

## ADOBE CONNECT – PRIVACY ENHANCING BEST PRACTICES

This document complements the Policy on Online and Distance Learning and Online Teaching: Privacy Matters which were created for use by professors in the Faculty of Law at the University of Ottawa. It focuses on privacy enhancing best practices for professors opting to use Adobe Connect for distance teaching. We suggest that you depart from these practices only if your pedagogical objectives require it.

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### Privacy Focused Adobe Connect Settings Checklists

These are privacy enhancing best practices prepared for professors in the Faculty of Law at the University of Ottawa. We suggest you depart only when your pedagogical objectives require.

#### Default Settings for Every Class

When logging into your account through the Adobe Connect App, you can manage your default settings for **every** class. By doing so, you will not need to go through and readjust your settings for each class. Once these settings are enabled, you can alter these while you are in class.

#### Recommended Default Settings

Enable audio and video on entry: OFF Enable audio for all participants: ON Enable video for all participants: ON Enable public chat: ON Enable private chat: OFF Record: ON/OFF (only the host has the recording feature and it must be manually selected at the beginning of each session) Screenshot: Restricted to “Host” and “Presenter” only
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#### Individual Settings for Each Class

From a privacy perspective, we recommend enabling the Default Settings for Every Class, however depending on your pedagogical needs the default settings may not be appropriate. In these circumstances, the checklist below sets out the settings that can be enabled pre/in/post class. Once these settings are enabled, you can alter these while you are in class.

### Pre-Class

- Setting up your course:
  - o Ensure Adobe Connect is linked to your uOttawa credentials
  - o In *Sessions*, assign the course with the appropriate course name: ex. Torts 101
  - o Click Host. It should take you to the Adobe Connect interface. There, you can add and create your pods (the display windows with different functions such as PowerPoint, Video, Chat, Poll, etc.)
- Set up default choices for participant audio and video:
  - o We recommend enabling microphone and video access for all participants, but off on entry, so that individual participants can choose whether and when to turn these on
- Create and send Adobe Connect meeting invitations through uOttawa credentials such as Brightspace or uOttawa email
- Prepare your meeting space:
  - o Remove clutter and ensure you have enough lighting
  - o Close browser tabs or documents that are not in use
  - o Pre-upload materials (ie. PowerPoints) so they are available for viewing before the session begins
- Check your technical requirements:
  - o Stable internet connection
  - o Headphones or earbuds (refrain from using the computer speakers as it may create an echo!)
  - o Microphone (most of the time, it is connected to your headphones)
- If there are guest presenters in your session, you can enable their “Presenter” status ahead of time.
- Learn more here: <https://helpx.adobe.com/ca/adobe-connect/using/starting-attending-meetings.html>

### In-Class

- If you are having guest lecturers, add them as “presenters” beforehand. They are granted with these abilities: permission to screenshare and create breakout sessions.
- Student settings:
  - o Login
    - Participants can login through their Adobe Connect account on the desktop or mobile app. Adobe Connect does not have a dial-in option using only a phone line. Instead, participants can login in through an

internet connection, and “dial-out” by entering their phone number. They will then receive a call which allows them to listen into the session.

- Audio
  - Enabled for everyone (meaning, participants can choose to turn on their microphones by holding the mic icon until it turns green)
  - Ask everyone to mute/turn off their microphones unless they are speaking
- Video
  - Enabled for everyone (meaning, participants can choose to turn on their video by holding the camera icon until it turns green)
- Breakout rooms:
  - Allow you to separate the class into smaller groups for discussion or group work
  - Once in the breakout room, participants are automatically promoted to presenter, allowing access to pods like the whiteboard and notes
  - Breakout room sessions are NOT included in the recording
- Recording:
  - In the Policy on Online and Distance Teaching, the Law Faculty strongly discourages recording of synchronous classes. The exception to this is where a recording has to be made as part of a SASS-approved accommodation for an individual student or students. Students receiving such accommodation will be asked to sign an undertaking that limits them from, among other things, distributing the recording to others.
  - However, if you decide to record a class or classes, you may do so as the “host” of the Adobe Connect session by selecting “record”. Recording can be paused and resumed at any time during the session. However, before recording:
    - Advise students that the class is being recorded
    - Advise students that they may turn off their cameras in order to protect their privacy
    - Turn off the “gallery view”, so that the students’ names are not being recorded
    - Allow students to request that the recording be paused if they are uncomfortable sharing something that is being recorded
  - Students should be reminded that they are not permitted to record classes unless they have a SASS accommodation and have signed an undertaking that limits their use of the recording, including prohibiting them from distributing it to others.
  - Please bear in mind that even if you are not recording the class, there are a number of third-party tools that can be used by participants to record the class in other ways. There are no ways to know or prevent this. However, if you are concerned that students are recording sessions without authorization, you should refer the matter to the Vice Dean Governance.

#### Post-Class

- If you have chosen to record, you should download your recording directly from Adobe Connect as a compatible file on your desktop (ie. MP4 or MOV are the most widely

used). Learn more here: <https://helpx.adobe.com/ca/adobe-connect/using/recording-playing-back-meetings.html>

- Prior to publishing any recording, you should use the options available in Adobe Connect to hide the following information:
  - Names of attendees
  - Chat pods (public chat will be recorded by default, but private chat and breakout sessions will not)
  - Attendee pod
  - Q&A pod
- The Faculty has recommended the following with respect to recordings:
  - Post audio-recordings rather than video-recordings. (Since recording on Adobe Connect includes *both* audio and video, it will be necessary to consult a Tech Fellow for information on how to convert the recording to audio *only* before making it accessible to students).
  - Post recordings in a secure password protected site where access is restricted to students enrolled in the class. (The Tech Fellows can advise as to appropriate platforms to post videos. Note that Brightspace cannot accommodate large video files).
  - Limit the length of time that the recording is available (e.g. 24 hours after class).
- Remind students that they are not to share access to the recordings with anyone outside of the course.
- Once uploaded successfully, you should delete the recording off your local hard drive (your laptop or desktop) and set a date for later permanent deletion of the recording from the platform on which students have been given access to it.

### **FAQ about Adobe Connect**

#### **Q: What is Adobe Connect?**

**A:** Adobe Connect is a web conferencing application that cannot be used unless it is supported by the University of Ottawa. Adobe Connect Meeting allows users to create, manage, and conduct online meetings, webinars, and virtual classrooms with polling, screen sharing, chat, live PowerPoint viewing and annotation, webcams, on-demand video, moderated Q&A, and more. Adobe Connect is intended for live online class meetings. Its default settings are often already pre-set to be a lecture-focused space.

#### **Q: Does the lack of negative media coverage of Adobe Connect's privacy flaws mean it is the safest option?**

**A:** Unlike Adobe Connect, some other videoconferencing platforms have received negative media coverage relating to privacy and security. The lack of negative coverage relating to Adobe Connect probably relates to its small user base. Note that Adobe is no longer issuing security updates for Connect. This means there may be vulnerabilities in Connect that could be exploited to undermine user privacy.

#### **Q: Where can I find Adobe Connect's privacy policy?**

**A:** Currently, Adobe Connect’s privacy policy falls under the general Adobe Suite privacy policy. In it, they do not state a commitment to keep data within Canada.

Some of the content in this document was drawn from other universities’ best practices guidelines, including:

York University:	<a href="https://uit.yorku.ca/faculty-staff-services/teaching-research-computing/collaboration-tools/adobe-connect/">https://uit.yorku.ca/faculty-staff-services/teaching-research-computing/collaboration-tools/adobe-connect/</a>
University of Calgary:	<a href="https://www.ucalgary.ca/contedinstructors/d2l-adobe-connect/adobe-connect-account-request-and-configuration">https://www.ucalgary.ca/contedinstructors/d2l-adobe-connect/adobe-connect-account-request-and-configuration</a>
University of Pennsylvania:	<a href="https://computing.sas.upenn.edu/AdobeConnect/students">https://computing.sas.upenn.edu/AdobeConnect/students</a>
University of South Carolina:	<a href="https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/cte/teaching_resources/technology/adobe_connect_professional/index.php">https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/cte/teaching_resources/technology/adobe_connect_professional/index.php</a>
Florida International University:	<a href="http://ecampus.fiu.edu/documents/AdobeConnect/How%20to%20use%20the%20Chat%20Pod%20in%20Adobe%20Connect.pdf">http://ecampus.fiu.edu/documents/AdobeConnect/How%20to%20use%20the%20Chat%20Pod%20in%20Adobe%20Connect.pdf</a>

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