Educational Web Conferencing - Best Practices

ETIQUETTE
Classroom discussions are familiar to most of us, but synchronous video meetings are less so. It's important to establish ground rules to make things run smoothly. Here are a few ideas:

Log into Prior to Meeting Time
- Set up your camera, microphone and speakers beforehand to ensure that they're working. Invite students to enter the meeting space early to get set up and test their equipment.

Mute Mics
- Microphones should be muted when you're not speaking to the class. Have students mute their mics, too. This will eliminate feedback.
- Background sounds can be very distracting to all: shuffling papers, music, eating or drinking, pencil tapping, etc.

Request to Speak
- Explain how you want students to request the chance to speak. For example, raise hands or submit a question using chat. Ask students to introduce themselves before speaking.

Use an Agenda
- Make a meeting agenda and stick to it. Share it with the class up front. Be mindful of time.

Questions & Comments
- Direct questions or comments to a particular person by name. Check for comprehension periodically; see if everyone can see and hear one another.

Text Chat Rules
- Set ground rules for use of text chat. Discourage "side conversations" that will distract students from the ongoing conversation. Explain what is and isn't appropriate for them to post. It's not FaceBook chat time.

WAYS to WEB CONFERENCE
Yes, you can lecture. But have some other options on the plate to keep things interesting.

Guest Lecturer
- Invite a guest lecturer to meet with your class for an interview or presentation. Record the session for future use.

Office Hours
- Run office hours remotely by making a virtual room active and have students come and leave as needed.

Paper and Research Reviews
- Use screen sharing to review student documents and give feedback in real time.

Student Facilitation
- Allow students to lead discussion, present findings, sum up, or pose alternative ideas.