Technology: Set up

Components:

- A monitor (television)
- A Polycam camera on top of the television
- A codec which is the technology used to compress a television signal to the size that can be transmitted on a telephone line
- A control panel which contains the keys for operating the system (a manual control)

Get the television and videoconference equipment from Brouster Hall, the IMC Storage Room, Rm. 052.

Plug in two wires:

- The orange Internet wire, into the purple Internet receptacle
- The black 2-prong electrical plug that is connected to the auxiliary electrical switch on the side of the television stand

Move the grey Polycam triangular microphone to the middle of the conference table. (Make sure it is off “mute”.)

On front, lower part of the television, turn on the black power button. Once the television is on . . .

On the front, lower part of the television, click “Source” until you get “S-video.” That will bring up the window “Place a Call.” You should also see a live picture of the classroom.

At the top of the hand control, press the green “Call” button. That should bring up Belleville, and you might get a picture in picture of St. Louis, or vice versa.

Technology: To direct the St. Louis view:

Do you want to change the view of the current large picture or make St. Louis the main picture?

To change the view of the current large picture:

On the hand control, 1. Press the blue “Near”
   2. Use the rust-colored arrows to scroll left/right, up/down
3. Us the blue “Zoom” to telescope and wide angle

To make St. Louis the main picture:
On the hand control
1. Press the blue “Near” button and then blue “Camera”
2. Use the rust-colored arrows to scroll left/right, up/down
3. Us the blue “Zoom” to telescope and wide angle

Technology: To direct the Belleville view:

Do you want to change the view of the current large picture or make Belleville the main picture?

To change the view of the current large picture:
On the hand control
1. Press the blue “Far”
2. Use the rust-colored arrows to scroll left/right, up/down
3. Us the blue “Zoom” to telescope and wide angle

To make Belleville the main picture:
On the hand control
1. Press the blue “Far” and then the blue “Camera” button
2. Use the rust-colored arrows to scroll left/right, up/down
3. Us the blue “Zoom” to telescope and wide angle

Technology: Volume: in the middle of the hand control, use the dark orange “Volume” control.

Technology: When finished, make sure you press the red “Hang up” button before turning off the television’s power.

Please return the equipment to Brouster Hall, Rm. 022.

Technology: Troubleshooting

Picture freezes
On manual control, press “Hang up” and then “Call.”

If Belleville’s volume is too loud
Have Belleville turn down the volume on their manual control

If a lot of reverberation
Have Belleville turn down their volume; otherwise, they need to relocate their triangular microphone

If you cannot get through to Belleville
It’s usually because either the Belleville Internet has been disconnected or the system has not been turned on yet. Call Deb Blanquart!!
Class Management

Have the cell phone numbers of the Belleville students and Deb Blanquart, and they should have yours.

Requires more work than traditional on-ground classes because you
1. are managing two classroom sites, and
2. you must have all the information available for the off-site class at the beginning of class

Managing two classrooms:
- Giving equal attention
  - Use of technology:
    - Use the picture-in-picture feature
    - Have the students move into a small group so that the entire class can be seen
    - Use close-up features when an individual is speaking for any length of time
    - Make sure that the instructor and students in St. Louis are always in the picture
    - Set up the camera so that when you’re looking at the St. Louis students, it looks like you’re also looking at Belleville students
    - In the first class, span both classrooms with the camera to show the other site what the classrooms look like.
    - Be in the classroom at least a half hour before class to ensure that everything is working properly.
    - The size of the class will determine the physical set up of the class
  
- Use of pedagogy and teaching skills:
  - Allow time for introductions and use close-ups during the entire introduction
  - Learn everybody’s name, but especially Belleville’s, and call on them by name.
  - Collect and distribute information about the students prior to the first class
  - Make sure that Belleville students participate often; call on them, even if they are not willing, and be patient to allow them to answer
    - When asking questions, call on a specific site or student. Rotate the order of no one speaking or everyone speaking at once when a question is asked.
    - Ask specific sites to respond to comments made by another site in order to enhance the discussion.
    - A larger participation grade is needed when using videoconference because for the class/teaching mode to work, students MUST participate in every class
  - Create group activities that give Belleville separate but vital roles in the activities (unless it is one big group discussion)
  - Engage in informal conversation before class on a routine basis with both sites. It helps to break the technology barrier.
  - Email the Belleville students individually on a regular basis to check in on them.
    - Regular feedback from them is important.
  - Encourage the use of “email pals” to solve questions and problems in class.
  - Give the Belleville student an option to meet one-on-one with the instructor by way of video
• Make sure the Belleville students are notified of the preparation requirements well in advance of the next class.
• Establish protocols in your first class and be sure that all participants are aware of these “ground rules.”
• Good planning is essential, more so than with traditional on-ground classes

All the class information must be available for the off-site class at the beginning of class:
• Have all slide presentations, movies, assignments, and other required work on Blackboard CE. It allows the Belleville to use the computers in front of them for class instead of personal emails, etc. St. Louis students like having that access for printing off slides, etc., as well.
  o The appearance on Blackboard must be appealing to the Belleville students.
• All handouts must be either online (Blackboard CE), including tests with selective criteria, or given to Deb Blanquart in enough time for her to hand out the material on the night of class.
• Always have a Plan B offline lesson in the event there are technical problems or last minute schedule changes due to local weather conditions

Challenges

✓ Some Belleville students tend to think that because a teacher is not present, it’s okay to wander in on their schedule
  o Start class on time; otherwise, the other site might disrupt the class.

✓ Students in Belleville tend to get into their own conversations.
  o Be blunt and ask Belleville if they wish to share their discussion with the rest of class.

✓ St. Louis students tend to exclude Belleville by not looking at them when talking to the other St. Louis students
  o Remind the talker to make eye contact with the Belleville students as well.

✓ Belleville students tend to use the computers for things other than class.
  o Have the students to go through the slides as you change them for St. Louis.
  o When giving in-class assignments, have them do a computer component of the assignments
  o Send them emails or telephone them when you think they’re doing something other than class work. Ask them what the issue is.

✓ Noises made by one site that annoy the other site
  o Have the students keep bags of food off the table and away from the microphone
  o Shuffling of paper should be kept to a minimum
Technology failure
- Try to avoid lengthy time troubleshooting technology. Instead, over the cell phone implement Plan B until you get back online.
- Have a sense of humor
- Do not bad mouth the system; the students immediately use the system as the issue behind their dislike/like of the class
- While working on the system, implement Plan B so that the students are not sitting around

Dressing for the camera
- Avoid reds
- Avoid whites around the face
- Avoid strong/black/white contrasts
- Avoid high-contrast, busy patterns, such as polka dots or pinstripes
- Choose solids and muted colors
- Avoid reflective spangles or shiny necklaces or earrings