Record a Webcam Video in Canvas When Teaching Remotely

This guide will help you complete a video in Canvas using the webcam on your computer. When teaching remotely, video can be a way to add your presence to your course and keep students engaged.

Plan Your Video

While you may not be used to scripting your in-class lectures, you'll find that it helps to plan out a video in more detail. Writing a script or an outline for your video is a good way to keep yourself focused while recording. It can help to read the script aloud to yourself a few times--phrases that seem perfectly fine when written may sound awkward when spoken.

Set Up Your Recording Space

Unless you already have experience recording videos of yourself, you may have to move your camera, body, or the items in your environment around to compose the most aesthetically pleasing image and capture the highest quality audio.

• Prop up your computer so the webcam is at eye level or slightly above. A stack of books can work as a makeshift tripod.

• Rearrange any items that might be in the background to remove distracting shapes, colors, or words so viewers can focus on you and not the things behind you.

• Control the lighting by adjusting any lamps or windows in your space, try to turn off any lights that are directly above your head since overhead lighting can cast unflattering shadows on your face.

• Position yourself so that you are the brightest object in view of the camera; don't have any bright windows or light bulbs behind you since webcams will automatically dim to compensate for bright spots and can make your face too dark.

• Turn off anything that can make a distracting noise in the background.

• Project your voice, just like you would in a classroom, so the microphone can hear you.

If you need more help getting your video to look and sound the way you want it to, you can check out the tutorials on LinkedIn Learning. Northwestern instructors, teaching assistants, students, and staff can use LinkedIn Learning to complete training tutorials including technical guides to learn how to use specific technology as well as presentation skills guides to improve your on-camera performance.

Some resources to help with the visual performance of your videos are Executive Presence on Video Conference Calls, Web Video: Develop Your Video Presence, and Web Video: Lighting.

Canvas Video

Canvas Video is the fastest way to record a video in Canvas. While it may not be the best quality, it is quick and takes very little time to set up. Videos are a way to add your presence to an online class, and Canvas Video is the quickest way to send a video message to your students through Canvas.

This guide will describe how to use Canvas Video in a web browser to record a webcam video. By the end of this guide you will have recorded a webcam video using Canvas Video.

Login to Canvas
Visit the Northwestern Canvas site. Sign in with your NetID and password.

Navigate to a Rich Content Editor
Locate your course site, then navigate to any Rich Content Editor, which can be found by clicking the "Edit" button on a content page or by creating a new Announcement. Locate the Canvas Video button in the menu and click it to launch the Canvas Video applet. To view how this button looks in the current version of Canvas, visit the How do I record a video using the Rich Content Editor as an instructor? guide on the Canvas Community site.

Configure the Recording Options
Select your video camera and microphone as your input devices and adjust your settings as needed.

Record Your Video
Press the Record button. Follow along with your script, then click Finish when you've completed your recording.

Upload Your Video
If satisfied with the recording, upload your video. Delete and start again if needed.

Panopto

Panopto is a video recording, editing, hosting, and streaming platform that is available to everyone at Northwestern. Panopto is useful for creating a wide range of videos, but it can take some time to set up and learn to use.

This guide will describe how to use the Panopto Recorder software for Windows or macOS to record a webcam video. By the end of this guide you will have installed, logged in, and recorded a webcam video using the Panopto Recorder software.

Enable Panopto in Your Canvas Course
By default, Panopto is not enabled in Canvas. To enable Panopto:

1. Go to the Settings on your course navigation menu.
2. Click on the Navigation tab.
3. Find Panopto on the list of disabled menu items and drag it to the list of enabled menu items (you can also use the three-dots menu to enable items).
4. Save your changes. Panopto will now appear on your course navigation menu.

Connect Your Canvas Account with Panopto

If you have never used Panopto before, or never used it in Canvas, you'll need to authorize a connection between Canvas and Panopto. There are many ways to do this, but the easiest way is to use the Panopto link on the course navigation menu.

1. Find the Panopto link on the course navigation menu and click it to open the main Panopto folder for this course.
2. When the page loads, you will be asked to authorize Panopto to access your Canvas account. Click the checkbox to allow Canvas to retain the authorization so you don't have to reauthorize each time you use Panopto.

Install Panopto Recorder

1. Go to the Northwestern Panopto login page.
2. Choose "NU LTI Panopto and Canvas" or "NU ADFS" from the sign-in menu.
3. Log in with your Northwestern NetID and password.
4. Select the "Download Panopto"; link and click the "Download Panopto"; button that appears.
5. Once the download is complete, open the downloaded installation file and follow the instructions that appear. (Watch the installation instructional video for Windows or MacOS on the Panopto support site if you need help or contact the Northwestern IT Support Center.)

Sign In to the Panopto Recorder

Since you're downloading the Panopto Recorder software application from Northwestern's own Panopto site, it should automatically connect to the Northwestern Panopto hosting server. If it does not automatically connect, follow the steps below to log in through the Panopto Recorder software application.

1. Open the installed Panopto Recorder app.
2. Click "Sign In"; and enter northwestern.hosted.panopto.com in the server field.
3. Change the "Sign In With"; dropdown menu to "NU LTI Panopto and Canvas" or "NU ADFS" and enter your NetID and password, then click "Go."; If you need help, Record a Video and Recording with Panopto for Mac provide detailed explanations of how to set up your Panopto Recorder app.
4. Record your video.

Launch the Panopto Recorder

Locate and launch the Panopto Recorder. Complete the sign-in process.

Configure the Recording Options

Select your recording folder. Select your input devices. Adjust your recording preferences, frame rate, quality levels, etc.

Record Your Video

Press the Record button. Follow along with your script, then hit Stop when you're finished.

Edit Your Video (Optional)

You may need to edit your video before submitting an assignment to your instructor. Panopto editing instructions can be found on the Panopto Documentation - Edit page.

Share Your Video

After you have recorded and uploaded your video, you may need to manage your videos on the Panopto web interface to change the permissions settings to allow anyone with the link to view the video.

Change Viewing Permissions

If you started your Panopto recording from within your Canvas course, it may already be in a location that your students can access. Panopto video to your own Panopto folder (called My Folder in Panopto) and click the "Share" button on your video to change the video permissions to allow "Anyone at your organization with the link" to view, then click Save Changes. Once you have done this you can submit your video to a Canvas assignment or discussion post. The Panopto Support site has a guide that details the steps for How to Share a Video.

Uploading Your Video Directly to Panopto

If you did not want to install the Panopto Recorder or used alternative recording software or tools, you can still upload your video directly to Panopto. Steps are described below, but you can also refer to the Panopto Support site guide on How to Upload a Video Files Using the Create Button.

If uploading your video to this course's Panopto folder, use the Panopto link on the course navigation menu.

1. Click the "Create"; button and choose "Upload Media"; from the dropdown menu.
2. Upload the video file that you recorded on your computer or another recording device.
3. Go to the assignment where you want to post your video and use the Panopto button to embed your video in your submission or discussion reply.

If uploading to your "My Folder" or another destination of your choosing in Panopto, sign in to the Northwestern Panopto site and repeat the previous steps. Then, follow the Change Viewing Permissions steps described earlier in this guide.

Learn More About Recording Videos

The Digital Learning Resource Hub has many resources for recording videos.

The Resources section of the SPS Distance Learning website has guides about using supported video recording tools such as Panopto, and the Canvas Video tool. Guides for common recording software included on macOS and Windows devices are available on the Mac Quicktime app and Windows Camera app support pages.