**FAQs - The Virtual Classroom Resources**

**CSU Faculty and Staff**

**(Non-FERPA)**

**Statement**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, CSU moved to a remote learning platform through various delivery methods. In its on-going commitment to providing resources that help Faculty and Staff deliver a premier educational experience to our students, especially in this challenging time of adjustment for all, CSU is providing these Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) as a resource. The FAQs below address systems, technical features and user expectations.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**(Faculty)**

1. **What options do Faculty members have when it comes to using on-line and real time to teach classes?**

CSU has several approved vendors that provide cutting-edge technology,

including asynchronous and virtual options to assist with teaching your students.

The asynchronous delivery method means that the class activities do not take place in real-time. This flexibility allows students to participate as their schedule permits provided they meet the class deadlines.

The virtual classes (such as Zoom) allow for real-time audio and visual display during the class as well as screen sharing, a chat feature and an attendance tracking function.

1. **Are Faculty required to record their virtual classes?**

No. Faculty are not required to record their virtual classes. However, some students achieve better learning when they have the ability to refer back to lectures. CSU encourages Faculty to work with students and give them every chance to be successful.

1. **Do students have to participate in the visual feed feature of virtual classes that allows their image to show up?**

No. The professor/host sets the parameters for student’s participation in each virtual class and has the ability to prevent participants from being seen or heard during the virtual class.

The professor/host can have just their computer screen visible to the class and provide real time audio. If a student is concerned about privacy, they have the personal option to disable their camera and mute themselves during the class. Students selecting either or both options will still be able to listen.

1. **What can an instructor do if a student makes an inappropriate or insulting comment or presents an offensive image during a virtual class?**

The term for this is ‘Zoombombing’ and it refers to the deliberate disruption of real-time virtual classes by individuals posting inappropriate content. The individuals could be CSU students or hackers who infiltrated the virtual classroom.

Some examples include:

1. use the videoconferencing feature to show pornographic images in the background
2. using offensive screen names
3. chat conversations with non-academic or inappropriate topics

If that occurs it is recommended that the professor use the host control features to immediately remove the offender from the class, apologize to the other students and continue with the lesson.

After class Student Affairs should be notified.

Additional resources to prevent Zoombombing include: setting up password protections, turning off file transfer and annotation options, enable the waiting room feature, and disabling private chat functions. Please refer to <https://www.csuohio.edu/ist-help-desk/ist-help-desk> here for information on these features.

1. **Is Faculty required to use CSU approved technology platforms to teach virtual classes?**

Yes. CSU has secured vendors who offer the capacity and security features necessary to support learning in a higher education environment. The technology is constantly changing so Faculty should work with the Provost’s Office and IS &T to determine which approved vendor is suitable for their class needs.

1. **Where can Faculty get help with making class materials accessible to all students?**

The Office of Disability Services is offering accessibility assistance. Please refer to these resources: https://www.csuohio.edu/disability/onlinetransition

1. **Can CSU provide any language that Faculty can share with students regarding the use of virtual technology in class?**

Yes. Please contact the Provost’s Office for language that can be included in the meeting invitation, the syllabus and/or displayed on the screen during your virtual classes.

1. **If a student misses a virtual lecture in real time, where will they be able to access it?**

Yes. Most virtual systems allow the instructor/host the option to record each class and make that recording available to students. IS & T can discuss with the professor/host the specific recording logistics for the system they are using for their class.

1. **Is a student allowed to share information about accessing the class to someone that is not a student?**

Many of virtual platforms are set up to automatically notify students that any links they are provided to access the class should not be shared with others. If the class invitation is sent via an Outlook calendar invitation the instructor/host will be notified each time that invitation is forwarded to another person.

Some students may be sharing class access information as a part of an approved accommodation. If you are concerned that a student is sharing class access information with someone else, please notify the Dean of Student, Shannon Greybar Milliken. Her email is [s.greybarmilliken@csuohio.edu](mailto:s.greybarmilliken@csuohio.edu).

Only the phone number and the meeting identification number are needed to join the virtual meeting telephonically. However, the professor/host can see each phone number that is participating in the class and/or the screen name of anyone invited that signs in using the technology system.

1. **What happens to all the exchanges that take place on a platform during a class? Do they go away after the semester?**

No. IS & T can discuss with the professor the specific storage logistics for the system they are using for their class.

1. **In the remote work environment, I meet my student’s medical and counseling needs through a virtual platform. What do I need to know about FERPA and HIPAA?**

CSU has engaged a vendor whose virtual platform meets the rigorous security standards of both the Family and Education Privacy Rights Act (FERPA) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). This interactive platform will allow students to see their healthcare provider and/or counselor and ask questions in real-time. To participate students will be required to complete the appropriate release (HEALTH CLINIC AND CONSELLING CENTER) and a secure link will be provided to them to facilitate their appointment. The Health Clinic and Counseling Center will continue offering services to students using phone, email and in-person appointments will resume in the future.

**FAQs - The Virtual Classroom and FERPA**

**#2**

**Q1**: **What is FERPA?**

**A:** FERPA, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, is a federal law passed in 1974 and codified as 20 U.S.C. § 1232g. The law protects the privacy of personally identifiable information (“PII”) in students’ education records and provides students the right to view and amend those records. FERPA applies to any higher education institution receiving federal funds administered by the U.S. Department of Education. Thus, FERPA applies to CSU.

**Q2: What are education records?**

**A:** “Educationrecords” as records that are: (i) directly related to a student; and (ii) maintained by the University. Education records can exist in any medium including the following: handwritten, typed, computer generated, videotape, audiotape, film, microfilm, microfiche, e-mail, and other media.

Under FERPA, the University is prohibited from disclosing student education records or the PII contained therein, without prior written consent from the student, unless the disclosure meets an exception to FERPA’s consent requirement. CSU’s FERPA Release Form is available here: [https://www.csuohio.edu/sites/default/files/media/registrar/documents/ferpa\_release.pdf](about:blank)

**Q3: Does FERPA apply to virtual learning, such as a class/lecture delivered via Zoom.**

**A:** Yes. Anything that would be a FERPA violation in person would be a FERPA violation in the virtual learning environment. In other words, the University may not disclose PII from student education records without the student’s written FERPA consent, unless an exception under FERPA exists.

**Q4: Are video and audio recordings of virtual classes where student images and voices are recorded an education record requiring a FERPA consent for posting for later viewing by those in the classes?**

**A:** If the Zoom recording is directly related to a student and is maintained by the University it would be an education record and therefore would require a FERPA compliance release from each student videoed before it could be released. If a recording includes only the instructor, it is not a student record and FERPA does not limit its use.

Faculty could begin each Zoom class with an introduction such as: “Our classes will be video and audio recorded so that students in the class can refer back to the class and for those students who were not able to attend the live class. Therefore, please complete the [FERPA Consent for Classroom Recordings](file:///V:\Front%20Desk%20Documents\FERPA\2020\FERPA%20Consent%20-%20Classroom%20recordings.pdf) and email to me. If you choose not to provide a FERPA Consent Form, please keep your camera and audio off.”

**5Q: What can an instructor do if a student makes an inappropriate or insulting comment or presents an offensive image during a virtual class?**

**A:** Anything that would be a violation of the CSU Student Code of Conduct in a physical classroom would be a violation in the virtual classroom.

At the start of each virtual class, students should be reminded that just as in a physical classroom, the [CSU Student Code of Conduct](about:blank) applies in the virtual classroom and that violations will be addressed in accordance with the Code.

**Q5. Are there any settings in Zoom that allow an instructor to limit screen-sharing capabilities?**

**A:** Yes, Zoom recently informed that the screen-sharing settings within the account have automatically defaulted to “Only Host.” This setting gives hosts sole permission to share content within their meetings by default.

**Q6. Can I give my students the ability to share their screen when using Zoom and if yes, how?**

**A:** If you would like to give students screen-sharing permission when hosting your next class, click the arrow to the right of the Screen Sharing icon, select Advanced Sharing Options and select All Participants.”

Should you have any technical questions about the use of any platform, please contact CSU’s IS&T at <https://www.csuohio.edu/ist-help-desk/ist-help-desk>.

**Q7: Is it a FERPA violation if a third party is listening in on an online course or class lecture?**

**A:** FERPA does not prohibit individuals from listening in on an online course or class lecture where no PII from a student education record is discussed. Therefore, no student FERPA consent is necessary. Whether to permit third parties to listen in is a policy decision.

**Q8: Is a FERPA consent required in situations where professors, advisors, or counselors are interacting with students virtually and others are in the room listening and/or observing?**

**A:** If a professor, advisor, or counselor is having a conference with a student discussing grades or individual student work, a FERPA consent form is required. CSU’s FERPA Release Form is available here: [https://www.csuohio.edu/sites/default/files/media/registrar/documents/ferpa\_release.pdf](about:blank)

Having a third party in the room is not sufficient implied consent to release FERPA protected information. Students should be advised if they have a third party in the room whom they want to hear information relating to the student’s education record that the student must sign a FERPA consent form, or alternatively, go in a different room than the other person.

**Q9: Who can I consult with if I have further questions about FERPA?**

**A:** Contact the Office of General Counsel at: [legal@csuohio.edu](about:blank) with any questions. Information is also available on the Office of General Counsel website at: [https://www.csuohio.edu/general-counsel/general-counsel](about:blank) and on the Registrar’s website at: [https://www.csuohio.edu/registrar/registrar](about:blank)