Share the ground rules on interacting in the virtual classroom: address how the chat will be managed, how questions will be asked and answered, and the time limits.
  - ○ Consider including a brief quiz on the required readings before class so that students are well-prepared.
- **Actively manage the discussion during class:**
  - ○ Mute all participants at the start of the session.
  - ○ Be clear about the class format, both to students and to the speaker. An interview format gives you more control of the topics to be covered, while an open discussion can be more interactive and highlight the guest speaker more.
  - ○ Whatever format you choose, have a strategy for managing Q&A. Some options are:
    - ■ Ask students to write their questions in the chat. This allows you to read through student questions and either answer yourself in the chat or ask the speaker to answer.
    - ■ Use the raise hand button on Zoom for students to signal that they have a question for the speaker.
    - ■ Consider creating breakout rooms for students to discuss in small groups and then ask the speaker questions.
  - ○ Having questions written down in the chat is useful because you can download the chat transcript and share it with students after the session.
- **Debrief and provide post-class materials:**
  - ○ Consider creating asynchronous materials for students to watch after class. Consult Haas Digital on creating asynchronous content.
  - ○ Debriefing can be done in-class or through Canvas discussion forum. For example, students can provide feedback on the class and ask lingering questions that could not be covered during the class.
  - ○ We like to provide our guest speakers with Haas swag after the session to thank them for their time. You can have a student present images of the gifts to the speaker at the end of their session and then send it via mail. You can find some here.

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