Current Topics In Remote Instruction

Challenges and solutions to common problems in remote instruction, as well as important topics regarding successful course delivery this semester including WebEx updates & Mediasite migration.

PLANNING TO USE LOCKDOWN BROWSER OR TEACH A DL OR WWW COURSE THIS SEMESTER?

Instructors at the University are increasingly learning the value of the online monitoring system called Respondus Lockdown Browser. While the technology is a valuable test-taking tool in remote learning, there are some important steps that should be taken to ensure proper use of the technology. We've included a nine step guide to using Lockdown Browser on page 2 of the newsletter.

In addition to the technology of Respondus Lockdown Browser, many faculty members have already heard from their department head or associate dean that the University has new requirements regarding identity authentication in test taking in remote learning. We've included everything you will need to know to ensure you are following the university-mandated steps in authentication methods.

Be sure to verify you are using the appropriate method for authentication in the table provided in this newsletter.

TEACHING INTERNATIONAL LEARNERS

The University of Connecticut is lucky enough to offer instruction to learners who may be located outside of the country. While this is an impressive offering, remote learning can pose issues that are otherwise not relevant or as significant to learners in the states. Check out our guide to ensuring success in teaching international learners this semester in your online course.

ICLICKER INTEGRATION

If you’re using iClicker Cloud in your class, you need to know about a new integration to HuskyCT. You and your students will not use iClicker Sync from your course so if you added this tool in your course, please remove it. Starting January 7th, you will be using the new integration which requires you to link to your course directly from your iClicker Cloud course and if students have an iClicker account they won’t need to do anything. If they don’t have an account, they will need to create one and add your course.

To turn on the integration, go to the Settings for the iClicker course, click Integration and click “Connect to Blackboard” and follow the prompts (be sure to sync the roster). At the end of the process, you’ll have the option to email students who don’t have an iClicker account indicating that you’ll be using the software for class and how to purchase it. If you don’t email them right away, you can later by clicking on People in the iClicker course. You can learn more about setting up iClicker Cloud courses on our website.
The No-Fail Guide To Lockdown Browser

Some instructors have used Respondus Lockdown Browser with Monitor without any issues; others have run into difficulty with some students. Following this guide will help you avoid trouble with Lockdown Browser.

1. ATTEND A WORKSHOP
The Center for Excellence in Teaching & Learning offers a variety of workshops on Lockdown Browser before and during the semester. Attending one of these workshops will ensure you are familiar with the technology as well as the best practices for avoiding common mistakes when using Lockdown Browser. If you cannot attend a training, you can watch the recording.

2. REVIEW INFORMATION ON OUR KNOWLEDGE BASE
Information on using Lockdown Browser is also available on our confluence knowledge base. You can access this by going to your institution page on HuskyCT and selecting "Instructor Help."

3. SET UP A PRACTICE EXAM
Set up a no-stakes practice exam that students can take as many times as they want throughout the semester to ensure that they do not have technical difficulty. If they change computers or make any changes to their computer—such as upgrading the operating system or changing settings—they should test their equipment again.

4. VERIFY YOUR VERSION
Make sure students install the UConn version of Lockdown Browser—other versions will not work.

5. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS
Remind your students of the technical requirements of Lockdown Browser which include needing a strong internet connection and a working webcam.

6. USE RECOMMENDED SETTINGS
Lockdown Browser requires specific settings to function properly. These settings include the following:
   1. Do not select force completion
   2. Do not touch the password field in test settings (do not edit, add, or delete the password)
   3. Use "display all at once" for question settings

7. FINISH YOUR TEST
Be sure to completely finish building your exam prior to turning on those settings.

8. KNOW THESE STEPS
Some settings are crucial for troubleshooting Lockdown Browser mistakes.

   **Clear Test Attempt:**
   1. Access your Grade Center
   2. Locate the column for the student's test
   3. Click the drop down arrow and select "view grade details"
   4. Select "Clear Attempt" on the following page.

   **Force Submission:**
   1. Access your Grade Center
   2. Locate the column for the student’s test
   3. Select the blue "in progress" symbol
   4. Expand the menu by selecting "test information"
   5. Select "Submit Attempt"

9. ALWAYS HAVE A BACKUP PLAN
In the case that Lockdown Browser fails to work, make sure you have a backup solution. Be prepared to manually monitor some students using Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Webex, or Blackboard Collaborate.
New University Authentication Guidelines

Federal mandate requires that instructors of all distance education course sections ensure that students who register in these courses are the same students who participate in and complete the course activities and assessments and receive academic credit. Two authentication methods must be used to meet the mandate.

METHOD ONE
Because students use their NetID and password to securely access course content and assessments, instructors should use HuskyCT as the primary repository and access point for course content, assessment, and activities.

METHOD TWO
Instructors can choose from one of the methods included in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessments &amp; Activities</th>
<th>Method &amp; Body</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Routine interactions via email, phone, and video</td>
<td>Instructors can use check-ins and/or office hours to discuss content, previous assignments, and progress on existing assignments. Instructors can ask for identification and/or confirm student identity via official UConn photo in StudentAdmin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synchronous virtual class, Small group meetings, and Individual student meetings</td>
<td>Instructors can facilitate synchronous class sessions, small group meetings, and individual student meeting discussions using an online platform. Instructors can ask for identification and/or confirm student identity via official UConn photo in StudentAdmin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor proctored assessments</td>
<td>Instructors can observe students taking tests/assessments and can lead one-on-one synchronous oral examinations using an online platform. Instructors can ask for identification and/or confirm student identity via official UConn photo in StudentAdmin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recorded assessment submissions</td>
<td>Instructors can use Respondus Lockdown Browser with Monitor to record student display of ID and assessment session. Instructors can review the recorded assessments to confirm display of ID and if needed, confirm student identity via official UConn photo in StudentAdmin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-created videos and Video assignments</td>
<td>Students can use Collaborate, Kaltura, or other technology to create and submit videos (individually or group) in which they discuss course content, make presentations, or perform other activities. Instructors can confirm student identity via official UConn photo in StudentAdmin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion boards</td>
<td>Instructor can create discussion boards on HuskyCT, and review a discussion threads (both previous and current posts) to check for consistency of writing style, topics discussed, etc. for each student in the discussions. Instructors can compare writing styles, topics discussed, etc. to student submitted written assignments and participation in other activities or assessments in which student identity was authenticated.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTIFY STUDENTS OF YOUR METHODS IN YOUR SYLLABUS

To assist you, the University suggests including the following information in your syllabus:

“The University of Connecticut is required to verify the identity of students who participate in distance learning or online courses and to establish that students who register in these courses are the same students who participate in and complete the course activities and assessments and receive academic credit. Verification and authentication of student identity in this course will include [Method 1 and Method 2].”

QUESTIONS?
Contact ecampus@uconn.edu and they will assist you on behalf of the provost.
Teaching International Learners

The increase in distance education has exacerbated additional factors for all of us -- but one group of students has unique challenges to consider.

During the 2020-2021 academic year, most students have needed to adapt to new models of teaching and learning. The increase in distance education has challenged students and faculty alike. For one group of students, the difficulties are exacerbated by additional factors due to their international location. We’ve outlined those challenges here, along with some ways you can help ensure successful learning for international learners.

**CHALLENGE 1: TIME ZONE**

Students report academic and health issues during online learning while living in time zones other than Connecticut’s eastern time zone. International students, in particular, are often taking synchronous courses or exams late at night, leading to sleep disruption, degraded sleep quality, fatigue, and reduced motivation. This also leads to diminished participation because they are concerned about waking their family, cannot provide complex responses in the chat feature, and report their chat comments and questions are missed.

**Here’s how to help:**
- Record all synchronous sessions and make them available for asynchronous viewing.
- Provide asynchronous opportunities to participate, such as discussion boards and asynchronous polling, as an alternative to synchronous participation.
- Provide a more flexible time window during which students can take the exam that allows them to take it during normal business hours in their time zone.

**CHALLENGE 2: UNABLE TO CONNECT FOR SYNCHRONOUS SESSIONS**

Students in countries with Internet restrictions, such as China, report challenges accessing a variety of websites. The impact of the three China International Gateways, commonly referred to as the Great Firewall of China, screen traffic between China and the rest of the world. Intermittent security screening slows down general internet performance, making accessing virtual learning environments hosted outside China difficult, such as HuskyCT. This creates unreliable access to these sites. Many students utilize a virtual private network (VPN) but even with a VPN connection can be sporadic. In particular, the use of Blackboard Collaborate for synchronous sessions can be especially challenging for these students.

**Here’s how to help:**
- Utilize tools that do not require a VPN for synchronous sessions, such as Microsoft Teams (limit 350 participants).
- Utilize tools that are more stable with a VPN, such as Webex.
- Provide recordings of synchronous sessions to allow for asynchronous viewing.

**CHALLENGE 3: POOR INTERNET CONNECTION**

Many students experience what is referred to as “last mile” connectivity issues. Although there may be sufficient connectivity at the main network, as it gets further from the source the connectivity declines, similar to traveling on highways for most of a long journey but as you get closer to the end of the trip you are traveling smaller roads with less capacity and lower speeds. Additionally, similar to the highway, closer to the main network connections have only a few junctures but the rural connections have many twists and side roads creating a longer journey. During these last miles, the connectivity slows down, making it difficult to maintain a strong network connection.

**Here’s how to help:**
- Set online exams to show all questions at once, rather than one at a time, to reduce the number of times the page reloads.
- Post short videos when possible (i.e. 10 minute chunks), rather than longer recordings.
- Avoid loading voiceover PowerPoints directly into HuskyCT due to file size.
- Provide recordings of synchronous sessions to allow for asynchronous viewing.
- Provide course materials as electronic copies.
- Utilize course features that permit asynchronous participation, such as discussion boards.
Teaching International Learners Continued

CHALLENGE 4: INABILITY TO ATTEND OFFICE HOURS

Time zone differences hinder international students’ ability to attend office hours. Because office hours are based on Connecticut’s time zone, students with more than a 5-hour time difference are often unable to attend. Even if students are willing and able to attend office hours in the late night, they do not want to disturb their family by speaking at this time.

Here’s how to help:
- Establish a second office hour time that allows international students to participate during their daytime hours (e.g. 7:00 pm EST = 8:00 am China time).

CHALLENGE 5: OBTAINING COURSE MATERIALS

Students living outside the United States often have issues getting books and other course content delivered to their home in a timely manner. Countries with internet restrictions create additional challenges for obtaining and viewing course content. To date, China blocks more than 8,000 websites. Among the websites blocked Youtube, many Google sites, Wordpress, Slack, Netflix, Vimeo, Flickr, Wikipedia, Dropbox, Mendeley, LinkedIn, Flipboard, Amazon, social media sites, and many news sites.

Here’s how to help:
- Provide students with a list of required books and materials before the beginning of the semester so they have time to source access.
- If you use videos provide written transcribed content for those who may not be able to access and view the video.
- Avoid posting links if you are unsure if international students will be able to access.
- If you learn that a website cannot be accessed, be prepared to provide an electronic copy of the content.
- Provide short electronic documents.
- Rather than Youtube, provide the reference and more than one alternative source link, such as Youku.
- Rather than Google, provide the reference and more than one alternative source link, such as Baidu.

CHALLENGE 6: CREATING CONNECTIONS OR COLLABORATING WITH CLASSMATES AND INSTRUCTORS

Being in different time zones negatively impacts students’ ability to create connections with classmates and instructors. Research shows that a sense of belonging enhances classroom engagement and academic achievement.

ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES EARLY

The challenges of remote learning are testing course delivery on every level, but being informed and taking early action to set up students for success will make the semester and course delivery that much easier. Being familiar with these common challenges and being aware of your students will help build strong interpersonal relationships in your course. Hopefully with working together, we can make this semester a smoother educational experience for all.
What's New In Webex

New updates to WebEx will introduce improvements in e-Learning involvement and classroom engagement.

UPDATES TO HAND-RAISING FEATURE

The hand-raising feature in WebEx is experiencing some updates this month. The feature will now be moved to the emoji section for mobile users. In addition to the hand-raising function, users will now be able to use hand gestures which will translate into WebEx sessions as different reaction emojis. For example, lifting a "thumbs-up" will produce a thumbs-up reaction in WebEx. The same goes for clapping or putting a thumbs down.

UPDATES TO BREAKOUT SESSIONS

In addition to the updates to moving around breakout rooms, instructors can now pre-assign Breakout Session Groups. Once a meeting has been scheduled as normal, instructors can access the meeting and select the Preassign breakout sessions button. From here, instructors can follow this guide to add users to the pre-assigned breakout rooms.

Starting January 26th, users in breakout sessions will be able to move between breakout sessions while using the Breakout Room feature of WebEx without the instructor manually moving them. This will increase flexibility with larger discussion sections in WebEx and make breakout rooms a more involved experience.
What's New In WebEx Continued

WEBEX-BLACKBOARD INTEGRATION

Blackboard (HuskyCT) instructors can integrate Webex directly into their course page. Instructors may now create/begin Scheduled Meetings, list class Recordings, and facilitate Office Hours directly in their HuskyCT page.

STEP-BY-STEP
First, instructors will need to add the Webex integrated tool link to their HuskyCT page.
1. Access the "+" at the top of the navigation menu
2. Select "tool link"
3. Select "Webex" from the drop down menu
4. Select "submit"

Once you have the tool link added, you can start scheduling meeting with the tool.
1. Select the Webex menu item
2. Select the tools you will utilize in Webex. You can facilitate office hours, host scheduled meetings, or collaborate on a team basis. Check off what is relevant to your course and select "Apply"

Choose your features

Select the features you would like to be visible to yourself and

Virtual Meetings  Office Hours  Setup  Analytics

Next, schedule your meetings.
1. Select the "Meetings" tab on this same page.

2. Select "New Meeting" in the upper right-hand corner of the page. This screen will prompt you to "Accept" and sign-in to Webex if it is not already logged in.

3. Customize the meeting criteria. You can set a title, date, time, and reoccurrence schedule for the meeting.

4. Your meetings are now ready to be attended. When you are ready to start a meeting, sign into HuskyCT, select the Webex tool and select "start" next to the appropriate meeting.

QUESTIONS?
Contact Educational Technologies for Webex support at edtech@uconn.edu
Current FAQs

As e-Learning continues, frequently asked questions come into the Educational Technologies support office. Here are some of the most common and recent questions.

MEDIASITE MIGRATION TO KALTURA

If you are a Mediasite user and have not already requested your content be moved to Kaltura, now is a good time to get that going. You may have noticed some of your media in Mediasite is not working like it usually is, and that is because it needs to be moved to Kaltura. You can request this be done here: https://ait.uconn.edu/mediasite-to-kaltura-conversion-request/

SMART VIEWS & COMBINED COURSE SECTIONS

With the integration of larger course sizes and multiple discussion sections, instructors are increasingly making the decision to combine their course shells in HuskyCT. This is a step which can make instructing large courses easier and simple by including the use of a parent course to which the smaller child sections of the course are linked. However, with larger course sizes comes a larger grade center -- and organization of the grade center is crucial for class success.

Luckily, when you combine your large course sections, you are given the option to organize your course grade center with Smart Views specific to your child sections of the course. You can do so by following these steps:

1. Access your full grade center
2. At the top of the page, select "manage"
3. From the drop-down menu, select "Smart Views"
4. Select "Create Smart View"
5. Title it according to the specified section you are working on
6. Customize the selection criteria based on "Custom" view
7. Under "select criteria", change the user criteria to "Child Course ID" "equal to" and then input a separate value in the text box

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selection Criteria</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of View</td>
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<tr>
<td>○ Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ User</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ Category and Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ Custom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select Criteria</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Select the users' grade criteria to benchmark.

1. User Criteria:
   - Child Course ID

   Condition: Equal to Value: SEC001
Current FAQs Continued

**HuskyCT sites for next semester**

HuskyCT sites for all upcoming lecture and discussion sections were automatically created for instructors. Please check your Courses area in HuskyCT for those. If you need a HuskyCT site for another course section listed in Student Admin, please see these instructions on how to request those: https://confluence.uconn.edu/ikb/teaching-and-learning/huskyct/instructor-support/getting-started-with-huskyct/requesting-huskyct-courses

**Content from Prior Semesters**

To have content from a previous semester copied into your Spring course: https://confluence.uconn.edu/ikb/teaching-and-learning/huskyct/instructor-support/getting-started-with-huskyct/restoring-huskyct-content-from-prior-semesters

**Combining multiple sections of a course**

To request that multiple course sections be combined into one site in HuskyCT, refer to these instructions: https://confluence.uconn.edu/ikb/teaching-and-learning/huskyct/instructor-support/getting-started-with-huskyct/combining-course-sections

**Making a HuskyCT site available to students**

To make a Spring semester site available before the first day of class OR to keep a Fall semester HuskyCT site available to students who need access to course materials or to complete course assignments or tests, refer to these instructions: https://confluence.uconn.edu/ikb/teaching-and-learning/huskyct/instructor-support/changing-course-settings/granting-student-access-to-unavailable-courses

**Non-course HuskyCT site**

To request a HuskyCT site that is not associated with a course listed in Student Admin, please refer to these instructions: https://confluence.uconn.edu/ikb/teaching-and-learning/huskyct/general-support/requesting-a-huskyct-non-class-or-organization-site

**General HuskyCT help pages for instructors**

For general help from our knowledge base, see this link: https://confluence.uconn.edu/ikb/teaching-and-learning/huskyct/instructor-support

**Technology training**

To view training videos on teaching technology tools, including HuskyCT, Webex, Collaborate, and Kaltura, please refer to our Keep Teaching site: https://ecampus.uconn.edu/keep-teaching-how-to-videos/. To sign up for EdTech training sessions, please visit: https://fins.uconn.edu/

**StudentAdmin questions**

For StudentAdmin questions, please reach out to ITS (techsupport@uconn.edu) or the Registrar (registrar@uconn.edu).