University of Idaho

Best Practices: Conference Calls

Prior to the start of the meeting:
- Make a call and test the conference system
- If using additional microphones, make sure they are placed where they will pick up all participants. If someone is too far from the microphone, ask them to move closer.

Audio tips:
- Do not move papers, pens or use keyboards around the microphone. It doesn't sound like anything on your end but is amplified at the other sites.
- If you have many participants together in a room, there could potentially be a lot of background noise coming through the microphones, which can be very distracting for everyone. To avoid this, ask all participants to mute when they are not talking.

Meeting materials - be prepared with presentation materials; send materials to all participants the day prior (if possible) to the meeting.

Starting the meeting:

Greet and introduce all participants - just like any meeting, there will be a few participants who arrive on time and a few who arrive 1-2 minutes late. It's advisable to wait until everyone has joined so you can greet each participant as they join the meeting. This also gives you the chance to introduce participants to each other who have not previously met. Ask your participants to identify themselves before speaking. This is especially important when the meeting includes participants who have not previously met.

Additional Tips:
- Be courteous to other participants
- Speak clearly and toward the microphone
- Don't interrupt other speakers
- Don't carry on side conversations
- Don't wear "noisy" jewelry
- Don't cover the microphone – use the mute feature
- Know your audience
- Put your cell phone away
- Don't eat during the meeting

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