

Handout for Lecturers on How to Handle Video Recordings in Online Teaching

Video and sound recordings in the online teaching

Video and audio recordings (podcasts, soundtrack presentations) can, when properly used, be an important addition to your online material on Moodle. They cannot replace personal exchange in face-to-face teaching, but have the great advantage of being available to your students independent of time and place. **This is particularly important this semester, as many students do not have the time, peace and quiet and/or the necessary equipment to attend virtual classroom sessions, due to the extra care duties and isolation imposed by working from home, so the ideal solution is to create short video and audio clips to guide your students through your online modules.** However, low-threshold recordings of impulse lectures/introductions can also be helpful, as they help your participants to understand what is being said. A short introduction to the design and use of videos in online teaching can be found in the Moodle course at [bologna.labs](https://www.cms.hu-berlin.de/de/dl/multimedia/bereiche/video).¹

Technically, the recording of courses is extremely simple nowadays and already possible with simple tools: most laptops and tablets nowadays have a built-in microphone and pre-installed software for recording audio clips or screen recording. Presentation programs like PowerPoint or Keynote allow you to add an audio track to your slides. If you are more ambitious, specialized programs such as Snagit or Camtasia allow you to create short instructional videos with perspective changes (slides, newscaster format, video clip integration) from your presentations and screen recordings. Instructions and support can be found at the video and audio service of the CMS.²

Since online teaching in general and instructional videos in particular are "new territory" for many lecturers (and students) at the Humboldt-Universität, we are confronted not only with questions of technical implementation, but also with many legal questions: "What or who may I record", "Do I have to be seen in the video?", "What happens to the recordings?", "How can I restrict the use of my recordings?", to name just a few. We cannot answer all questions here, but we would like to present some basic models that make sense and work:

1. Recordings without Audience Participation (self recording, always possible)

- **audio recordings:** short, targeted audio recordings (2-6 minutes), which you can make available in addition to your slides or seminar reading set in Moodle, to explain an illustration/data set or to model an impulse contribution. Extremely low-threshold, as you only need a microphone and a script and are not visible when speaking or reading aloud
- **Pre-recording of your presentation:** You record your lecture or your professional introduction for the participants without them being present. Here you can decide whether you appear only as a "voice from the off" (PowerPoint, Keynote, etc.) or as a speaker with picture/portrait (Snagit, Camtasia) and how much effort you put into the pre-

¹ <https://www.cms.hu-berlin.de/de/dl/multimedia/bereiche/video>

² <https://www.cms.hu-berlin.de/de/dl/multimedia/bereiche/video>

production. You can record the presentation in a single pass (time-saving) or record slide-by-slide (more initial effort, but better reusability). For your participants, there is already great added value if you then divide the recording into sections or chapters. With a little more effort, interactive sequences (quizzes, surveys, reading tasks) can also be integrated into such a presentation. bologna.lab offers a Moodle course and consultation appointments for the creation of interactive videos with H5P (mail: bologna.digital@hu-berlin.de).

- **The creation of short video clips** (SnagIt, Camtasia) to guide, explain or illustrate certain tasks, learning sections or materials in your Moodle Course. The videos are short, have their own script and are used to explain to the participants what you expect from them, what to do next, how a contribution should be structured. Here you can act as a speaker to steer your class and provide orientation for the participants. Or you can use the self-made instructional videos to illustrate an experiment, a form of text work, data coding or similar object that can be better explained that way.
- **Podcasts recorded beforehand:** Good podcasts are more than the above-mentioned, quickly created short audio clips. Podcasts are most similar to a radio or television broadcast with a thematic focus. Therefore, you also need a script and, in addition to you as a moderator, usually also guests to interview or discuss or other material to record or present (book reviews, news reports). In this case, you should make sure that your guests and discussion and interview partners give you their consent to the recording and release for publication. The same applies if you use copyright-protected music as background music, as in radio broadcasts.

What do I need to consider?

As long as only you can be heard and seen in a recording and you have created the recording yourself, you are generally considered the sole author of a work. You can mark the work accordingly and give instructions on the scope of its legal use (see suggestions in the appendix). It is also advisable to consider the didactic value of your work and general academic practice:

- Your students will benefit most from your work if they can download it and use it at home or on their own computers for self-study.
- From an academic point of view, it is problematic to deny other academics (including prospective academics) access to academic arguments and data.
- If you have serious doubts about providing your students with your own material (data, primary sources, interviews, unpublished scripts), it is better not to do so; as a rule, you can use and quote the works of third parties in the context of academic teaching, as long as you name the copyright holders. An overview of the new copyright law (as of March 2018) can be found, for example, in the Moodle course "Copyright in Teaching and Studies" in CMS.³

³ <https://moodle.hu-berlin.de/course/view.php?id=74737>

2. Recording with participants (passive and active participation)

Many lecturers ask if they can simply record their video conferences to create online material. At first glance, this seems to be time-efficient (something is recorded that happens anyway). Technically and legally it is a bit more complicated because "live" recordings with participants also affect their personal rights and, if they are sitting at home, possibly the rights of roommates. There are also solutions to this problem, including investigating whether using live recording sessions (one person speaks, the rest listens) is the most efficient use of your students' valuable (and often expensive) online time. The strength of videoconferencing software such as AdobeConnect, Zoom or similar is actually in the active exchange, not in the transmission of lectures.

- **Self-Recording in Zoom:** This is possible in principle, as long as you inform the participants in advance about the recording and make sure that only you yourself are recorded. The easiest way to do this in Zoom is to deactivate the microphones and cameras of all participants before recording starts. In HU-Zoom, you as the organizer are always asked to inform the participants before the start of the recording. The participants are also reminded to deactivate their cameras/microphones. Further inquiries and comments are then still possible via the chat function, but are only recorded if you respond to the chat. Here, however, you should consider to what extent an invisible and inaudible audience contributes to improving the recording. You would have to stop the recording before you enter a possible exchange phase with word/image contributions from students.
- **Self-Recording with a Second Device:** Another, technically more complex possibility is to record your lecture with a second device: While you are conducting your lecture/seminar "live" in ZOOM on a computer and with a headset, you record your audio track (and, if you like, your picture) with a second device (mobile phone, tablet, laptop) in parallel. This means that only you can be heard or seen on the second audio track/video recording. You can also integrate verbal queries and chat contributions of the participants into your recording by summarizing them for later listeners and responding to them anonymously. **You should inform your participants about the recording.** The separate sound/video track can be added to your presentation afterwards using programs such as Snagit or Camtasia (Tip: If you want to add a video recording to your slides later, it is recommended to include a fixed placeholder for it on the slides).
- **Recordings with active participants:** are technically and legally a bit more complicated, because you need the consent of the participants to record. The moment other people are visibly and audibly recorded in your recordings, they are given a say (right to their own sound/image) in the release and use of the material. You also have the right to revoke a granted release at any time. In addition, the necessity for data storage must be proven and the storage period must be specified. For data protection reasons (right to informational self-determination) the following applies: Participation in recordings must be voluntary (they may not be a condition of participation or part of the evaluation); students who do not wish to participate in recordings may not suffer any disadvantage from this circumstance (e.g. exclusion from participation, lower grade). Zoom offers

students a whole range of possibilities for actively exercising their right to informational self-determination: independent control over image/sound, participation without image/sound, editing the user profile (name, avatar).

- ➔ **The following applies to the use of HU-Zoom in lecture format:** If the lecture starts with the cameras and microphones switched off (the participants are protected), the active request to speak with image/sound can be considered as consent to recording. Participants must be aware of
- where the recording will be published (usually in your Moodle course),
 - how long it will be stored there (usually until the end of the course/semester)
 - and whether they can object to publication and by when (usually the host of the zoom session or the responsible teacher).
- **Recording of discussions/interactive sequences:** There are of course also good didactic reasons to record interactive sections of your lectures and thus make them comprehensible to those who are absent. Since the students are the focus of the recordings, the above-mentioned points (voluntariness, right to a say in the release and use of the material) become even more important. If and where not all/a large part of the group is willing to record their work, the recording could take place after or at the beginning of a live session (as simulation or live experiment, see models in the appendix). It is important that the group of volunteers is not disconnected from the rest of the event and that you and the group do not have to spend too much extra time.

What should be taken into account here?

The procedure for obtaining approval must be designed in such a way that it can be documented that the necessity for recording and the duration of the recording have been explained, that the participants are informed about their options for participation with/without recording and that the willingness to participate in recordings can be actively signalled again in each session (e.g. by a corresponding request/message in the chat). This can be achieved by transparent and fair communication on how to use Zoom in your course. For smaller groups (up to 15 participants), we recommend that, based on these recommendations, a procedure for the joint use of recordings and controls from Zoom. In larger groups, it may make more sense if some students agree in principle to participate in recording (but in the concrete situation, they can always withdraw their willingness and in any case get a say/release right over the material). Please also consider that this consent and the limitation of the storage period limits the sustainable reuse of the material in subsequent semesters.

3. Accessibility/low-barrier online teaching

One potential advantage of online teaching is the diversity of digital (multimedia) formats. Digital teaching can help reduce and circumvent many barriers (access to rooms, time restrictions), but is not automatically barrier-free/low. If you mainly focus your course on the virtual presence in Zoom, you are excluding students who have to care for relatives at the time of your live event or whose household has only computer that is shared by roommates for

wage work at home. We therefore recommend that you use asynchronous teaching wherever possible, i.e. make recordings, teaching videos and podcasts available online to make it easier for your students to prepare and follow up on the synchronous "live parts". While videos and podcasts are an enrichment for many participants, they may not be suitable for participants with sensory impairments (e.g. visual and/or hearing impairments). Newly designed teaching materials that require some effort should therefore not only be produced quickly (the great pressure of the current semester), but should also be designed as barrier-free as possible. We recommend that teaching materials be made available in more than one version (e.g. script as a text document and audio file, presentation as PDF and video, etc.) For videos, Zoom offers the possibility to insert subtitles "live", in Camtasia subtitles can be added manually. However, this requires a considerable additional expenditure of time. A good introduction to the topic is provided by the CMS overview for the design of accessible documents and websites.⁴

4. General Recommendation

The involuntary switch to online teaching in the summer semester of 2020 came as a surprise to lecturers and students alike and confronts us all with new, unfamiliar situations in teaching. Approach your participants and respond to them, allow them - and yourself - to address uncertainties and discomfort in dealing with new situations and technologies. Give some space to discuss difficulties and develop common solutions where possible. For example, in your Moodle courses you could set up a forum where people can help each other with questions and problems. You can also relieve your workload by giving up some control and asking students to help you moderate sessions (list of speakers, collecting chat comments for questions). Discussions and exercises that cannot/should not be recorded in sound or vision, but which would still be of added value for absent participants, can be documented very well by means of result protocols, as is the case in classroom teaching.

To inform all participants about how to use Zoom in, the Task Force Digital Teaching has formulated a proposal that reminds all Zoom in users (participants and organisers) of their rights, possibilities and responsibilities in a transparent, fair and responsible use of Zoom.

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⁴ <https://www.cms.hu-berlin.de/de/portale/entwickler/barrierefreiheit/>