Teaching in the GK Virtual Classroom

Preparatory Guide for Virtual and Classroom + Virtual Delivery
“Anything that can go wrong will go wrong.”

– Murphy’s Law

The question is: Are you ready for it?

This document prepares you for teaching in the virtual, and specifically the C+V (classroom + virtual), modality. It supplements the Instructor Guide. The Instructor Guide focuses on the content of the course. The Teaching in the GK Virtual Classroom Guide provides helpful tips, technical considerations, and suggestions to keep students engaged in a virtual or blended environment.

The first time you teach a virtual or C+V class, go through the entire document. After you have taught a few classes, you will probably no longer need this guide and will be able to manage with the instructor guide alone.

In addition to this guide and the Instructor Guide, be sure to review Virtual Classroom documents and C+V documents on the Instructor SharePoint, located on the C+V and VCeL tabs.

- **VCeL Instructor SharePoint site**
  https://corpspsrmt.globalknowledge.com/VCeL/default.aspx

- **C+V Instructor SharePoint site**
  https://corpspsrmt.globalknowledge.com/cv/default.aspx

We also have a Virtual Classroom FAQ page that contains all of our teaching resources for Adobe Connect, and The LIST (The Learning and Information Solutions Technologies Site) that contains information on the instructional technologies used when teaching in both the virtual and blended modalities.

- **Virtual Classroom FAQ**
  http://www.nextcourses.com/deliverysolutions/adobeconnect/faqs

- **The LIST**

- **Use the Virtual Class checklist** on the Virtual Classroom FAQ site to thoroughly prepare you for class.
# Table of Contents

| Preparatory Guide for Virtual and Classroom + Virtual Delivery | 1 |
| — Anything that can go wrong will go wrong. | 2 |
| — Murphy's Law | 2 |
| Table of Contents | 3 |
| **Twelve Adobe Connect Features to Use in Your Course** | 5 |
| Feature 1: Audio Options | 7 |
| Feature 2: Flexible Layouts | 9 |
| Lobby Layout | 10 |
| Teaching Layout | 10 |
| Activity Layout | 11 |
| Blank Layout | 11 |
| Feature 3: Session Recording Pod | 11 |
| Feature 4: Session Content | 12 |
| Pre-loaded Content | 12 |
| Adding Content on the Fly | 13 |
| Transferring Files to Participants | 13 |
| Feature 5: Screen Sharing | 13 |
| Desktop, Application, or Window Sharing | 13 |
| Request Student Screen Share | 14 |
| Feature 6: Drawing Tools | 15 |
| Feature 7: Chat | 18 |
| Public Chat | 18 |
| Private Chat | 18 |
| Feature 8: Real-Time, Customizable Polling | 19 |
| Feature 9: Monitoring Student Engagement | 19 |
| Engagement Meter | 19 |
| Feature 10: Breakout Groups | 20 |
| Feature 11: Video | 22 |
| Live Streaming Video | 22 |
| Pre-recorded Video Content | 23 |
| Feature 12: Leader Photographs and Video | 23 |
| Photograph | 23 |
| Video | 24 |
Appendix

Emergency Numbers

Additional Resources
Twelve Adobe Connect Features to Use in Your Course

Even though you are teaching both classroom and remote students, you will be teaching through Adobe Connect. All students, including the classroom students, should be logged into Adobe Connect and viewing the slides on their screens. You and the students will interact with each other mainly through Adobe Connect. Therefore, it is important that you know the Adobe Connect interface well and are familiar with Adobe Connect features that can make your class engaging.

Experienced instructors make the use of interactive Adobe Connect features seem easy. The secret is practice. If you have taught virtual classes for Global Knowledge before, you will have been given access to an Adobe Connect sandbox for your practice. If you do not remember how to access your sandbox or do not have one, contact the Instructor.Helpdesk at 1-800-841-4274 or instructor.helpdesk@globalknowledge.com to set you up.
More Information

**Live online training on the Adobe Connect Meeting tool** is provided every Monday at 2PM ET. This training is offered at no charge by our Adobe resale partner Clarix. We recommend this training as a first step for all instructors new to teaching using Adobe Connect. The first 15 minutes of the training covers back-end administration features and the next 45 minutes covers the main teaching features in Adobe.

Please click on this link and register for the date you would like to attend. When you register please indicate you are with Global Knowledge in the Company / School field.

http://www.clarix.com/training-registration.php

NOTE: You do not need to attend the 2nd hour of training as you are not required to know that information – it covers other Adobe products.

**For a best practices checklist, click this link:**
Feature 1: Audio Options

Audio conference settings are checked by default as illustrated below. These audio settings provide all attendees the option joining by phone or by computer audio at any time.

The Allow Participants to use Microphones option is checked by default because this gives the students the following audio choices:

If you are teaching from a Global Knowledge training center, you must use the phone provided in the room to dial-in to the meeting directly. Do not use the Dial-out option.

1. Enter into the Adobe Meeting room that you have been provisioned for class as normal.
2. When you are ready to start class audio for remote students, click **Start**.

3. Choose the option to **Dial-in to the Audio Conference via Phone**.

4. Enter the Toll Free number as listed. Note that the **same number will work for both US and Canada** training center locations. Once connected follow the instructions and enter the Moderator code. Please ensure you have dialed the numbers properly.

5. Audio is now connected. These steps will need to be repeated if audio is lost during your class.
Note
If students have dialed-in and their phone numbers are not mapped to their names, they will be harder to manage in Adobe Connect and not be connected to audio in a breakout room. If you put them into a breakout room, they will still be connected to the audio in the main room, and not be able to hear or communicate over the phone bridge in a breakout room.

For more information, please read the Managing Breakout Groups card:

More Information
For more information about audio, please read the In Session - Controlling Class Communication - Using Audio, Chat, and Notes section of the Virtual Classroom FAQ site:
http://www.nextcourses.com/deliverysolutions/adobeconnect/faq

Feature 2: Flexible Layouts
Every Global Knowledge virtual classroom is created from a single template that contains four layouts: Lobby, Teaching, Activity, and Blank. These layouts are designed based on instructor feedback, and will be the same for all classes.

Your classroom is created five days before the first day of teaching. Once your classroom is created, you can enter it and set up the layouts, pods, and content however you would like. You have complete control over how the layouts look, what pods are displayed, the size of the pods, and what content appears. The room will save however you set it up based on the beginning template.

The layout that you display will also display to the students. When you change layouts, it also changes for all of the students. The students do not have the ability to change layouts or alter the pods unless you change their permissions during class.
Lobby Layout

Designed for use at the start of class and during breaks.

Teaching Layout

Design to be the primary layout for lectures and demonstrations.
Activity Layout

Designed to be used for individual and group exercises, polls, knowledge check reviews, and breakout groups.

Blank Layout

This layout can be easily customized to meet the needs and agenda of your class. Use the pods menu to open any type of pod. You can resize, rename, and arrange the pods as you would like.

Feature 3: Session Recording Pod

All students taking a virtual or a blended modality course are promised six months access to each day’s indexed recording. You are required to record all lessons. As you teach, keep in mind that you are being recorded. Try to keep the volume of your voice and the pacing of your speech consistent and smooth.

Each virtual classroom has an Auto-Recording pod. Here’s how the pod works:

- 1 students = Auto Record prompt
- 10 students = Recording automatically starts
- Less than three students, you must start the recording manually (Meeting Menu → Record Meeting).
When you close the meeting room (Meeting → End Meeting) the recording will automatically end and is saved to the Adobe server. No action is needed on your part. Check out the recording and evaluate how you performed. Consider what you will do different in class the next day?

If you pause recording for breaks or lunch, be sure to restart the recording before beginning your next lesson.

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**Note**

Do NOT close the room by clicking the X in the upper right corner or by using Exit Meeting from the Meeting menu. Closing the room in this manner may corrupt the recording file.

Click on **Audio** and **End Meeting Audio** (this will end the audio for the session) then click on **Meeting** and **End Meeting**. This will dismiss all students and you can customize a note to them about when the room will be available to them again.

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**Feature 4: Session Content**

**Pre-loaded Content**

Your course slides and other approved course materials will be located in the Adobe Connect Content Library. It is your responsibility to access and download these files into your virtual classroom, preferably prior to the start of class.

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**More Information**

For detailed information on accessing your course slides, read this card:  
http://www.nextcourses.com/deliverysolutions/application/views/adobeconnect/resources/QRC_Accessing_Course_Slides_v2.0.pdf

If you have animations or text not appearing, read this card:  
http://www.nextcourses.com/deliverysolutions/application/views/adobeconnect/resources/QRC_When_Animated_Objects_or_Text_Don't_Appear_v1.1.pdf

If your slides are in PDF format, read this card:  
Adding Content on the Fly

You can also upload content on the fly to a Share pod, using the same steps in the Accessing and Managing Course slides card, except on the Select Document to Share pane click Browse My Computer and locate the content you wish to upload.

Transferring Files to Participants

Reasons for transferring files to your students are as follows:

- Your students did not receive their physical books in time for the class, and Global Knowledge has created electronically-secured courseware for you to share with the students.
- You have exercises to complete in the class, and you want the students to have their own copies of the worksheets or exercise files.

Notes regarding sharing GK courseware files:

Only Global Knowledge files that are secured and prepared expressly for students should be shared via a File Share pod.

- You should never email Global Knowledge courseware files.

More Information

For detailed steps on using the File Share pod to transfer files, read this card:
http://www.nextcourses.com/deliverysolutions/application/views/adobeconnect/resources/QRC_Transferring%20Files%20to%20Students.pdf

Feature 5: Screen Sharing

Desktop, Application, or Window Sharing

Instructors can use the sharing feature for demonstrations, and students can use this feature for group exercises where one student does the task while the other students watch and discuss what needs to be done.

Demonstrations add interest and are a good way to teach without relying solely on PPT.

Adobe Connect allows you to share an application, your desktop, or a single Window using the Share pod. Most instructors find application sharing to be the best option because you don’t end up inadvertently sharing everything that shows up on your desktop, and it uses less bandwidth.
For information on the new features for screen sharing in Adobe Connect v9.3, watch this short video:
http://videos.globalknowledge.com/medias/y4yl7ctbzh

More information on sharing your screen can be found in Adobe Connect’s How To for Hosts and Presenters:

Request Student Screen Share

Use this option to send a student a request to share their screen. You might want to do this, for instance, if a student is having trouble with a lab and you want to look at what they are doing.

To request a screen share, simply hover over the student’s name in the Attendee pod, and select Request Screen Share. The student will get the request and be able to share their screen.
**Feature 6: Drawing Tools**

Adobe Connect drawing tools can be used with a Share pod when sharing a whiteboard, presentation, PDF, or your screen. In the following screenshot, the drawing toolbar is circled, as well as the **Draw** button which turns the toolbar on and off. The default drawing shapes and pen tools are shown.

- These are typically tracked at the project level.
- Ultimately the project manager’s responsibility, but BA plays a key role in identification and management.
Using the drawing toolbar, you can change the color and other properties of the drawing shapes and pen tools.

It is awkward to draw or write using the annotation tools with a mouse. For more control in drawing concepts, use a tablet with a whiteboarding application. For writing, use the text tool rather than trying to write freehand with the mouse.

For C+V courses offered in our training center, you can use the Mimio device connected to the whiteboard.
You can give students drawing rights without making them a presenter. From the attendee list you can give drawing rights to individual students or to everyone. You need to hover over their name and click **Enable Drawing**.

To grant rights for all participants to draw on a specific **Share** pod, simply click the pod menu and select **Enable Participants to draw**.

**For information on the new features for drawing in Adobe Connect v9.3, watch this short video:**
http://videos.globalknowledge.com/medias/hbtoh4wbl1

**For details on using the Whiteboard drawing tools read this page:**
http://help.adobe.com/en_US/connect/9.0/using/WS11d1def534ea1be08a52b610b38bfaa95-7f5c.html#WS11d1def534ea1be08a52b610b38bfaa95-7f54
Feature 7: Chat

This instant messaging function is a primary tool to interact with and solicit information from students, especially the remote students. Many in-class students also enjoy sharing via chat. Encourage students to use chat to participate in discussions with other students.

Public Chat

Encourage students to ask questions through public chat (Everyone tab). Often other students might have the same question and can benefit from the answer. You might want to assign a couple of in-class students to keep an eye on the chat and to flag your attention if you miss someone’s question.

Private Chat

Use private chat when dealing with issues that pertain to a specific student only (for example, personal concerns or technical issues that only affect that student). Simply hover over a student’s name in the attendee list, and select Start Private Chat. By default, students can private message each other. You can change this from the menu bar select Meeting → Preferences → Chat Pod and uncheck Enable Private Chat for Participants.
Feature 8: Real-Time, Customizable Polling

Use polling questions to find out information from the student. For example, the question could be about their level of experience using a piece of equipment. A Poll pod is open on the Activity layout, or you can open a blank poll from the menu bar, Pods → Poll → Add New Poll.

You can populate the polls ahead of class by entering the poll questions and answer choices. An alternative method is to create generic, reusable polls. These polls contain a generic set of questions and answers, can be created in your Adobe Connect classroom prior to the first day of class, and will remain for the duration of the course. Student responses to these types of polls are captured, but are not graded.

More Information

For details on polls, including creating generic reusable polls, read this card:

Feature 9: Monitoring Student Engagement

Engagement Meter

Whereas in a classroom you can easily see how engaged students are, you might lose touch with your remote students. Keep an eye on the engagement meter to gauge students’ interest. The meter is found in the Presenter Only area. You can access this area from Meeting → Display Presenter Only Area (only Hosts can see this area when opened) – think of this area as the backstage.
In the **Attendee** pod you can change the view to see who is engaged and who is not by looking at the color icon next to the students’ name. If colors are all green then your class is very engaged. If a student goes to **RED** it indicates that the student has minimized the Adobe interface and may be multi-tasking or absent from class.

![Attendee Pod]

If you notice the students’ interest starting to wane, you might consider a break, an interaction such as a poll or chat question, or a change in your instructional method.

**Feature 10: Breakout Groups**

Use breakout groups to divide remote students into smaller groups for discussions, exercises, or labs that require the students to share equipment. Before the first use of breakout groups in the course, explain the instructions to the students in detail. The **Activity** layout contains a Breakout room best practices PDF (non-course specific) in the **Activity Files** pod for the students to download.

![Activity Files]

You manage the breakout room groups using the **Attendee** pod. Simply click the breakout room button, and you can create the groups, place the students in the groups, and start the breakout session. You can either add students manually or have the system group students.
The layout that you are in when you start the breakout groups will be the layout for the breakout group rooms.

You can easily share the work completed in the breakout groups with the whole class. End the breakout session, and in the main room choose Pods > Breakout Pods. Select a breakout room name, and then select Chat, Share, or Whiteboard.

When using breakout rooms, keep in mind the following information:

- When creating breakout rooms in a C+V environment, remember that classroom students cannot be grouped with remote students (all the classroom students are sharing one phone line).
- Make sure ALL students (and yourself) are on the same type of audio source (phone or VOIP/computer audio) before starting breakouts. Audio can be easily changed for the entire group.
  - Recommended audio source is phone for real-time conversation.
  - Give students a break period to allow time to change or adjust their audio devices.
- Explain how to get in touch with the instructor (Host) from the breakout room, and test to be sure students can do this when in the room for the first time. This is important for students to get help or leave the breakout room early.
  - Students can change their status (raise their hand, agree, etc) in the breakout room and the status change will appear in the Attendee pod in the main room.
  - Students can send the instructor a message by using the Send Message to Host option at the bottom of the attendee pod. The message notification will appear in the main room and remain until you close it out.
- Explain the concept of Application Sharing to the students before starting the breakout session. Demonstrate Sharing using your own desktop so they see what they will be doing.
• Explain the different roles: **Participant** vs **Presenter**. Students are Participants in the main room (limited ability), but will all be promoted to Presenters when in breakout rooms, giving them the ability to speak, share, and interact equally.

• Explain that Presenters (because of their ability to share their screens) automatically receive the **Adobe Add-In** download for Application Sharing – this is a PowerPoint add-in, NOT an .exe file, and does not require Admin rights to download. This add-in has been known to kick students out of the session or breakout room, so prepare them to re-enter the room should this occur.

• Account for 5 minutes to set up and reconvene breakout groups. This is a good time to give the class a mini-break, but ask that they remain logged in to the session.

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**Note**

Breakout group time is not recorded. The instructor can pause recording during the breakout rooms so as not to have long gaps in the recording, but must remember to unpause the recording when the class reconvenes. It is better to leave the recording on than to forget to resume it.

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**More Information**

For detailed information on how to use breakout rooms, including when students are paired for technical labs, read this card:


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**Feature 11: Video**

**Live Streaming Video**

When teaching in the virtual classroom, you must intentionally engage your students without any “eye-to-eye” connections. Video is a great way for your students to connect with you and put a face to your voice. Adobe Connect 9.2 has many options for working with live video streams.

• You can briefly turn on your webcam during course introductions, so that your students can see you, and then pause it once you begin lecturing to conserve bandwidth.

• Live video is an option for physical demonstration of equipment.
To stream video, use the Video pod located in the Teaching layout. You can bring up the Video pod into any layout by checking Video from the Pods menu. You can also allow your students to stream video by choosing Enable Webcam For Participants from the Video pod dropdown arrow.

More Information

For detailed instructions and best practices on using streaming video in class, read this card: http://www.nextcourses.com/deliverysolutions/application/views/adobeconnect/resources/QRC_Using_Video.pdf

Pre-recorded Video Content

To show videos that are hosted on a website, you can add a link to the video to the Web Links pod on the Activity layout. Advise your students to turn up their speakers to hear the video through their computer if they are not already using VOIP audio.

1. If you do not have a Web Links pod loaded, click Pods → Web Links → Add New Web Links.
2. In the upper-right corner of the pod, click the menu icon.
3. Select Add Link.
4. Type the URL path and URL name.
5. Click OK.
6. Select the Web Link to the video.
7. Click Browse To.

On your screen, and all of your student’s screens, the URL opens in a new instance of the web browser.

You can also load certain types of videos to the Share pod, such as: SWF, FLV, F4V, and MP4. These types of video will play within the Share pod, just like any other type of content. Video files are usually large, so they will take longer to load, so do this before class or during a break.

Feature 12: Leader Photographs and Video

Photograph

The Lobby layout has a Video pod that you can use to show a still picture. Simply start and then pause your webcam.
If you have a picture that you would rather use, you can hide the Video pod and open a small Share pod in its place. You can upload a profile picture into the Share pod.

Follow Global Knowledge guidelines for photographs:

As a Global Knowledge instructor, there are occasions when you will be representing yourself in a photograph. A photograph enables a student to see who you are and make a connection even if it’s only virtually. You are also representing Global Knowledge, the leading provider of high quality training solutions. To ensure a professional image, please follow these guidelines when submitting photos for use in VCeL training, webinar presentations, and social media sites such as LinkedIn, Twitter, Spiceworks, etc.

- The photo should be a head and shoulders shot of you in work attire. To avoid making your photo look like a police mug shot, angle your body about 45 degrees from the camera while keeping your face looking directly at the camera. A nice smile would be great also.
- Make sure the background is free of clutter with no plants or other protrusions directly behind you or in the frame. To take emphasis off the background, move 4-8 feet from the wall.
- Wear a solid-colored, collared shirt or work-appropriate blouse.
- While many flattering photographs are taken at weddings and other special occasions, resist the temptation to use a photograph of yourself with others cropped out. It’s noticeable.
- If possible, use natural light with the light source shining toward you, not behind you.

Video

Some instructors use their webcam to stream video of themselves while teaching. Global Knowledge guidelines are to use video only during the instructor and student introductions. Streaming video can eat up bandwidth and there are known issues of video slowing access to virtual labs.

More Information

For detailed instructions and best practices on using streaming video in class, read this card:
Appendix

Emergency Numbers

- Global Knowledge Instructor Helpdesk: 1-800-841-4274
- Email: instructor.helpdesk@globalknowledge.com

Additional Resources

- Instructor Best Practices Virtual Class Checklist
- Instructor Sandbox:
  - Available at https://gk.adobeconnect.com/practicesb
  - User name: trainme
  - Password: teachvcl
- Best Practices Guide, Discussion Board, and C+V Documents
  - Available at:
    - VCeL Instructor SharePoint site
      https://corpspsrmt.globalknowledge.com/VCeL/default.aspx
    - Virtual Classroom FAQ
      http://www.nextcourses.com/deliverysolutions/adobeconnect/faqs
    - The LIST