We want to give a big shout out to all the 2020 graduates! We are all so proud of you & look forward to hearing about all of your future plans & accomplishments! “The world is your oyster” You have survived a pandemic, a big accomplishment & now you have graduated, another major milestone!

Remember all of us are here for you, even after graduation!

Much love to you all!!!!

Mike, Barb, Jasmine. Melissa & Geri
Zoom Protocol

So with this new era of video conferencing and online meetings, many have found that there are a new set of guidelines to follow - things that we might not have needed to discuss in person, but are worth going over now that so many are working from the comfort of their own homes - or discomfort, depending on your setup.

Let’s face it: working from home is difficult. So here are some suggestions, compiled from Zoom's own website as well as other sources, which will help you stay productive, connected, and not-embarrassed as much as possible while we struggle through this new era of office work.

Use the video option when possible.

It lets people see you and confirm you’re not some super-sophisticated AI voice. This is particularly important if you’re the one hosting the meeting or a speaker, and slightly less so if you’re an attendee,

Dress for the job you have, not the job you want, or; Don’t wear your pajamas.

Times are tough for those working from home, and wearing sweatpants all day, every day is one of the few silver linings. But if you’re in a position where you can put on something more professional-looking, it’s probably a good idea. You might also find it makes you feel a little more normal.

Stage your video area.

Keep in mind that people aren’t just seeing you, they’re also seeing whatever the camera is pointed at behind you. Maybe arrange it so that your camera isn’t facing towards a pile of unfolded laundry?

More light is better.

Video quality is dramatically improved with more lighting. And don’t you want everyone to see your beautiful face, now that you’ve gone to all of the trouble to put on actual clothes and stuff? An extra nearby lamp is usually helpful. Just make sure the light is in front of you, not behind you - being backlit makes you harder to see.

Try to look into the camera.

If you’re presenting or speaking to a group, looking into the camera will give the appearance of eye contact with whoever you’re talking to. It’s also definitely better than being forced to stare at your own face and realizing how badly you need a haircut.

Do your own tech support before you start.

Make sure you do a test run at some point, and that you’re aware of your audio and video settings before you start. Most video conference services allow you to see a test of what your camera is recording before you start broadcasting it to everyone else, so have it arranged the way you want it. Zoom, for instance, has a feature that lets you test your settings before your meetings begin: just go to zoom.us/test.

You can also usually decide if you come in with audio hot or muted before you accidentally broadcast whatever is on the TV in the next room. And speaking of sound ...

Stay on mute if you’re not talking.

Background noise can be really distracting. If you aren’t sharing anything at the moment, go ahead and hit mute until you do. That way, no one has to listen to the car alarm that goes off in your neighborhood or your neighbor’s perpetually barking dog.

Don’t eat during the meeting.

It can be a little gross to watch other people eat sometimes. Or listen to them chewing, for that matter. (Ew, sorry, I just grossed myself out thinking about it.) Hold off if you can, or if not, maybe turn off the video and audio.

Don’t do other private things while on a meeting.

Speaking of gross: have you heard any horror stories about people being caught picking their nose or using the bathroom while on a video conference, thinking they were muted or had their video off? Don’t become a statistic. It can be easy to forget that people can hear or see you! So don’t risk it.
May Birthdays

We want to wish all our students with Birthdays in May a very Happy Birthday!

Shaevon Boyd
Hannah Allen
Benjamin Roark
Morgan Marek
Brandon Hickman
Drevon Barney
John Hicks
Madison Harper
Emily Dunn
Robert Harrah
Jakayla Mathews
Natalie Williams
Emily Curry
Hannah Austin
Kaitlyn Meadows
Brooklyn Ellison

SO PROUD OF ALL OUR GRADUATES!
22 Facts About The FAFSA

1) The FAFSA is THE form required at all colleges that accept and award federal aid. (Yes, there are a few that do not participate in the federal financial aid system, but these schools are rare.)

2) It’s the form that provides your college financial aid officers with the information they need to go ahead and create your financial aid package.

3) FAFSA stands for FREE Application for Federal Student Aid.

4) Hence, it’s FREE.

5) It’s available online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. NOT dot com, NOT dot org, NOT dot anything else.

6) You can still get a paper version, if you really, really want to. But you don’t.

7) It utilizes a July-to-June calendar. In other words, we are in the middle of the 2011-2012 year and “New Year’s Day” is July 1, when we move to the 2012-2013 year.

8) The 2012-2013 form is available for processing on January 1, 2012.

9) The FAFSA helps determine the awarding of over $150 billion in federal aid, as well as state aid.

10) The majority of colleges also use the FAFSA to determine who qualifies for their own institutional need-based aid.

11) If you have your 1040 income tax return available, the form can be fairly straightforward.

12) Do not pay someone $1500 to fill the form out for you to “maximize your aid potential”. Generally, the only one receiving more aid in that situation is the preparer.

13) The FAFSA is based on your current household and your current assets. What you’ve got in the bank and investment accounts on the day you complete the FAFSA.

14) But the FAFSA wants to know about last year’s (2011) income for your household.

15) If your parents are divorced or separated, it’s based on the parent you spent the most time with in the previous year.

16) And your step-parent, if there is one in that household.

17) Don’t send notes to the federal processor. They’ll just shred ‘em. Your concerns and questions should be directed to the financial aid office of the school you attend or are planning to attend.

18) Your parents saying that they won’t pay for College does NOT grant you independent status. To be considered independent, you have to be 24 years old, married, a military veteran or some other factors you can learn about here.

19) Here’s a link to a useful webinar about the FAFSA. (Useful, but 60 minutes in length)

20) Here’s a link to my favorite FAFSA video. (Enjoyable, only 5 minutes in length)

21) Here’s a link to my Facebook page – feel free to post any $$/FA questions you have.

22) If you have FAFSA questions, you can the federal government’s hotline at (800) 433-3243