

# Webcam Video Recording Tips

## **Manage Performance**

Connect to the fastest available internet connection. Capturing video and audio with a webcam will work on a high speed wireless connection, however, it is best to use a wired (Ethernet) connection whenever possible. Recording functionality can also be improved by closing applications that are not needed for the webcam recording. The competition for available system memory could effect performance of the recording.

## **Beware of Background Sounds and Potential Interruptions**

Be conscious of ambient sounds (fans, air conditioners) and how they may be captured in the audio recording. Whenever possible turn off noisy devices or consider finding a quieter location. A quick test recording is a good way to determine if the background sounds are competing with your voice. Also, do what you can to avoid interruptions: close windows and doors, mute phones and hang a "Recording in Progress" sign on your door if there is a potential for visitors.

## **Microphones**

You may be able to get away with using your computer's built-in microphone in a quiet location, but for the most control and best sound quality use an external microphone. Set microphone levels high enough to capture your voice but not so high that the audio is distorted. Microphone levels can be adjusted in System Preferences (Mac) or the Control Panel (Windows).

## **Composing the Shot**

Consider the distance you need to be from the camera lens to capture or omit elements from the frame. Will you use your arms? Do you want them in the shot? Remove clutter or distracting elements from the frame so the focus is on the subject. Avoid wearing bright colors or thin stripes as they have the potential to create a distracting visual effect.

## **Lighting**

Make sure the subject of the recording is well lit. Turn on overhead lighting and, if necessary, set up a light and point it at the subject. Avoid backlighting—instead of placing yourself in front of a window (during daylight hours), rotate 180 degrees to direct the light source on the subject.

## **Look at the Camera**

It is best to look at the camera lens when recording rather than looking at the video capture window that appears on your computer screen. Our first instinct is to look at the image of ourselves on the screen, but, by looking at the lens, it will give the impression that you are looking at (addressing) your audience. One way to reference lecture notes without looking down is to post them on the top of your monitor.