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Letter from the CTO to faculty about technical support for remote learning

Janet Scannell
Carleton College Staff

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Dear colleagues,

We all know that there are going to be a lot of unknowns this term, and some of them are about the technology environment. I want to share a few final thoughts, including ways that ITS will be available to support you in the next few days.

First, if you are planning to have any synchronous sessions with your class, I want to point out a few steps that will minimize lag or stuttering of your videoconferencing:

- Reboot your computer if you haven't in a while (which will reclaim computer memory)
- Reduce the number of applications you have running and the number of extra tabs you have open in browsers (especially in Chrome)
- Move your computer closer to your router / access point (to reduce how many walls are between you and the source of your WiFi signal. Even better is using a wired connection.)

Second, if you're planning to use Zoom, we strongly recommend that you [install the latest Zoom client](#) which addresses some recent security and privacy concerns - and also makes it more likely that you and your students will see the same features. By the way, Kendall George and I are closely tracking the information coming out about Zoom's practices. So far, we are encouraged that [Zoom has taken the concerns seriously and has been addressing them quickly](#).

Finally, if you or your students have any technology challenges, here are resources available to you in addition to our usual Helpdesk resources:

- "[chat-based support](#)" which is a new service being staffed by professionals and students.
- "[instant video support](#)" where student technicians are standing by to debug video conferencing challenges
- And various other webpages, like this one summarizing [available software to download or access via a remote lab](#) and this one with tips on [optimizing your home network](#).

These support services will be most useful before or after a videoconferencing session. If you find that you need more in-class tech support, please let me know. We have a group of 20 technologically savvy staff members, from ITS and other departments, who will be helping in various ways this week.

Some faculty have asked about the steps ITS has taken to support students' home computer environments, which is described well in [this Carletonian article](#).

It's an impressive endeavor you're all engaged in - transforming your courses in such a short timeframe. Let me know if you have other questions or ideas for how we can help.

-Janet

Janet Scannell (she, her)
Chief Technology Officer
Carleton College