How to join your online class in WebEx

UNC Charlotte provides the online conferencing program WebEx for faculty, staff, and students. This platform creates an online environment for synchronous (meaning, “live”) meetings.

This document provides directions for
1. preparing for,
2. logging in, and
3. participating in a WebEx session.

Please read this document and take action BEFORE our first online meeting.

1. Preparing for an online class meeting

Run a Test Meeting

In advance of your first live online class, it is essential that you run a “Test meeting” in WebEx to ensure your computer is working properly. This will help you verify, and learn how to adjust your microphone strength and speaker volume. Run this test on the computer you will use for the course since you need to verify the settings for that computer.

Before running the test, make sure your computer’s operating system and the browser you choose to use will allow you to run WebEx via the following page: Supported Operating Systems and Browsers

Click the following link to run a Test Meeting: Test Meeting in WebEx

Choose a good location

Find a quiet place where you can participate in your online course. This means a space where there will be no audio distractions like people talking, a television, music, etc. Make sure the light in the room is in front of you so that you will appear clear if your instructor wants you to use video. Also be aware of the background behind where you are sitting since it could be captured in your video screen.

It is quite possible that you will be speaking via your computer’s microphone, and external microphone, or headset. The latter is recommended to minimize background noise and to ensure your voice is heard clearly in the online environment. Since you might be speaking, carefully choose where you will participate so that you will not disturb any others who might be around you.
This is another reason why it is a good idea to avoid public spaces to participate in the online course if at all possible.

**Let others know you will be “attending class”**

If you have a roommate, are living at home, or have a family of your own, it is a good idea to explain to them how you will be attending class. Consider posting a sign to let others know that you are “attending class” and indicate when you will be finished.

**Use a headset and microphone if possible**

As indicated above, you will have a better experience if you use a headset and microphone to participate. The headset will bring the sound closer to your ears and the attached microphone will enhance the quality and strength of your voice for others in the class. You do not have to buy a headset, but if you choose to do so, you don’t have to spend a lot of money. Some good models are available for under $30. If you already have a set of earbuds with an attached microphone, that will work just fine.

**Do I need a webcam?**

Your instructor will let you know if you need a webcam. Minimally, you should have a functioning microphone.

**Accessing technical support for WebEx**

As indicated above, your instructor is not expected to provide WebEx support for you. If you have any questions or experience any technical issues, please see:

- **WebEx Support**, by calling 866-229-3239 or using the WebEx FAQs
- **UNC Charlotte HelpDesk** - Call 704-687-5500

**2. Logging in to your online class meeting**

**Where is the WebEx link I need?**

You will see a link for WebEx in the navigation menu of your course’s Canvas site. Clicking the link will show any upcoming WebEx sessions that have been scheduled for your class. **Note**: Do NOT go to the webex.uncc.edu site, since this will not give you access to your course’s WebEx room.
You should plan to login to your class at least 10 minutes prior to the start time to ensure your computer is functioning properly. If you do not do so, and you experience any technical difficulties, then you will not have adequate time to address them before your class begins. Your instructor cannot provide technical support for you as the class is beginning. When you are ready, click on the appropriate link on this page to launch WebEx.

See this illustrated guide:  [How Do I Join a WebEx Session from Canvas](#)

**Running WebEx for the first time**

Please note that the first time you login to a WebEx space, you will be required to download and launch the small WebEx application. For example, in Chrome you will be prompted with the following:

![Add WebEx to Chrome](#)

Once installed on your computer, you will not have to do so again.
3. Participating in a WebEx Session

Your instructor will review with you how you will interact and participate in your online class. Prior to doing so, take a look at the following image which illustrates what you will see. Please note that there are some cosmetic differences in the appearance of the interface depending on whether you are participating on a Macintosh computer versus a PC. The image below is a screenshot of the interface on a Macintosh. The image following is the interface as it appears on a PC.

WebEx Training Room: Macintosh Interface

As noted, the location and appearance of some tools look different. If your instructor is using a different device than you, i.e., you’re on a PC and the instructor uses a Macintosh, you will easily adjust to these differences.
WebEx Training Room:  PC Interface

How will interaction and communication happen in WebEx?

Live, synchronous meetings/classes like the one you will have in WebEx require the use of a variety of built-in tools and strategies for creating a learning experience. Your instructor will use some or all of these to foster interaction:

**Desktop Sharing** - The largest space within the interface is where you will see slides, documents, or anything on your instructor’s computer he/she wishes to share. For class presentations, the instructor can give you the rights to share your desktop so that you may share a set of slides or a document while you speak.

**Chat** - This window located at the bottom right is where you can type questions, answers, ideas, etc.

**Icons** - Above the chat window, you will be asked to respond to prompts by clicking a particular icon like the green check mark to signify agreement with a question or prompt.

**Microphone** - Somewhere in the interface (this varies from PC to Mac) you will see the icon of a microphone. *Unless you are currently speaking, make sure your microphone is muted.* You can tell you are muted when the icon is red.
**Webcam Video** - Depending on how many participants are in the room and/or the focus of the lesson, you may have your webcam on the entire time or only when asked to do so. Look for the icon for a webcam to turn your webcam on and off. You will also notice an icon that appears as an overlay on top of your instructor's video. By clicking this icon, you can enlarge the video, which will minimize the rest of the interface. From that point, you can then make the instructor's video full screen by clicking another icon. To return back to the original WebEx interface, move your cursor to the top of the screen to locate a “Return” option.

**Breakout Rooms** - Your instructor may choose to use this feature of WebEx which makes it possible to recreate pairs activities or group work you might normally use in face-to-face classes. In these spaces, only members of your group or pair would be able to interact in your breakout room. Breakout rooms include a chat feature, the ability to talk with one another using your microphones, and to interact via a whiteboard. Your instructor can enter and leave your breakout room at any time.