

Using Zoom with Your TA(s)

In this guide, we identify common ways instructors ask their TA(s) to assist in teaching synchronously over Zoom. We then recommend the relevant features of Zoom to use in each case.

A note on terms: The “host” of a Zoom meeting has full control over all meeting functions and permissions. They can also delegate some authority by making different participants “co-hosts.” Co-hosts have *some* of the same controls in managing meetings that hosts do.

For more on the differences between host and co-host roles in a zoom meeting, [see here](#).

Routine cases:

You are present to teach the class and the TA is there to assist you.

If you want your TA to...	We recommend...
<p>Manage participation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and respond to questions in chat • call on students with “raised hands” 	<p>There’s no need to do anything special here. Your TA can manage participation in these ways while in the meeting as a normal participant, without any additional Zoom privileges.</p> <p>It’s a good idea to establish a protocol with your TA for how they will let you know when a student has a question, comment, or issue (i.e. through private zoom chat, other “back channel” chat, text, or simply interrupting you verbally).</p> <p><i>Note: If you want the TA to be able to communicate privately with individual students, make sure you have enabled private chat.</i></p>
<p>Maintain meeting security:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mute disruptive participants • remove participants or lock meeting to prevent new entries • admit participants from waiting room or move them into it 	<p>Make your TA a co-host.</p> <p>Scroll over the TA’s name in the “Participants” list and click “More,” then select “Make co-host.” You can make multiple TAs co-hosts.</p>
<p>Manage polls:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • launch polls • share poll results with the class 	<p>Make your TA a co-host.</p> <p><i>Note: TAs cannot create or edit the poll questions for a meeting—only the individual who created/scheduled the meeting can do so.</i></p>
<p>Present content via shared screen</p>	<p>Make your TA a co-host (see above).</p>

If you want your TA to...	We recommend...
<p>Record meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • start and stop recording • access recordings and share with students 	<p>Make your TA a co-host to give them permission to record a meeting. TAs who record meetings locally will be able to upload files to Panopto (see here for a guide on that process).</p> <p>If you choose to record to the Cloud, the recording will be stored on your (the host's) account, so a TA will be unable to access it unless you have given them your Zoom password.</p>
<p>Facilitate Breakout Rooms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create and assign students to breakout rooms • move students into and out of breakout rooms • visit breakout rooms to check in with students 	<p>Your ability to share these responsibilities is fairly limited, since only the host of a meeting can create, edit, and manage the rosters of breakout rooms.</p> <p>One option is to make your TA the host of the meeting whenever you want them to create the breakout rooms. Scroll over their name in the "Participants" list and click "More," then select "Make host." Then, have the TA make you a co-host so you can continue sharing your screen and conducting your lesson while they work on the breakout rooms. Whenever they're done, you can click "reclaim host" in the "Participants" menu.</p> <p>Another option is to keep your hosting privileges and at the start of class, go ahead and create breakout rooms and assign students to them. Then, leave them alone and wait to "Open" them until the time when you want to use them.</p> <p>To allow your TA to check in with students in different breakout rooms: make them a co-host. You can then place them into one of the breakout rooms, and from there they have the ability to move to other breakout rooms.</p>
<p>Facilitate their own discussion sections, office hours, or other Q &A sessions</p>	<p>Have your TA schedule and host their own meetings for these purposes.</p> <p>All TAs (undergraduate or graduate students) can set up licensed Zoom accounts through the university by visiting https://jhubluejays.zoom.us/ and selecting "Sign in."</p>

Emergency:

The TA unexpectedly needs to lead the class because you are not present.

If this happens...	We recommend...
<p>You temporarily lose internet connection or need to leave abruptly for some other reason.</p>	<p>As a precaution, make at least one TA a co-host of the meeting at the start of class, as soon as they enter the meeting.</p>
<p>You want the TA to start and run the class because you are unable to do so.</p>	<p>Give the TA your host key. This six-digit number will enable them to take control of a meeting you scheduled. They can click “Claim host” in the participants list and enter the number to gain full host controls.</p> <p>You can find your host key—and edit it—at the bottom of your Zoom “Profile” page online. If you would rather your TA doesn’t have the key on an ongoing basis, you can change it after they’ve used it.</p> <p><i>Note: This solution only works if you selected the setting “Enable join before host” when scheduling the meeting, to allow participants (including your TA) to enter before you’re there.</i></p>

A Final Note:

Many of the recommendations given here involve making a TA a co-host or host during class. Zoom does include a feature to [pre-assign an “alternative host”](#) when scheduling a meeting. However, we do not recommend relying on that feature. Many JHU instructors have been unable to assign their TAs as alternative hosts due to TAs operating on different types of Zoom accounts than instructors. If you’d like to use this feature, we strongly recommend testing it well in advance.

Indeed, the best way to see if *any* of these features work well for you is to test them in a simulated class meeting with your TAs. CER staff are also available to act as “student” participants for such purposes.