

Virtual Connections and Collaborations

Ferguson Library
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Welcome to Virtual Connections and Collaborations

By the end of this class you will have knowledge of the following items:

- Variety of different audio and video communications platforms
- Different ways you can play games with friends while separated
- Various other fun activities to try

Audio and Video Communications Platforms

Name	Link	Pros	Cons	Price
Zoom	https://zoom.us	Brand familiarity General ease of use for participants Accessible on computer, tablet, and smartphone Do not need an account to join a Zoom meeting Screen sharing	Privacy & security concerns Free account limitations - 40-minute limit if you have 3 or more people participating Different interfaces between mobile, tablet, and computer	Free (w/ limits) Or \$14.99/mo/host
Google Meet	https://meet.google.com	Brand familiarity General ease of use for participants Accessible on computer through a browser, tablet, and smartphone Can host meetings up to one hour on a free account (24 hours through September 30) Screen sharing	Requires a Google Account - privacy and security concerns with that Lower video quality sometimes	Free Expanded features available without a G Suite account through 9/30/2020

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Discord	https://www.discord.com	<p>Consistent text chat rooms for synchronous and asynchronous chatting</p> <p>Audio or video chat</p> <p>Screen sharing</p> <p>Build a persistent channel for your friends and family to easily connect to</p> <p>Create separate channels for various activities and discussions</p> <p>Unlimited time</p> <p>Access on computer, web, phone, tablet</p>	<p>More setup required</p> <p>May be confusing to new users</p> <p>Video chat not as robust as other platforms</p>	<p>Free</p> <p>Can pay for enhanced experience as a user</p>
Slack	https://slack.com/	<p>Consistent text chat rooms for synchronous and asynchronous chatting</p> <p>Audio or video chat</p> <p>Screen sharing</p> <p>Build a persistent channel for your friends and family to easily connect to</p> <p>Create separate channels for various activities and discussions</p> <p>Unlimited time</p> <p>Can access on computer, web, smartphone, and tablet</p>	<p>More setup required</p> <p>May be confusing to new users</p> <p>Many features limited to desktop client</p> <p>Video chat limited to 1-on-1 with free basic plan</p>	<p>Free</p> <p>Can pay for enhanced features</p>

Synchronous communications allow everyone to participate together at the same time

Asynchronous communications allow people to remain in contact even with differing schedules

Equipment

- Microphone
- Camera
- Often these are built into laptops and all-in-one computers and they are always a part of smartphones and tablets
- Headphones
 - Helps you hear better

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- Reduces interference and feedback from your own speakers
- Often can find headphones with built-in microphones which are better and clearer than ones built into computers

Gaming

Party Games

- Win, Lose or Draw
- Blind Man's Bluff card game
- Name in the Bag
- Bingo
- 20 Questions
- Yahtzee
- Scattergories
- Werewolf/Mafia
- Two Truths and a Lie

Party Video Games

- Skribbl
 - Guess the drawing game
 - <https://skribbl.io/>
- Word Scatter
 - Like Boggle
 - <http://www.wordscatter.com/>
- Jackbox Games
 - Variety of fun games including trivia, drawing, guessing, and wordplay
 - <https://www.jackboxgames.com/>

Board Games Online

- Sandbox Simulators
 - Physics-based game simulators
 - Most board and card games are available
 - Need to know the rules to play
 - Some options
 - Tabletop Simulator
 - <https://www.tabletopsimulator.com/>
 - Board Game Arena
 - <https://boardgamearena.com>
 - Tabletopia
 - <https://tabletopia.com/>
 - Card Games

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- Various sites allow you to play different card games online against strangers and friends
- Recommendation: PlayingCards.io <http://playingcards.io/>
- Game Apps
 - Either tablet apps or computer applications
 - Many allow for online multiplayer
 - A lot of popular board games are available

Other Activities

Watch Parties

Allows you to watch a movie on popular streaming services with friends. Software will sync up the movie for everyone and sometimes provide text or voice chat for discussions

- Use Zoom
 - Host shares screen with the movie playing (Be sure to check option to optimize for video!)
 - Video quality is not the greatest and sometimes there are syncing issues
 - Free Zoom accounts are limited to only 40 minutes, so it may be difficult to arrange a full movie
 - Only the host needs to have access to the streaming service
- Netflix Party
 - Offers text chat
 - Install extension in Firefox or Chrome
 - Everyone participating needs to have a Netflix account
- Hulu Watch Party
 - Offers text chat
 - Everyone needs access to a paid Hulu account
 - Built into Hulu streaming service already
- Amazon Prime Video Watch Party
 - Only Amazon content
 - Everyone needs an Amazon Prime account
 - Built into Amazon Prime Video service

Other Options

- Virtual Happy Hours
- Virtual Exercise Classes
- Book Clubs
- Online Painting or crafting sessions
- Cooking Together