

Drop-In Advising Recommendations

For departments that wish to conduct a daily open advising session, Zoom Meeting is the recommended tool. Departments can add a URL for a recurring Zoom meeting on their website for staff to join as scheduled, and constituents to join on demand. A working example of this is the "Virtual Front Desk" from the Student Financial Services department at UC San Francisco:

<https://finaid.ucsf.edu/>.

Here is a screenshot of this from their website:

Student Financial Services Notice Regarding COVID-19

As UCSF continues to monitor the developments regarding the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, Student Financial Services will close our physical office beginning Monday March 16, 2020. This is expected to last for approximately 2-4 weeks. We will re-evaluate the situation as it develops.

Our Front Desk staff and our Financial Aid Advisors are able to maintain services remotely using our [Zoom Virtual Front Desk](#) Monday through Friday from 9am to 4pm, with a closure for lunch from 12noon to 2pm.

Please be patient as we learn to adapt to this new method of meeting with you. We understand that there can be an influx due to the limitations of meeting with an advisor in-person or by phone but will do our best to support you during these times.

We hope that we can provide the same quality of service and availability to our students during this time while keeping everyone's health and safety as our top priority. Thank you for your patience and cooperation.

[ZOOM VIRTUAL FRONT DESK](#)

UCSB SA Use Case

By using a main Zoom meeting session and incorporating its Breakout Room functionality, staff can be scheduled throughout the day to triage requests for advising (see Zoom Breakout Room tutorial below). The meeting host and/or co-host(s) can act as a virtual reception desk, and as users join the main meeting, the host/co-host(s) can assign an advisor with an advisee(s) into a specified Breakout Room (a co-host designation tutorial is linked below). Once a Breakout room advising session has completed, attendees just close out the Zoom meeting as normal.

Departmental staff can then recall back into the main meeting session and await being assigned to a new Breakout Room session by the meeting host.

Some attributes of Breakout Rooms:

- Zoom supports up to 50 simultaneous Breakout rooms within the main meeting session, allowing for high capacity advising needs.

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- Breakout room sessions are private from all meeting attendees except host/co-hosts, so if a higher level of privacy is needed, it's recommended that advisors establish a scheduled standalone meeting with advisees at a different time.

[Zoom's Breakout Room Support](#)

[Establishing Co-Hosts Overview](#)

Future Solutions

The viability of other applications as solutions for virtual drop-in advising is still being researched. These solutions may require larger implementations (or individual departmental roll-out, depending on scope and vendor support), so they're not yet immediately accessible to all departments.

- QLess is being researched as a possible solution for creating "waiting rooms" to serve users virtually. This functionality will allow users to provide their phone numbers that will give UCSB staff the ability to perform call backs in the queued order. UCSB L&S Advising is already using this solution with good success.
- Nectir or Tawk.to (or other embedded website chat applications) would fulfill an on-the-fly advising need, as students navigate through a department's website (see <http://food.ucsb.edu/> for a working model of Twak.io -currently chat only-). This has the ability to be an anonymous experience, or can integrate with SSO or Gauchospace, giving the advisor information about the user.

Recommended Tutorials

Zoom Meetings & Webinars:

- To download the Zoom application to your laptop or home based computer go to the zoom.us download page: [Click Here](#))
- [Zoom Tutorials](#) at Zoom.us (Meetings, Webinars, Rooms, and other helpful How To Zoom tutorials.

Google Hangouts Meet:

- [Hangouts Meet Training and Help](#)

For additional technology tool information, recommendations, and tutorials, visit Student Information Systems & Technology (SIS&T) at <https://sist.sa.ucsb.edu/resources>.