Google+ Hangouts on Air

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Learning Technologies Institute

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Copyright Division of Information Technology, University of Maryland
Getting Started with Google +

What are Google Hangouts on Air?
Google Hangouts On Air allow you to have live office hours with a small group of students, while letting a large group of students stream the video in real time and ask questions through a forum. The video is also saved and uploaded to Youtube, so students can also watch the Hangout at a later date. You can use Google Hangouts to answer questions that students have, or have a live discussion on class material, or even collect feedback on your class. Previous classes have found Google Hangouts to be a great tool in building student engagement levels. This handout goes through the steps you need to take to set up Google Hangouts.

To set up Google Hangouts, you will need:
- A Gmail account- www.gmail.com
- A Google+ account- www.plus.google.com
- A YouTube account- www.youtube.com

In a nutshell, you need to:
- Pre-select 9 students to join you in the Hangout. (Google Hangouts has a cap of 9 participants other than yourself, and requires that each participant has a Google+ account; therefore it is important that the participants know who they are ahead of time.)
- Log in to Google+ and add students to a circle ahead of time so they can join the Hangout when it starts
- Connect to your YouTube account and enable your uploaded videos to be longer than 15 minutes (15 is the default video length cap)
- Set up your Hangout video to stream on your class site as an announcement, with embedded code provided
- Set up a special forum for the other students who will be streaming the Hangout in real time to ask questions that you can answer in the Hangout. (You can also set this up in advance, to collect questions that you'll address in the Hangout)
- Start your Hangout! Your pre-selected students can join it on a first-come-first-served basis
- Once your Hangout is complete, it will automatically start its upload to Youtube on the account you have connected. You can then take the video and upload it to ELMS, or leave it embedded on a page.
This is what a Google Hangout looks like:

Hangout 7 May 10, 2013

These live Hangouts can be viewed from within ELMS after being embedded on a page, which will look like this.
Getting Started

Name Your Hangout and Invite People

Log into your Google+ account and click on the Home button drop-down menu on the left. Choose Hangouts on Air then click Start a Hangout on Air button on the right side of your screen. It will look like this:

Note: Before you can choose students for the hangout, you will first need to create a circle of preselected students that you would like to include in the Hangout on your Google + account. Inform your students of your Google + account name so that they can add you to their circles and you can receive their Google + account name/ email.

Once you have your circle, you can send out your Google+ Hangout invitation to the students in that circle. Important note: You have to send the hangout invitation at the point where you want to start the hangout; that will be the last thing you do after getting everything ready. Although only nine people can join the Hangout, it might make sense to invite more than 9 in the event that some students cannot make it on the day itself, and let them know that they can join the Hangout on a first-come-first-serve basis. You cannot make reservations for specific people.
It is important to make a Hangout ahead of time so that you can see how it connects to your Youtube channel. When you first make a Hangout, you will be prompted to connect a required YouTube Channel. After you have connected the YouTube channel you will be prompted with this menu:

![Start a Hangout](image)

Check “Enable Hangouts On Air”. After naming your Hangout and clicking on the enable Hangouts On Air box, you’ll get a pop-up informing you that the Hangout session will be streamed on your YouTube channel and on your Google+ stream. Once you click on the blue "Okay, Got It!" button, you'll need to agree to Google's terms of service.

**Agree to Google's Terms**

Make sure you read through the terms of service, especially if you’re using this on behalf of your University. You only need to agree to the terms during your first Hangout.
Anyone you invite into a Hangout will need to agree to the Google+ terms of service. Once you click that you agree and click continue, you’ll start your first Hangout session. You can then wait for others to join your Hangout or start broadcasting live without them. Anyone else you invite to join your Hangout will also receive a note informing them that the Hangout is live.

How to Record Longer Hangout Sessions
In YouTube, you need permission to post videos longer than 15 minutes. Since many Hangouts might last longer than 15 minutes, you should verify your account with YouTube so your recorded video doesn’t get cut. Here’s how to enable longer Hangout recordings. Once logged into YouTube, go to your "Upload" page and click on "Increase Your Limit". You’ll need to verify your account by submitting your mobile phone number.
Google will then text you a code that you need to type in to verify your account.

You will then receive YouTube verification announcing that you can upload video longer than 15 minutes. That’s all you need to do to get a verified account, which you should do if you want to avoid getting your Hangouts cut at the 15 minute mark.

**Remember the YouTube Terms of Service and Copyright**
You are responsible for the video content (and what others do within the Hangout). If someone acts inappropriately or plays copyrighted audio or video in the background, it can count against your personal account. Remember to follow YouTube’s terms of service and their community guidelines during Hangouts On Air.

**Set up a special forum for students streaming the Hangout**
Because you can only have nine students in your Google Hangout, you may direct the other students to a specially created discussion forum in ELMS in which they can post questions that you address during the Hangout.
Embed Your Live Stream
You can copy and paste a live stream player on a Page of your choosing in your ELMS course space. Once you go live, this player will show the live stream on a page of your choosing. (Note: When embedding the live feed there is sometimes a delay.) When you start the Hangout you can copy the embed code before you begin broadcasting and paste it as an Announcement. Below is a picture of where the embed code is located in the Google Hangout.

If you take this code and paste it in the html within a Page you can have it appear for the students. Click on the page you wish to embed the feed. Then click Edit this Page and be sure to choose Switch Views to change from the text editor to the html editor. When setting this up, It should look like this:
**Press Start Broadcast to Video Chat On Air**
To start broadcasting your Hangout, click on the red "Start broadcast" button.

The "Start broadcast" button is located on the top right of your screen. After pressing the red "Start broadcast" button, you'll get one more message informing you that the broadcast will be public.

**Broadcasting Publicly**

This is the last announcement explaining that you are about to broadcast your Hangout publicly. After clicking OK, the red button will give you a 10 second countdown before going live.

**What to Do After Your Hangout**
After you've finished your Hangout, it could take up to an hour before the video appears in your YouTube account. Don’t worry if you don’t see it right away because it will upload and process very soon. When the video is ready, you'll find it appearing in your YouTube Video Manager page where you can then place it into a playlist, start sharing or edit. If there was any dead air time at the beginning or end of the session you can use the edit tools in YouTube to cut down the video. The embedded player on your ELMS Page will now become a video player with the recorded Hangout.

**Further actions**
**Block Inappropriate People and Tell Others**
If you're hosting a Hangout On Air, you can block anyone you think is inappropriate. But just because you've blocked them from appearing in your Hangout doesn’t mean that others in the Hangout can’t still see or hear them. So if you have blocked someone, ask the rest of the group in your Hangout to block them, too.

**Explore Hangouts First**
Take some time to get a feel for what it’s like in a Hangout by starting one with just yourself. Play with apps if you like exploring. Learn the interface. Switch back and forth between video of you and your screen. Get comfortable with it before launching the first real Hangout for your Course.
**Hangout Day Checklist**

- Post a reminder in the morning encouraging students to watch the Hangout.
- Communicate the plan for how you would like your hangout to run. Will there be a lecture followed by Q&A? Should students come with questions ready?
- Invite participants and get them into the Hangout at least 15 minutes ahead of the scheduled time.
- Once you have invited the participants, remember to check the preview post in your stream to ensure the video looks good before you go live.
- If you want to embed the video or share the link, you must do this before you click “Start broadcast”.
- When you’re ready to go on air, click “Start broadcast” to broadcast to the world.
- Instruct the Hangout participants to mute their microphones while they are not speaking to ensure there is no echo or feedback during the session.
- Be sure to monitor your Hangout and ask any participants who are streaming unauthorized third-party content to stop. This includes, but is not limited to, unlicensed music, pictures, and video. It is the Hangout operator’s responsibility to block users misusing third-party content.
- A warning will be given if Google detects that copyrighted content is being broadcast live. Failure to stop broadcasting copyrighted material will result in the live broadcast being shut down and you will lose access to Hangouts On Air.

**System requirements for Hangouts**

It is recommended that the presenter and participants, if possible, use a high quality webcam as well as run the session in a well-lit environment. A headset with microphone is also a great way to cut down on background noise and feedback.

The following are the system **requirements** for Hangouts:

**Supported Browsers:**

Google Chrome 10+ Download
Microsoft Internet Explorer (IE) 8+ Download
Mozilla Firefox 3+ Download
Safari 4+ Download

**Supported Operating systems:**

Mac OS X 10.5+
Windows 7
Windows Vista with SP1 or later
Windows XP
Chrome
Ubuntu and other Debian based Linux distributions
Processor Minimum Requirements:

Any 2 Ghz dual core processor or greater.

Bandwidth
In a Google Hangout you may want to check that the students you invite into your session meet the bandwidth requirements. Past sessions have shown us that low bandwidth can interrupt the Hangout and make for unclear content. If this happens in your Hangout, we find that it is best practice to try and reiterate what the students said to help all of the other viewers understand the interrupted feedback. It is always recommended that students use a wired connection rather than wireless.

Minimum bandwidth required:
- Outbound from the participant: 230kbps
- Inbound to the participant: 380-500kbps

Ideal bandwidth for the best experience:
- Outbound from the participant: 900kbps
- Inbound to the participant: 1.2mbps

With group hangouts of more than 2 people you can expect bandwidth usage in ideal situations to be:
- Outbound from the participant in all situations: 900kbps
- Inbound to the participant with 5 participants: 2mbps
- Inbound to the participant with 10 participants: 3mbps