VoiceThread

Best Practices for Creating Collaborative Asynchronous Online Discussions

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Zoom Controls to Communicate during this Webinar

Mute or Unmute your microphone. Muting helps to reduce background noise.

Start your video, if you would like to show your face through your webcam.

Type a text message into the chat for the participants and I to see.
Educational Technology Services

Consultations - Professional Development

✓ Course Design/Development
✓ Organization Design/Development
✓ Departmental Training
✓ Blackboard LMS
✓ Educational Tech Tools
✓ Video Production
✓ Accessibility
✓ Open Educational Resources

To set up an appointment: www.albany.edu/edtech
After this workshop, you will be able to . . .

- Plan engaging VT discussions based on best pedagogical practices for large & small online/blended classes.

- Locate & select best playback options for your VoiceThreads.

- Apply best practice discussion and comment quality tips

- Design media slides for effective engaging group discussions.

- Find help resources
VoiceThread

sound + images = impact

65% VISUALS & VOICE

10% VOICE

20% VISUALS

MEMORY RETENTION

Source: The Weiss-McGrath Report
VoiceThread Process - Refresher

1. Brainstorm
   - Pedagogical goals/objectives?
2. Getting Creative
   - Create media (PPT, MS Word, images, video)
3. VoiceThread
   - Upload media to VT & set parameters
4. Blackboard
   - Set up VT link within Blackboard & continue VT Set-up
Blackboard & VT Discussions

**Blackboard**
- Asynchronous
- Text based

**VoiceThread**
- Asynchronous
- See body language
- Hear tone of voice & cadence
- Ability to mix audio, video & text
10 Tips for Quality Discussions

1. Conduct low stakes discussion, non graded activity (Ice-breaker)
2. Provide clear instructions/utilize rubric
3. Provide an exemplar comment & reply
4. Cite supporting evidence within conversation
5. Appoint student discussion leaders
6. Ask open-ended questions (why & how) - Case based/debates
7. Establish a teaching and social presence by participating
8. Encourage revisiting the conversation
9. Use smaller groups for large classes (Bb groups don’t transfer)
10. Set time limit on comments – 1-2 minutes!
Commenting Quality

- Create Avatar
- Concise comments – Set time limit 1-2 minutes
- Model effective comments
- Utilize comment re-ordering
Create Your Avatar

- Depicts teaching presence
- Encourage students to upload professional ‘facial’ image
- Avatars are also great for Role Playing/debate discussions
Quality & tone of VoiceThread conversation often dictated by the first comment on a slide

Why is the first comment so important?
- If webcam comment is engaging and thoughtful...
- If first comment is short text comment...
Comment Re-ordering

▶ **Pro Tip** – Utilize Comment **Re-ordering** feature!

▶ Do you own the VT or have editing rights?

▶ Want to showcase an exemplar comment?
  ▪ Change the order of comments on any slide
  ▪ Find comment, drag & drop!
  ▪ New position saved automatically
Do you utilize the ‘Post First’ option within Blackboard? Participants must create a thread in order to view other threads within the discussion forum?

- Comments are hidden from other students
- Instructor controls timing/release of opening comments
Large vs. Small Class

- 20+ Students = fairly heavy
- Consider length of comment time & pedagogical use case
- Limit number of students commenting on slide
Slide Design Tips

- Include introductory slide with audio/video overview

- Break up slides/bulleted questions (i.e. 3 Questions = 1 question each slide)

- Same Discussion
  - Create multiple slides with smaller groups participating (5 students) each slide
  - Student names on slide for participation confirmation (1 slide with instructions & 2nd slide with student names)

- Different Discussion Prompts
  - Student option to pick topic of interest

- Be aware of your video capture sizing when developing your slides. (recording with your webcam on).
  - Size of video recording can’t be reduced in size
  - Video image is moveable on slide
  - Be careful you are not blocking your slide text during video recording/creation
Let's Take a Look

- Demo of Webcam movement
- Slide design examples
Best Practices for Discussion Facilitation

- Show teaching & social presence
  - Revisit VT’s
  - Provide audio/video feedback
  - Mention name of student while providing feedback

- Threaded commenting feature

- Enable comment moderation when you feel appropriate
Time-Saver & High Quality Conversation Tips

- Model ideal level of participation
- Record your own exemplary voice/video comment – sets the tone of conversation
- Time limit on comments Feature
- Re-ordering quality comments to the top of conversation channel
- Speed Playback Feature
## VoiceThread Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Exemplary - 3.33</th>
<th>Developing - 2</th>
<th>Beginning - 1</th>
<th>No Credit - 0</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Originality</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The minimum number of comments are left and all comments are in the student's own words and contribute unique viewpoints or ideas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comment(s) are in the student's own words and contribute mostly unique viewpoints or ideas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student comment(s) demonstrate repetition of ideas contributed in previous comments.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student comment(s) demonstrate evidence of plagiarism.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Comprehension</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The minimum number of comments are left and all comments demonstrate an understanding of the related concepts and ideas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comment(s) demonstrate an attempt to understand the related concepts and ideas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comment(s) demonstrate little to no understanding of the related concepts and ideas.</td>
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<td>Student comment(s) demonstrate evidence of plagiarism.</td>
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<td><strong>Clarity</strong></td>
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<td>The minimum number of comments are left and all comments are clear and understandable.</td>
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<td>Written or spoken comments are mostly clear and understandable.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written or spoken comments are not clear or understandable.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student comment(s) demonstrate evidence of plagiarism.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Grading Notes:**

- Each student’s VoiceThread score will range from 0-10 points, provided that comments were left before the due date. 0 points will be earned for students who do not participate before the due date.

- Each “exemplary” score will result in 3.33 points in each of the three categories, each “developing” score will result in 2 points, each “beginning” score will result in 1 point.

- “0 points will be earned for the entire activity if a student’s comments demonstrate evidence of plagiarism (excerpted from a book, website, or other sources).
Help Resources

- Explore VoiceThread - [https://voicethread.com/](https://voicethread.com/)
  - 24 x 7 Support – Vendor Supported
  - Tutorials
  - Digital Library – Guidance & inspiration on successful projects
  - YouTube Channel
  - Free workshops

- UAlbany askIT wiki & Teaching with Technology Workshops
  - Getting Started
  - Student Guide
  - FAQ
Today we learned about:

- Planning for engaging VT discussions based on best pedagogical practices for large and small classes.
- How to locate & select best playback options for your VoiceThreads
- Applying best practice comment quality tips
- Designing media slides for effective engaging group discussions
- Finding help resources
References/Sources

- VoiceThread.com
- Google images - https://www.google.com
- eLearning-Yardi UK - https://www.yardi.co.uk/products/elearning/
Schedule a Consultation

www.albany.edu/edtech
518-442-4288