



# Kaltura

**Live Room**

**Best Practices  
For Faculty**

## Best Practices for Faculty Using Kaltura Live Room

1. **Where?** - Remind students that Kaltura Live room “lives” in the Media Gallery of Canvas. All they have to do is click on it and choose “Launch Live Room”. At that point they are in. There are no links, codes or other instructions that you have to distribute. There is no formal invitation such as is used in WebEx. Just tell them when to show up.
2. **Microphones** - Once in Kaltura Live Room you should mute all the microphones to prevent a negative audio feedback loop from diminishing your experience. Make sure to unmute yourself as the moderator or no one else will be able to hear you. Ask students for confirmation on a regular basis that they can indeed hear you. Gentle reminders from students in the chat window will avoid minutes of embarrassing silence.
3. **Technology Requirements** - Drive home the point with your students that it’s important for them to turn on their speakers but they do not need a camera or microphone installed to participate meaningfully. They can simply type their questions and answers in the chat window which is built into Kaltura. Also, emphasize that students who cannot make it to your class sessions will not be penalized for any reason. Make sure to let them know that you understand the challenges that they face and that you are often faced with those same challenges. Reassure them that every effort is made to record the lectures and that it will be made available to them at a later date. Use the advice of the best engineers – under promise and over deliver (i.e. tell them it will be posted in two days but try to get it to them the next day).

4. **Raising Hands** – There is a feature in Kaltura Live Room that allows students to “raise” their hands. It’s in the upper-right hand corner. However, experience has shown that students often cannot find it. Rather than wasting precious time trying to explain where it is you should consider adopting the following protocol. Ask students who have a question to type “QT” if they intend to text you their question or “QA” if they want to use their microphone (“A” is for audio). In the former case, that alerts you to pay attention to the chat window and wait patiently for the student to reply. In the latter case that means that you should unmute the student’s microphone to give them the floor to speak. Look for their name in the participants window in the upper right-hand side and click on the microphone icon. It will change appearance and that will let you know they can then speak.
5. **Regular Feedback** – Make sure that when you are doing something new like pulling in a short video clip for them to see or loading up and playing a PowerPoint file, that you periodically perform a quick informal poll to ensure that they are seeing what you intend for them to see. Just because you can see something doesn’t mean that they can. “Let me know if you are able to see the YouTube video that I just displayed on the screen” will help avoid a lot of headaches. If most students can see it but a handful cannot do not let that stop you in your tracks. Empathize with those who cannot see it and remind them that they will be able to see the video recording after class. This reassures them that they are not missing anything.
6. **PowerPoint Slides** – make sure to load PowerPoint files, MS Word files or other documents in advance of your session. It takes sometimes several minutes for them to both upload and convert before they can be made available for you to display to your students. You don’t want to be doing this in front of them. If you have long spells of silence you will have students exiting the session unceremoniously. Preparation is the key.
7. **The Whiteboard** – the whiteboard is a useful tool but unless you have an ergonomically comfortable mouse (i.e. one that allows you to write and draw with ease) you should use this feature sparingly. Students will cut you some slack for writing that might not be ready for prime time but if you are struggling constantly while using it they will grow tired and impatient. Put yourself in their shoes. How many of us in meetings have pulled out our smartphones to check baseball scores when the presenter is fumbling with technology?

8. **Annotating the Screen** – an alternative to using Whiteboard is annotation. Simply pull up a PowerPoint slide or MS Word document that has writing already on it. If you are teaching math or science, pull up a few unsolved problems and then use the built-in pencil to solve them. If you teach English grammar or a foreign language, pull up some sentences that include fragments, run-on sentences, commas splices, etc., and then ask your students to identify what's wrong with them. This makes it very interactive. Remind students that these sessions are not spectator events. Their participation will increase the value of their experience. How you market this point to them will make all the difference.
9. **Video** – The key here is curating. Hunt down what you want to show your students in advance. If it's a YouTube video or video that you have stored on EduTube, make sure to show short clips. Anything more than two or three minutes is too long. If you need to have them view anything longer it's best to have them view it before class. Once you have the video clips collected, you will want to organize them on your Chrome tabs. A useful thing to do which ensures that you do not accidentally close these tabs is to "pin" them. How do you do that? Right click on the tab that you want to display and choose "pin tab". That will push the tab to the far left on your list of open browser tabs. If you accidentally click on it nothing will happen. There are not close features on a pinned tab. If you need to close the tab later, just right click on the tab again and choose "un pin tab".
10. **Quizzes** – this is a pedagogically useful feature that is built into Kaltura Live Room. It's not to be confused with the quiz tool available in Canvas. It's there for you to author short quizzes – one to three questions (or more) which you might want to administer on the fly during your session. This is helpful in gauging whether or not your students are comprehending the material you are presenting. Once you "play" a quiz it will be sent to their screen. Students must click on "start quiz" at which time they will be able to answer the questions. When the quiz ends, which is initiated by the instructor, the results are displayed on the screen. Keep in mind that it is more than possible that a handful of students might not see the questions. Tell them that they can answer the questions in the chat room when the quiz is over. In that case you will need to verbalize the question stem and the answer choices. This is another case in which having a backup plan will save your skin.

- 11. External Resources** – You are not limited to simply showing YouTube videos or EduTube videos to your students. You can also bring them to external sites that may be of interest. Suppose that you are teaching art appreciation. You might wish to navigate to a gallery that displays works of art like paintings and sculptures. Focus on some of them and then ask students to identify the artist or the period or culture from which they originated. This makes the session more than just a show and tell. It allows students to be a part of it. Obviously there are instances where you might have to provide some priming to get responses. Another external resource might be something that is very interactive like quizziz.com where you can push pre-prepared quizzes to students' phones. This site actually provides a leaderboard while the quiz is being conducted and allows the experience to mimic that of a television game show. It also allows students to provide a pseudonym for students who are shy and don't want to be embarrassed when it's discovered that they were in last place. By the way, it's also a lot of fun. Faculty members participated in these during the training and it received good reviews. Becoming a member is free and there is already tons of content there so you don't have to author the quizzes yourself. Just make sure to edit them for accuracy and pedagogical appropriateness.
- 12. Breakouts** -There is a very powerful feature in Kaltura Live Room known as Breakouts. As the name suggests, it gives you the power to break up the class into groups. There are two choices – autogenerate and manually drag and drop. If the former is used, Kaltura will split the students evenly into several groups. Once the breakout session is initiated, students in each group will be able to collaborate with each other via microphone, whiteboard or chat without the other groups hearing them or seeing what they are doing. Warning – students without microphones won't be able to use them so they should be encouraged to use the whiteboard or the chat window. This feature is not for the faint of heart. It is recommended that you take it for a test drive before using it. Consider doing that with some volunteers from your class or fellow faculty who you can add to your course over the weekend so you can check it out.

13. **Choreographing** – just like a good dance number can't be done without practicing and planning so is true with a good class session. Lay out the pieces of your session in advance and place them in the order that makes sense. Rehearse it in advance. Try to have a lively cadence and don't get frazzled when things don't go exactly as you had planned. Draw from these experiences to make future encounters more productive.
14. **Failure** – one thing is certain about using any technology – Murphy's law will eventually prevail – "anything that can go wrong, will go wrong". However, this should not deter you from moving out into the deep. Students are remarkably forgiving when professors demonstrate humility and lay bare their true humanity. Use self-deprecating humor, laugh off small snafus and most of all, don't take yourself too seriously. Oh and by the way, have fun.