

Instructional and Administrative Video Conferencing Guidelines

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Introduction

A video conference is a live connection between people in separate locations for the purpose of communicating, involving audio, video, and often data (text, graphics, PowerPoint presentations, sharing Word or Excel documents, etc.). At its simplest, video conferencing provides transmission of static images and text between two locations. At its most sophisticated, it provides transmission of full-motion video images and high-quality audio between multiple locations.

Video conferencing systems typically consist of cameras, microphones, a codec (coder-decoder, which codes and decodes the video, audio, and data signals), network access equipment, a network, and other specialized equipment. A point-to-point video conference is only between two sites. A multi-point video conference includes more than two sites. UWF’s video conferencing system can accommodate a large number of people in a single conference. Figure 1 graphically illustrates the locations of video conferencing systems on the university’s campuses.

Instructional and Administrative Videoconferencing Network

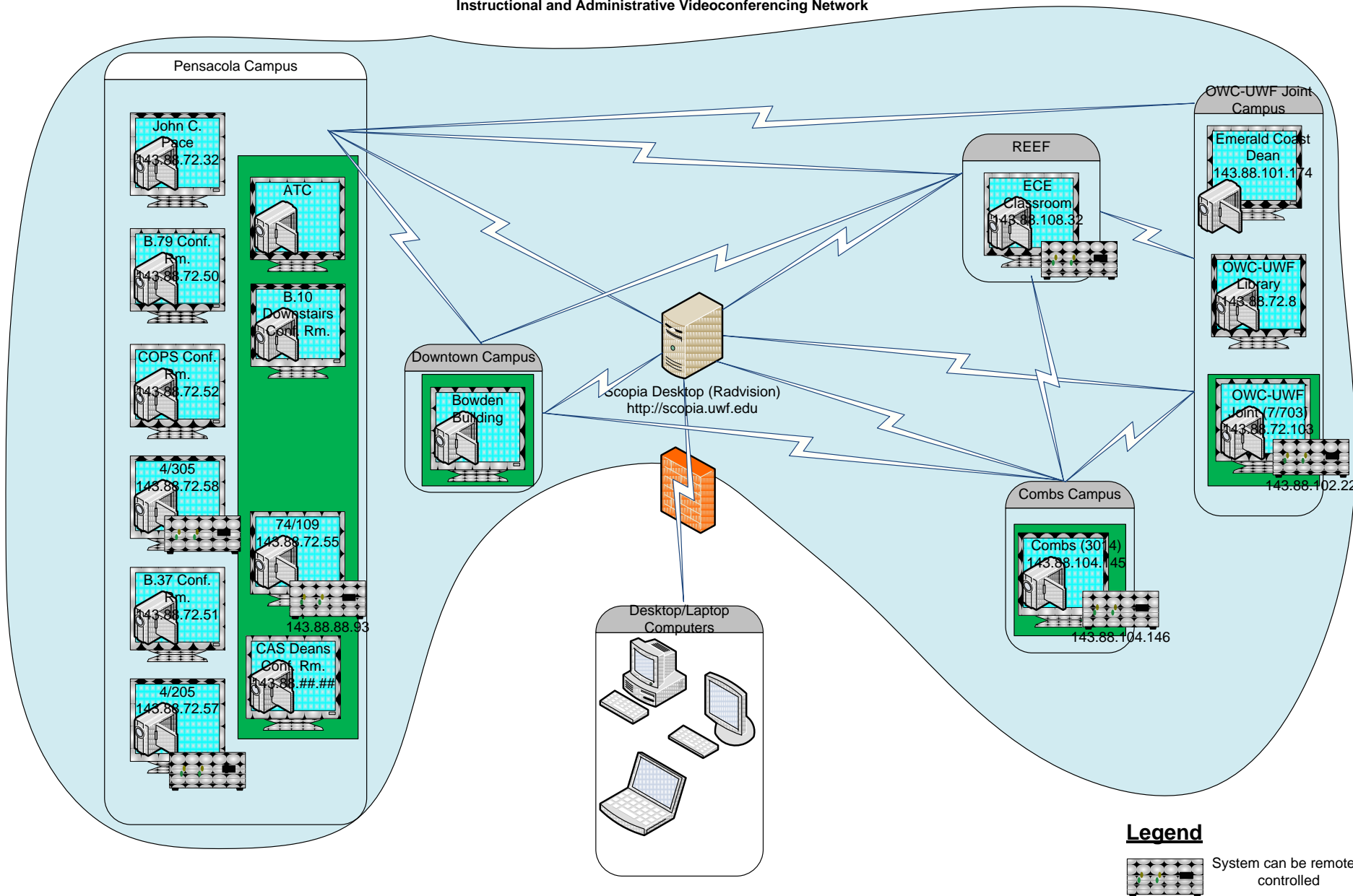


Figure 1. Instructional and administrative video conferencing network. Multi-point conferences relying on the Scopia gateway could experience intermittent problems if the Scopia Desktop device is offline for maintenance.

Uses of a Video Conference System

Video conference rooms are used for (1) teaching and (2) administrative meetings. Rooms are typically specialized for one of these purposes. Therefore, features and functions of the teaching rooms may not be available in the administrative video conferencing rooms.

It is important to distinguish conferences between two remote sites and conferences where a number of sites are involved. The latter, multi-way or multi-point conferencing, requires some method for each site to receive the communications from all the others. A Multi-point Control Unit (MCU) is used to accomplish this. Each site connects to the MCU and the MCU receives and sends the video and audio from and to each of the connected sites. The university has access to a device such as this, which can be used to connect several video conference systems together for a meeting. Multi-point control is described later.

Teaching

The instructor facilitates the course from one video conference classroom and simultaneously broadcasts the lecture and course materials to students in other videoconference classrooms. Each instructional video conference classroom is equipped for full motion, interactive, two-way audio and video. Students can see and interact with the instructor and classmates at other locations at all times. Although the instructor will be based at one location, he or she may visit and teach from other locations throughout the semester, if they so choose. Instructional video conference classrooms are located on the Pensacola, OWC-UWF, REEF, and Combs campuses.

Pensacola Campus

- 4/205
- 4/305
- 74/109

OWC-UWF Campus

- 7/703

Combs Campus

- 3/3014

REEF Campus

- 1/118

Types of materials that can be used. Like most resources, video conference systems are not without their limitations. In UWF's facilities, basic materials and techniques can be used. For instance, facilitating discussion and interaction among students is encouraged because the systems were designed for two-way audio and video. Also, static images and text in Word, Excel, or PowerPoint documents can easily be used in these classrooms. Because the instructional video conference classrooms are equipped with SMART symposiums, drawing figures, formulas, and text can also be made a part of the curriculum.

Document cameras are installed in these classrooms; therefore, images and text from books and magazines can be projected as well as 3-dimensional objects.

Full-motion video (such as Quicktime movies, DVDs, and Windows Media) can be used; however, due to limitations in the device that transmits this type of data, i.e., codec, the streaming quality may be greatly reduced to the point where using this type of media is counterproductive. Table 1 lists the type of equipment and a sampling of media that can be used in the instructional video conferencing classrooms.

Scheduling an instructional video conference classroom for teaching. Instructors who wish to teach in an instructional video conference classroom need training for technical operation of the equipment as well as tips for using good pedagogical techniques in this type of learning environment. Requests for teaching in an instructional video conference classroom should be made to the Registrar through the college's representative. Prior to the start of the semester, the Registrar will meet with the college representatives to schedule the classrooms. Instructors must receive training before classes start for equipment operation. Student facilitators are no longer provided; however, departments may choose to identify a TA, GA, or other person who could function in this capacity. They would be eligible to receive the same training that is provided to instructors. The Academic Technology Center is available to assist instructors with pedagogy.

Administrative Meetings

Several facilities are available for administrative meetings. Administrative meetings conducted via video conference can greatly reduce travel time associated with attending meetings, especially when meeting attendees are geographically separated from each other. These facilities are located on the Pensacola and OWC-UWF campuses and at the Bowden Building for WFHPI.

Pensacola Campus

- John C. Pace Library, 1st Floor Conference Room
- College of Professional Studies, Deans Office Conference Room
- College of Arts and Sciences, Deans Office Conference Room
- Building 10, Downstairs Conference Room
- Building 4, Room 408

OWC-UWF Campus

- Building 8, Library Conference Room

Procedures are in effect for scheduling and using the video conferencing rooms in the John C. Pace and OWC-UWF libraries. Please consult the knowledgebase on the IT Help tab in Argus for more information; use "video conference" for your search terms. To schedule any of the other administrative video conference rooms, contact the person or department who schedules these rooms for more information.

Table 1.

Type of Equipment Available in Instructional and Administrative Video Conferencing Rooms

Room	Presentation PC	Student Workstations	Laptop Connections	SMART Symposium	VCR	Document Camera	USB Inputs on Presentation PC	CDs & DVDs ¹
Pensacola 74/109	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓ Digital	✓	✓
Pensacola 4/205	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓ Digital	✓	✓
Pensacola 4/305	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓ Digital	✓	✓
Pensacola John C. Pace Library	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
Pensacola 79/141	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Pensacola 37/104	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Pensacola CAS Dean's Office	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
Pensacola COPS Dean's Office	✓	✗	✓	✓ ²	✗	✗	✓	✓
Pensacola 77/138A (ATC)	✗	✗	✓	✓ ³	✗	✗	✗	✗
Pensacola 10/Downstairs	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
Pensacola 4/408	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
West Florida Historic Preservation	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
REEF ECE Classroom	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓ Digital	✓	✓
Combs 3014	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓ Digital	✓	✓
Emerald Coast 7/703	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓ Digital	✓	✓
Emerald Coast Dean's Office	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Emerald Coast Joint Library	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓

¹ Use of CDs and DVDs is discouraged due to inconsistency of the quality of transmission and reception between sites; CDs and DVDs should only be played from the Presentation PC or Laptop

² SMART Overlay

³ SMART Overlay

What You Need to know Before Scheduling

Users of the videoconferencing rooms must be familiar with the equipment and know how to conduct a video conference meeting. Neither the Academic Technology Center nor Information Technology Services have staff to devote to facilitate meetings.

Desktop Videoconferencing (DVC)

In general terms, desktop video conferencing (DVC) is communication with other people using audio and video equipment attached to a desktop or laptop PC. A better term might be personal video conferencing. The term is used to distinguish DVC from systems which use more sophisticated equipment (cameras, microphones, and speakers), which can be used for larger numbers of people at each site and a range of different audio and video qualities and facilities. Examples of more sophisticated equipment are the Instructional Video Conference Classrooms and Administrative Video Conference Systems in the University Libraries.

Equipment

Desktop Video Conferencing requires a camera, speakers, and microphone. It is preferable to use a headset that includes a microphone. This prevents echoes from occurring at the other end caused by sound from the remote site entering the microphone and being transmitted back to the remote participants. Instead of a headset, which can only be used by one person, it is also possible to use an echo-cancelling microphone/speaker combination. DVC is intended for one person to be seen and heard at a time from a single computer. Multiple computers can be connected, but only one person per computer.

Equipment Tested

The following equipment has been used by ITS engineers and is known to function adequately. Specific models and prices have not been given since new models at new prices are continually being introduced.

Cameras. Logitech webcams are recommended for use in DVC. These cameras are connected via USB ports and require driver software to be installed.

Headsets. Plantronics headsets are recommended for use in DVC. The headsets connect to the computers audio input and output. Driver software does not need to be installed.

Scopia Desktop by Radvision

The university owns a combination desktop video conferencing/multi-point control unit known as Scopia Desktop. The unit is capable of being used for teaching and administrative meetings. Scopia Desktop allows a person to connect to other people and systems in multiple ways as illustrated in Figure 2. Scopia desktop users can also connect to each other, independent of connecting to a video conference system.

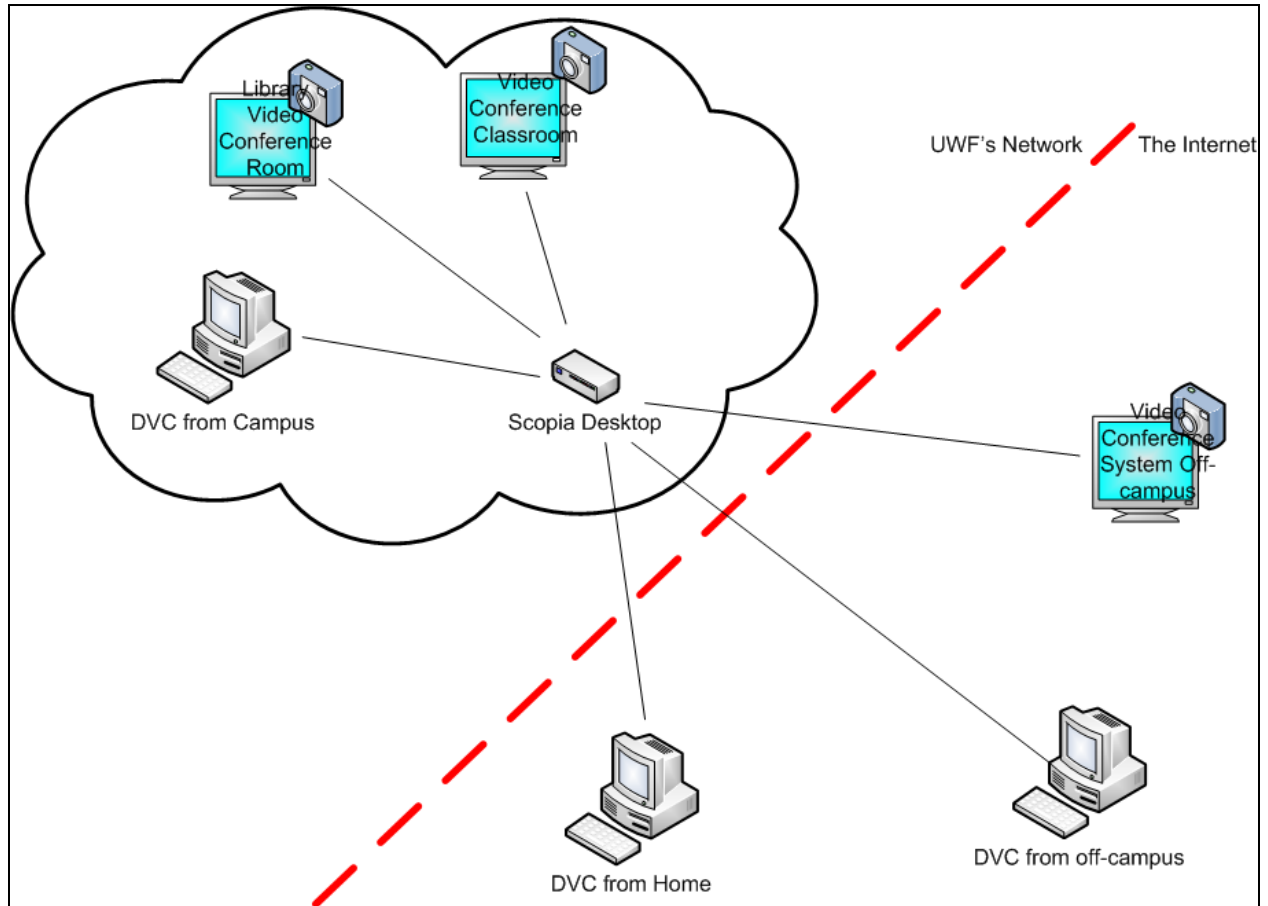


Figure 2. Uses of Scopia Desktop by Radvision.

Scheduling Scopia Desktop

Instructors and staff may schedule seats to be used in their courses and conferences. A limited number of seats are available. Scopia Desktop seats may be scheduled similar to how physical conference room facilities are scheduled in Microsoft Outlook. When scheduling Scopia seats in Outlook, use “video conf” for search terms.

Similar to using the physical video conferencing facilities, instructors and staff must attend training before they can use Scopia Desktop in a video conference. Training can be arranged by contacting the ITS Help Desk at 474-2075 or email at helpdesk@uwf.edu.

Video Conference System Orientation, Training, Operational Assistance, Facilitation, and Technical Support

Responsibilities

Each academic and administrative unit will identify one or more support persons who will be able to train end-users, provide reactive support, assist end users with the operation of the system, and facilitate classes, conferences, and meetings. Information Technology Services provides a train-the-trainer program for most systems and technical support for equipment malfunctions. ITS does not provide operational assistance in Instructional Video Conferencing Classrooms or Administrative Video

Conferencing facilities, such as turning on and off equipment, connecting to remote sites, adjusting volume controls, etc. **Providing operational assistance is the responsibility of the administrative or academic unit using the system.** Room locations, primary use, and scheduling information is found in Table 2.

For technical problems with equipment in an *Instructional Video Conferencing Classroom*, instructors can receive on-site support from 8:00 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. on Friday during regular academic semesters on the Pensacola Campus by contacting the ITS Help Desk at 474-2075. Other campuses' hours of support differ; please check with the Local Support Provider for more information.

For administrative meetings in the John C. Pace and OWC-UWF libraries, technical support is available from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on normal business days. Contact the ITS Help Desk at 474-2075 for assistance. In other administrative video conference facilities, contact the Local Support Provider.

Table 2.

Video Conferencing Room Locations, Primary Use, Remote Control, and Scheduling

Room	Campus/Location	Primary Use	Remote Control of System	Scheduled By
4/205	Pensacola	Academic	✓	ECE
4/305	Pensacola	Academic	✓	Registrar
74/109	Pensacola	Academic	✓	Registrar
John C. Pace Library	Pensacola	Administrative	✗ ⁴	University Libraries
37/104	Pensacola	Administrative	✗	ITS
CAS Dean's Office	Pensacola	Administrative	✗ ⁵	CAS Dean
COPS Dean's Office	Pensacola	Administrative	✗ ⁶	COPS Dean
77/138A	Pensacola	Administrative	✗ ⁷	ATC
4/408	Pensacola	Administrative	✗	SSE
10/Downstairs Conference	Pensacola	Administrative	✓	Building 10 Admin
West Florida Historic Preservation	Bowden Building	Administrative	✗	WFHPI
ECE Classroom	REEF	Academic	✗ ⁸	ECE
3014	Combs	Academic	✓	Registrar
7/703	OWC-UWF Joint Campus	Academic	✓	Registrar
Emerald Coast Dean's Office	OWC-UWF Joint Campus	Administrative	✗	Emerald Coast Admin
Library	OWC-UWF Joint Campus	Administrative	✗ ⁹	University Libraries

⁴ Camera control only⁵ Camera control only⁶ Camera control only⁷ Camera control only⁸ Switching camera sources and inputs only⁹ Camera control only

eControl

eControl permits remote control of equipment at the distant site, such as the LCD projector, plasma displays, volume, and projection screen (Table 3). Video conference systems that are capable of being controlled remotely require users to have additional training for this type of operation.

Table 3.

Partial Listing of IP Addresses for Dialing Systems, IP Address for Remotely Controlling Systems (Where Applicable), and Username and Password Required for Logging in to Control Equipment at Distant Sites

Room	Campus/Location	Codec IP Address (Dial this number to connect)	eControl IP Address (Use to remotely control the distant site)	eControl Username / Password
4/205	Pensacola	143.88.72.57	10.20.0.20	Given at training
4/305	Pensacola	143.88.72.58	10.20.0.29	Given at training
74/109	Pensacola	143.88.72.55	143.88.88.93	Given at training
John C. Pace Library	Pensacola	143.88.72.32	✘	✘
79/141	Pensacola	143.88.72.50	✘	✘
37/104	Pensacola	143.88.72.51	✘	✘
CAS Dean's Office	Pensacola	143.88.80.137	✘	✘
COPS Dean's Office	Pensacola	143.88.72.52	✘	✘
77/138A	Pensacola	143.88.72.75	✘	✘
10/Downstairs Conference	Pensacola	143.88.72.54	✘	✘
4/408	Pensacola	143.88.72.27	✘	✘
West Florida Historic Preservation	Bowden Building	98.173.22.85	✘	✘
ECE Classroom	REEF	143.88.108.32	143.88.108.125	Given at training
3014	Combs	70.184.45.251	70.184.45.253	Given at training
7/703	OWC-UWF Joint Campus	143.88.72.103	143.88.102.22	Given at training
Emerald Coast Dean's Office	OWC-UWF Joint Campus	143.88.100.174	✘	✘
Library	OWC-UWF Joint Campus	143.88.72.8	✘	✘
COPS Mock Courtroom	Pensacola	143.88.88.110	✘	✘