

**Accessibility Communication Guidelines for MLA Live Virtual and Face-to-Face Instruction (January 2023)**

To meet [MLA’s strategic goal](https://www.mlanet.org/strategy) of ensuring inclusion and accessibility to MLA offerings set by the MLA Board of Directors, we require MLA instructors and presenters to meet accessibility standards for documents and platforms used in webinars and courses and for communicating with students virtually and face-to-face.

**General Communication Guidance**

Please follow these tips in teaching and in communicating with your students. It’s drawn from accessibility guidance and applies to live and virtual teaching and communication.

* Practice your presentation and the tools you’ll use.
* Speak clearly and not too fast.
* You're an expert on your content, [don’t "upspeak" or "uptalk."](https://youtu.be/NQWej-hMiZI)
* Instead of saying "um," "like,” and "you know," pause. Pauses give your audience time to process what you have shared.
* If you are displaying information on a screen, read or describe all the text and graphics.

### Give people time to process information. Pause between topics.

### Use a good quality microphone and ensure the microphone is positioned so it picks up your voice well.

**Webinars and Instructor-Led Virtual Courses that Use Zoom**

This guidance is for staff and instructors.

1. In preparation sessions with instructors, staff review the items marked \* below.
2. Staff reviews Zoom guidance for participants at start of each session
3. Staff will do the following and engage instructors as necessary:
   1. Include dial-in numbers in the course
   2. Advise presenters to be in a noise-free environment and stay close to the microphone.
   3. Mute participants upon entry
   4. Turn on live captioning
   5. Save recording in cloud
   6. [Spotlight](https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362653-Spotlighting-participants-videos) presenters
   7. Don’t allow Raise Hand as a way to indicate a reaction. Use a poll instead.
   8. Encourage Raise Hand to structure large group discussions\*
   9. Ask participants to identify themselves before speaking\*
   10. Ask participants to use a background that doesn’t move\*
   11. Read chat comments aloud\*
   12. Make the recording with captions and chat transcript available to all learners after the session