

## Hosting Virtual Student Organization Meetings

During these challenging times, it is critical to find and form connections, albeit remotely. Here are some suggestions to help keep you and your student organization engaged virtually. If you have any other suggestions, please email us at [studentlife@csulb.edu](mailto:studentlife@csulb.edu) and we will add them to the list : )

Are you a leader of a student organization on campus? Consider the following tips for running virtual meetings with your student organization.

### Making the shift to a virtual organization

- Opt for video calling whenever possible. Video calling (instead of a text or phone call) might feel weird at first, but it increases connection and community. During COVID-19, it is more important than ever to stay in touch and communicate effectively. Video calling, when wifi is strong, is the best way to do this.
- Create new roles and rotate responsibilities. Consider forming new and creative subcommittees that can work on projects in more small groups. These might include activities/games to play during meetings (to keep members engaged and connecting with each other), virtual event planning or resources to share via social media.
- Ask others what they think. Especially in virtual environments, it can be hard to speak up. It's important to ask things like "what do people think of this?" or "does anyone have anything to add?" Be ok with some silence on the other end. It may be helpful to ask each person what they think if you aren't getting any feedback.
- Meet one-to-one with others. If you are in a leadership role, consider scheduling 1:1 check-ins with other Executive Board leaders and members. This is a great way to maintain connection and be able to accommodate the different needs of your group.
- Centralize organization documents. Consider Google drive, Slack, or another project management for being able to share information with your organization in a timely, adjustable fashion.
- Continue to meet. Your group and their responsibilities/purpose might look different, but they are still important. Even if your group doesn't have a lot of business or "things to do," we recommend staying connected with members to discuss future plans, activities you can do in the meantime or just for fun.
- Set up communication channels outside of meetings. Consider using Google chat (Hangouts), GroupMe, Facebook messenger as a centralized channel for the organization to communicate. This can help keep everyone up-to-date and help avoid the confusing text message chain. It's a good idea to set expectations for these as well.

### Before the Meeting

- Practice using your technology ahead of time! Work with a friend to test out your meeting platform. Make sure you know how to share your screen, mute/unmute, etc. easily.

- Make an agenda and share ahead of time. Though you can share the document during the meeting, having access to an agenda ahead of time gives members time to think of questions or ideas to bring to the meeting. It will also help leadership feel more prepared.
- Set standard weekly meeting times and stick to them.

#### During the Meeting

- Start each meeting with an icebreaker where everyone gets to share. If there are a lot of participants, consider using the chat features for people to respond and share.
- Set clear agendas, outcomes, and action items. We recommend using google docs as a way of creating living agendas where people can see updates in real-time and items as the meeting goes along.
- Assign a position to take notes during the meeting, if you don't have someone already.
- If possible, you may want to record meetings. ALWAYS let members know ahead of time if you plan to record a meeting and ask for their permission.

#### After the Meeting

- At the end of every meeting, be sure to articulate clear action items and next steps. Send out a copy of the minutes/notes from the meeting or send a link to a shared drive.

Information adapted from Western Oregon University: <https://wou.edu/student-engagement/connecting-virtually/> and CSU Humboldt: <https://clubs.humboldt.edu/content/virtual-engagement>