

MRU Statement on the Use of Web Cameras in Online Classes

The use of Web cameras is one tool to increase (virtual) face-to-face interaction during online classes or exams. Many instructors have found this to be an effective method to promote engagement and dialogue for synchronous course activities.

Although Web cameras can enhance the online learning experience, their use cannot be made mandatory by MRU instructors.

There are many reasons why the mandatory use of Web cameras is problematic, including:

- lack of access to adequate internet bandwidth or wifi stability
- students not having a web camera
- privacy concerns related to having visual access to a student's location or environment (space shaming, illegal activity, the monitoring of personal computers, etc.)
- privacy issues related to the potential recording, and sharing, of classes
- anxiety and stress created in some students around feeling that everyone is looking at them
- difficulties in interpreting face-only nonverbal communication
- students may have to be multitasking (e.g., childcare) during classes
- may be counter to some education accommodation requirements
- not specified as a requirement in the course syllabus

This communication is not intended to discourage the use of web cameras, but to clarify that their use shall not be made mandatory. The ADC resources available at [Preparing for Online Delivery](#) include best practices for synchronous course delivery and guidelines for alternative approaches.