

## Faculty Town Hall Meeting

July 1, 2020

### Questions & Answers

***Q. How are in-person and virtual courses assigned to instructors and when are they notified?***

A. Curriculum Directors (CD) or Curriculum Managers (CM) schedule course sessions for the upcoming calendar years\*; additional sessions are scheduled as needed within their respective areas of responsibility. CDs and CMs then make an initial round of assignment offers for the scheduled classes, based upon experience with the course, instructor evaluations, past and recent availability, proximity to training site (in-person only), and equity in distribution of courses. Subsequent rounds of assignment offers are made as needed until all scheduled sessions have an assigned instructor. You should log into your Higher Reach account to verify your course assignments.

***Q. What guarantee do I have for teaching an in-person or virtual course?***

A. GSUSA does not guarantee you will teach a course. Course assignments are based on the needs of the school. While open enrollment (OE) instructor assignments are generally made a year in advance\*, on-site contract (OS) courses are varied and unpredictable.

When a client requests an onsite course, we solicit instructors approved in advance to teach that course. However, depending upon the client's specific requirements, we may sometimes limit our solicitation to local instructors, instructors with certain experience or backgrounds, or those residing in close proximity to the location of the course (in-person only) in order to minimize costs. Even though an instructor might be asked to provide available dates for an OS course, the course is not confirmed until the client has provided a funding document to our GSUSA Business Development staff. We try to obtain approval as quickly as possible, but due to government constraints, fast approval is not guaranteed. Once the contract is signed, instructors are notified that the course is confirmed.

*\*Due to COVID-19, virtual course assignments are made using the same criteria listed above with added consideration given to an instructor's experience using virtual platforms such as Zoom, Adobe Connect, or MS Teams and experienced using various computer applications.*

***Q. What is Guaranteed-to-Go (G2G) for Virtual Instructor Lead Training (VILT)?***

A. Classes Identified as Guaranteed-to-Go (G2G) are those that are guaranteed to run as scheduled.

- Enrollment numbers determine if a class will run or be rescheduled. Class sessions with three or more enrollments are guaranteed-to-go (G2G) in Higher Reach. Class sessions with less than three enrollments are rescheduled. G2G decisions are made:

- On Wednesday at 3:00 PM, G2G decisions are made for classes that begin the following week on a Monday or Tuesday.
- On Thursday at 3:00 PM, G2G decisions are made for classes that begin the following week on a Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday.
- To determine if your class is a GO, please log into your Higher Reach account.

***Q. How do I determine if a class is scheduled to GO as a VILT or an in-person class?***

**A.** All in-person, face-to-face open enrollment classes have been suspended through December 2020. We are not scheduling or running any open enrollment in person, face-to-face classes through December and until further notice.

Should a contract customer request a face-to-face session, GSUSA will consider their request on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the curriculum director and instructor; reviewing agency return-to-work readiness guidelines and geographical location of training.

***Q. Will instructors have a choice of which VILT platform (Zoom, Adobe Connect, MS Teams or D2L) to teach their assigned classes?***

**A.** VILT for open enrollment (OE) classes are hosted on the Zoom platform. VILT for On-Site (OS), contract classes platforms are decided by the client (military and civilian agencies), currently, Zoom, Adobe Connect and MS Teams. Self-paced courses are delivered via D2L. VILT platform assignments are based on instructor's experience with each platform.

***Q. What is the timeframe for receiving course confirmation notices?***

**A.** Course confirmation notices are emailed to instructors and students on Thursday and Friday for classes that begin the following week. Students receive a second confirmation notice one day before the start of the training class. This timeframe is due to accommodating late registrants.

***Q. What information is included within a course confirmation notice for instructors?***

**A.** Instructor confirmation notices include:

- Course name, section ID, training dates, and hours.
- Name of the virtual platform, instructor session login information with instructions, and a link to test your computer system.
- Student session login information.
- Name and contact information of Host if one is assigned.
- Help desk email for technical support.
- Name and contact information for the OSD lead (Program Assistant or Program Specialist assigned to ensure the successful delivery of your class).
- Attachments: Instructor and student course materials. Other GSUSA documents may also be attached.

***Q. Are instructors provided information sent to students?***

A. Yes, for open-enrollment classes, instructors are copied on the student confirmation email. For most contract classes, we do not send students any information. The agency's point of contact does this.

***Q. What version of Zoom is GUSUA using and will GSUSA use Zoom.gov?***

A. GUSUA is using Zoom 5.0, with enabled waiting rooms and session passwords to control who can log onto the sessions. For more information about the 5.0 update for Zoom, please visit: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/360043555772-Updating-to-Zoom-version->.

GSUSA is not a government agency and cannot use Zoom.gov. However, Zoom 5.0 features are closing aligned to Zoom.gov and GSUSA will continue updating to the latest version of Zoom.

***Q. How can we ensure students participate via video?***

A. We cannot require students to enable their video, but we can encourage that they participate on video. Some government laptops are designed without cameras, so students may not have the hardware to connect via webcam.

***Q. Can GSUSA provide a school virtual background for Zoom user?***

A. Yes, please check Faculty Source for the background and instructions for inserting the virtual background into Zoom.

***Q. What are the bandwidth requirements for students using Adobe Connect and are break-out rooms used?***

A. The bandwidth requirement is 256Kbps (512Kbps recommended) for participants, meeting attendees, and end users of Adobe® Connect applications. A DSL or cable connection is recommended for Adobe Connect presenters, administrators, trainers, and event and meeting hosts.

Yes, breakout rooms are being used. If there are bandwidth or connectivity issues, instructors and technical support staff may improvise and not use them to avoid additional technical issues, such as students dropping from the session or glitches.

***Q. For Zoom classes, can the default configuration be changed so that it does not automatically have "record" on?***

A. Open enrollment (OE) classes are recorded based on Department of Education 504 compliant requirements. The auto record can be paused during lunch and classroom breaks.

***Q. What about the GSUSA security requirements for Zoom?***

**A.** Due to the recent increase in Zoom security issues, specifically “Zoom Bombings,” Graduate School USA has implemented the following security features:

- Professional/Education Version of Zoom - All virtual instructor-led courses are hosted with a paid professional education version of Zoom.
- Zoom Waiting Rooms - These “rooms” place all participants in a virtual lobby. Participants can only be admitted to the session by the Host.
- Zoom Meeting Pin - Each class scheduled will have its own unique assigned pin.
- Zoom Meeting Password - A password will only be provided to those participants registered for that specific class. These measures will enhance the security of each GSUSA virtual training class, as we strive to preserve the integrity of learning for all students.

***Q. Can we get a Zoom "playground" where some of the instructors can get together and practice Zoom hosting?***

**A.** Instructors can use the free Zoom license for practicing and sharing lessons learned. All Zoom features currently with the GSUSA license are included on the free version. You should schedule multiple sessions due to the free version time limits.

***Q. How do I obtain Zoom training?***

**A.** *If you are interested in Zoom training, please submit a request to [Curriculum@graduateschool.edu](mailto:Curriculum@graduateschool.edu)*

***Q. Is it possible to use a platform other than Adobe Connect for military installations?***

**A.** Our clients (civilian and military) decide the platform. At the present time, via our Business Development Department, the pros and cons of each platform is discussed.

***Q. When will classes content be fully converted to an on-line delivery format?***

**A.** Curriculum Directors and instructors are currently modifying some courses to fit an on-line-delivery format. Due to the volume of courses offered, a plan must be developed for converting all face-to-face classes to an on-line delivery format based on the needs of our students and budgetary requirements.

***Q. Can we require students to complete the course evaluation form before leaving the class?***

A. Yes, you should give students approximately 15 minutes or so before lunch or at the end of the class to complete the evaluation.

***Q. How do instructors receive student's evaluation results?***

A. Student evaluation results comes from SmartEval and it is automatic, if you are not receiving student evaluations after completion of a class, within 5 to 10 business days, please send an email to [regina.gibbons@graduateschool.edu](mailto:regina.gibbons@graduateschool.edu).

***Q. How is the Grad School using the course evaluations data in the COVID and non-COVID environment?***

A. Course evaluation data is used for continuous improvement of GSUSA course content and instructor's professional development.

***Q. If students are using government-owned computers, they may not get the course evaluation survey emails due to security software. How can we ensure students receive the course evaluation link?***

A. Please post the link in the classroom chat or share the link via Power Point the day of the survey.

***Q. When should students expect to receive their course certificate of completion and what are the procedures?***

A. Certificates are available in the student's Higher Reach portal 5 to 10 days after the class. Students should log into the portal with the information contained in their initial email they registered with.

***Q. When will Higher Reach be updated about virtual classes through September? Also, will the canceled classes be removed any time soon?***

A. All the virtual courses through September have been entered unless Curriculum directors decide to add additional courses. The rescheduled/cancelled courses will continue to show under CURRENT SECTIONS until they are put into a rescheduled/cancelled status. Virtual classes will also be entered through December 2020.

***Q. Are the classes assigned in the website definite or are the classes assigned without regard to those assignments?***

A. The assignments in Higher Reach are made by each Curriculum Director. They are definite unless changes are made. Courses are currently updated to September 2020 and will be updated through December 2020.

***Q. Regarding Higher Reach, there are several classes listed in my schedule from previous years, 2019, 2018, and 2017. Can this be cleaned up?***

A. From 2014-2017 there are over 430 sections that are in an open or underway status. A clean-up process is currently in place, however, due to resource constraints, this is a low priority project.

***Q. Often instructors receive conflicting information about teaching the same classes, how can this conflict be resolved?***

A. Instructors can obtain a copy of their course listing via Higher Reach. If there is a discrepancy, please contact your Curriculum Director.

If you are scheduled for a face-to-face class in August – December, you should assume those classes will not run. All face to face classes in August - September are being cancelled or rescheduled. The curriculum director will assign an instructor for virtual classes.

***Q. How do we contact the Help Desk for technical issues?***

A. Please note that the helpdesk is not responsible for personal computers. They will assist as much as they can.

- GSUSA Internal Helpdesk Email: [helpdesk@graduateschool.edu](mailto:helpdesk@graduateschool.edu)
- GSUSA VILT Helpdesk Phone: 202-314-3606
- Higher Reach Helpdesk: [HiRSystemAdmin@graduateschool.edu](mailto:HiRSystemAdmin@graduateschool.edu)
- Online Helpdesk: [online@graduateschool.edu](mailto:online@graduateschool.edu)

***Q. What is the status of faculty GSUSA email addresses?***

A. If you are scheduled to conduct a GSUSA class via MS Teams, your GSUSA email account will be activated before your scheduled class. All other GSUSA emails addresses will be activated within a phased approach with activation testing, August – December 2020. Effective January 4, 2021, GSUSA all correspondence to faculty will be sent to their GSUSA email accounts.

***Q: How do I access Faculty Source?***

A. You can access Faculty Source via GSUSA home page (no password required):

- Visit [www.Graduateschool.edu](http://www.Graduateschool.edu)
  - Click Faculty & Staff (Upper right-hand corner)
  - Click Faculty Source
    - Bookmark: [www.graduateschool.edu/content/faculty-source](http://www.graduateschool.edu/content/faculty-source)

***Q. What are the technical requirements for the new fillable Participant Guides?***

- A. All GSUSA Participant Guides are PDF documents and are comment-enabled. Participants can navigate within the content of the course guide and annotate the guide using sticky notes and highlighting text. *The participant must have Acrobat Reader, a free software, to use the comment-enabled features.* GSUSA will share this information with students in the course confirmation notice.

Some participant course guides have full .pdf form functionality, i.e., fill-in blanks, boxes, add comments, highlight text, and navigate within the content. If your course guide is .pdf fillable, you will see this note in the upper left-hand corner of the document. Please Note: Even if the file is not form fillable, students can still add notes and exercise answers using the add a note function and save the file.

***Q. Will ALL curriculum videos be accessible from one site, Edu blogs or Faculty Source?***

- A. Not all curriculum videos will be found in the same place. Some videos are available only on DVD. Some HR curriculum videos are available on our learning management system; some have been made available on YouTube. Not all videos are available in any one format, which affects where we can post them. Instructors who need access, because they teach a course to which a specific video applies, have been provided information on how to access them. More information will be provided soon regarding YouTube postings. If HR curriculum instructors have a question, they can contact Jeanne Barela-Miller.

***Q. What is the policy for concerning use of recording (camera)?***

- A. The issue has been raised about use of recording virtual classes. GSUSA routinely records virtual classes using both video and audio capability. Recordings are not made public or offered for sale or other commercial use. The following language is shared with student course registration:

*Graduate School USA (GSUSA) routinely records open enrollment virtual classes using both video and audio capability. Recordings are not made public or offered for sale or other commercial use. By participating in a GSUSA virtual class, course, or other session, the student acknowledges that GSUSA has authority to record the classes and agrees to such video/audio recordings, which is covered by the Department of Education 504 compliance.*

*On-site (Contract) classes are not automatically recorded due to agencies requirements. However, if an agency request recording GSUSA will record the class.*