

Cameras and You. What You Need to Know.

Will I be required to have my camera on during my class meeting?

When you join an online meeting hosted by your instructor, you will have several options for how to participate, including using your camera, audio, and chat features. In most cases, you will have the option to turn your camera on or off. However, for certain subject matters, and occasionally for online proctoring, full audio and visual participation will be essential to instruction. In this document, we will explain your rights as they pertain to the use of cameras in an online class.

Why might I choose to turn my camera on?

Having cameras-on can benefit and enhance the class learning environment in a number of ways:

1. Instructors are better able to gauge student reactions, request feedback, and check for understanding.
2. Classmates may be able to more easily form friendships and study groups and engage in a livelier classroom experience.

Why might I choose to leave my camera off?

Students may choose to leave their cameras off during class for various reasons, including:

1. Not having a private area in their home to attend online class, so that the privacy of family members or minors would be compromised.
2. Not having access to a camera or reliable internet connection to maintain a video presence during their classes.
3. Otherwise feeling uncomfortable being on camera.

For these reasons, College of the Canyons has provided [guidance](#) on the use of cameras in class meetings. The California Community College State Chancellor's Office has also issued their [legal opinion](#) which strongly disfavors a cameras-on requirement. At College of the Canyons, instructors strive to ensure that your privacy is protected in any online class environment.

Can class meetings be recorded?

You might have heard of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, also known as FERPA. This act protects student records, including recordings of class meetings containing students' names or faces. At College of the Canyons, guidance has also been developed to assist instructors in their use of cameras and recording during live class sessions. This means that:

- Your instructor will ensure that identifiable student information is not included in online class recordings whenever possible.
- If your instructor plans to record an online meeting where you or your classmates will be identifiable (names or faces), they will first request a signed consent form from you. You always have the option to decline to be part of the recording.
- Students may not record or capture images of online class meetings without preapproval from the instructor and classmates.

Where are my legal rights to privacy defined?

The [California Constitution](#), [Americans with Disabilities Act](#), and [FERPA](#) outline students' rights for privacy while pursuing their education. College of the Canyons is committed to protecting student privacy, keeping educational records secure, and ensuring that students with disabilities are provided accommodations and protection against discrimination.