

Virtual Class Troubleshooting Tips

Technology is great...when it works.

Sometimes, technology fails. It happens in the physical classroom: power/internet outages, projector bulbs going out, smartboards improperly calibrated. It may happen in the virtual classroom, where we are even more dependent on technology. With that said, here are some tips to help you make it through your class against all odds: global pandemic, derecho-related outages, hardware/software crashes—these are strange times! No matter what, **stay calm** and model how you want your students to react when faced with technology issues.

HELP—I'm in but with a downgraded experience!!!

If your students can hear you, tell them what's going on and to give you five (or put them to work). If students *cannot* hear you, add this message in the chat. Then try the following:

- Check your internet connection.
- Limit what you share (or what others in your home are streaming): turn off your webcam, stop sharing content, etc.
- Ask students to turn off webcams and microphones.
- Leave the room and try to re-enter.
- Leave the room, close the browser, and try to re-enter (could also try switching between Firefox and Chrome).
- Leave the room, close the browser, restart your computer, and try to re-enter.
- Leave the room, close the browser, restart your computer, restart your router, and try to re-enter.
- Contact an [instructional designer](#) and send your CRN. They may be able to jump into your room quickly and troubleshoot.
- Contact [DMACC Tech Support](#).
- After class, if it appeared to be an internet connection issue, run a [speed test](#).
 - Gauge: Those with an average upload speed of 15 Mbps and a download speed of 60+Mbps have rarely experienced issues.
 - If the problem persists, you may need to upgrade your internet service.

I've tried everything, but I'm completely locked out!

This is your worst-case scenario and worst nightmare. Let's just avoid it altogether, right? Well, just in case, let's still have a plan. You need to take care of this one in advance.

- Remember, stay calm. Life happens. Give yourself grace to handle it with grace.
- Make a backup plan and share it with your students within the first week. Explain how and when you will communicate with them if you are not able to enter the virtual course room at all. Here's an example:

- “If you have been in the course room for 10 minutes and I have not entered, something is wrong. Please check your email or the announcements in the course immediately. I will communicate next steps in both locations.”
- The plan after that: post slides, share a lecture recording/YouTube video as soon as possible and have them watch before next class, and/or use the discussion board to have the class discuss a particular concept, reading, or something from the slides/video. This can then take place asynchronously, but you don’t lose a day. It might be similar to what you would do if campus were closed for multiple class periods. (It happened in Spring 2019!).