

**Center for Academic Excellence
Writing Center
Online Tutorial Student Start-Up Guide**

The Center for Academic Excellence (CAE) at Metro State offers online writing tutoring appointments through Zoom and written feedback through WOnline. Drop-in tutoring is available on Zoom through Write @ Desk.

Hours

Monday – Saturday: 10 AM – 1 PM and 2 PM – 6 PM (closed from 1 – 2 PM)

Contact

- Email: centerfolk@metrostate.edu
- CAE Front Desk on Zoom:
<https://minnstate.zoom.us/j/95469328289?pwd=Nnl1by8wQ1VNVkJKK2tOTC83bmtUUT09> (available during open hours)
- Phone: (651) 793-1460

Drop-in Tutoring at Write @ Desk

Drop-in tutoring and research help (no appointment needed) is available:

- Monday: 2 – 5 PM
- Tuesday – Thursday: 11 AM – 1 PM, 2 PM – 5 PM
- Friday: 2 – 5 PM

Join tutors and librarians for writing and research support on Zoom:

<https://tinyurl.com/y2qtutvl>

Written Feedback Sessions

This part of our guide will help you book and conduct a tutorial with written feedback.

When to Use Written Feedback:

- **You have some material drafted:** written feedback sessions work most effectively when the student has already drafted at least some content for an assignment and has access to the assignment prompt.
- **You need low-tech:** written feedback sessions don't require any audio or video hardware or software – you just upload your essay and receive feedback in the document via email or on WOnline.
- **You need flexibility:** since students “drop off” their essay for tutors to review, they do not have to be virtually present or logged in. Once you attach your essay and assignment instructions and provide directions, all you have to do is pick up your feedback when it is ready (see “How Written Feedback Works”).

- **You learn best through reading and writing:** if you know you find it easier to understand and respond to written feedback, this may be an ideal format for your learning. Tutors work to provide concise, accurate, and thoughtful comments to help you learn and improve your writing.

Scheduling the Session:

The remainder of this section will describe scheduling an appointment through our online tutoring and scheduling system, WOnline.

1. **Visit our online tutoring and scheduling system, [WOnline](https://my.metrostate.edu/my-apps/schedule-tutoring)** (<https://my.metrostate.edu/my-apps/schedule-tutoring>).
 - **If you have not used our system before,** you will be prompted to register for an account when you click "LOG IN HERE".
2. **Select a schedule** using the drop-down menu on the landing page. The bar will read "00 Landing Page". Clicking the arrow next to this bar will display all other schedules.
3. **Select an open appointment** (indicated by a white block in the schedule) to schedule it. A pop-up window will appear with a form asking for more details.
4. In the appointment form pop-up window, **choose "Yes. Schedule written feedback appointment." from the drop-down menu** in response to the question, "Meet on Zoom or receive written feedback?"
 - Enter the required information about the course and **provide detailed instructions** in the "What would you like to learn about today?" box.
 - **Attach your document and any instructions** relevant to the assignment by selecting one of the "Choose File" buttons, selecting the relevant file, and clicking "Open" to attach. Optionally, you may name the files, too.
 - i. You must attach a document and provide clear instructions in order for a written feedback session to be conducted successfully.
 - ii. Tutors will not read documents in advance; they will read and respond to the document during the tutorial session.
 - Click the **"Create Appointment"** button at the bottom of the window. If the appointment has been scheduled successfully, a pop-up window labeled "Success!" will appear.
5. When your appointment has been completed (about an hour after it was scheduled to begin), you can **collect your feedback document** from an email that will automatically be sent to your Metro address. The subject line will read, "New File Available: Metropolitan State University Center for Academic Excellence". Your feedback document will be attached to this email.

How Written Feedback Works:

While every tutor has a slightly different way of approaching written feedback sessions, the basics of all sessions are the same:

1. The tutor will download your paper and modify it to create a new version with their comments.

2. The tutor **will read your paper**, using the information you provided in the “What would you like to learn about today?” box when you booked the written feedback session to guide how they prioritize different parts of your paper.
3. The tutor will use the “Review” function of Microsoft Office to **create marginal comments** on your document, responding to your concerns. Alternately, they may include feedback in the document in differentiated text. They may also comment on issues or opportunities for improvement they notice in your writing. **The tutor will not directly revise or edit your document.**
4. In the last few minutes of the session, the tutor will craft a brief letter to you that usually includes a **summary of their comments**, suggestions for next steps, and resources that might be helpful as you continue working. This letter will be placed at the beginning of your document on a new page.
5. When the session is complete, the tutor will **upload and attach** the version of your paper with their comments to your appointment. You will receive an email notification with the attached feedback document.
6. You can use the feedback your tutor provides as you work to revise your draft. If you need more feedback or want the tutor to focus on a different part of your assignment, consider submitting the document for another written feedback or Zoom session.

Note: the “drop-off” quality of written feedback sessions means they **do not work well for brainstorming or planning to write**, where the ability to discuss and clarify is critical. For these kinds of needs early in the writing process, consider a synchronous “Online” tutorial (explained in the next section.)

Zoom Sessions

The Center for Academic Excellence (CAE) at Metro State offers real-time, online tutorials through Zoom. If you are new to these kinds of tutorials, this guide will help you get started.

When to Use a Zoom Session:

- **You need to get started:** since you work with tutors in real time, Zoom sessions are appropriate for any stage of the writing process – whether you are getting started, trying to understand an assignment, or revising an assignment.
- **You want higher-tech:** the format of Zoom sessions allows both students and tutors to read and annotate a document in real-time. This allows for more efficient collaboration, but requires the use of at least a working microphone, speaker, or telephone and a computer with reliable internet connection.
- **You have time to be present:** Zoom sessions most closely emulate face-to-face sessions, and allow students to be virtually present with the tutor throughout the session. If you have the ability to set aside time to be “live” for a tutorial, online tutorials are a productive and interactive option.
- **You want to talk it out:** if you know you work best on writing tasks when you can talk through ideas and get feedback in real-time, Zoom sessions may be a good option for your tutorials.

Scheduling the Session:

If you need help scheduling an appointment, email centerfolk@metrostate.edu, use our [Front Desk on Zoom](#), or call (651) 793-1460. One of our talented front desk assistants will help you.

The remainder of this section will describe scheduling an appointment through our online tutoring and scheduling system, WCOOnline.

1. **Visit our online tutoring and scheduling system**, [WCOOnline](https://my.metrostate.edu/my-apps/schedule-tutoring) (<https://my.metrostate.edu/my-apps/schedule-tutoring>).
 - **If you have not used our system before**, you will be prompted to register for an account when you click "LOG IN HERE".
2. **Select a schedule** using the drop-down menu on the landing page. The bar will read "00 Landing Page". Selecting the arrow next to this bar will display all other schedules.
3. **Select an open appointment** (indicated by a white block in the schedule) to schedule it. A pop-up window will appear with a form asking for more details.
4. In the appointment form pop-up window, **choose "Yes. Schedule Zoom Session" from the drop-down menu** in response to the question, "Meet on Zoom or receive written feedback?"
 - **Attach your document and any instructions** relevant to the assignment by selecting one of the "Choose File" buttons, selecting the relevant file, and selecting "Open" to attach. Optionally, you may name the file, too.
 - Complete the rest of the details about your appointment and select the **"Create Appointment"** button at the bottom of the window.

Before using Zoom sessions:

1. Visit <https://minnstate.zoom.us/> and login to the Zoom web platform using your Star ID and password.
 - Alternately, you may **download and install the Zoom desktop program**, then choose the "SSO" login option. Enter "minnstate" for the domain, then login using your Star ID and password. If you plan on using Zoom frequently, it is best to install the desktop program.
2. Test your audio, microphone, and camera (if video is desired) using the Zoom test meeting: <https://zoom.us/test>.

Beginning the Session:

1. At the time of your appointment, visit our scheduling system. Please log in a few minutes early in case of technical difficulties.
2. **Select your appointment** (indicated by a yellow block in the schedule). A pop-up window displaying the details of your appointment will appear. Alternately, select your profile in the navigation bar, then select "My appointments."
3. In the pop-up window, locate the label **"Join [Tutor Name] on Zoom"** at the top of the tutorial window, and **select the link** that follows. The Zoom room will load in a separate window or tab.

4. When prompted, select "Allow" for Zoom meetings.
5. You will be placed in the **waiting room** before the tutor admits you into the meeting space. (This is a precaution to ensure the privacy of your session with the tutor.) The tutor will admit you as soon as they arrive in the room.
5. When you arrive in the room, you may be prompted to configure your audio and video settings. Select your preferred settings.
6. Once you enter the meeting room, follow instructions below to work in Zoom, labeled "Using Zoom for Tutorials".

Using Zoom in Tutorials:

1. Set a **communication plan**. You can use chat (located in the meeting room toolbar at the bottom of the page), audio, video, or a combination of these features (described in **figure 4**). Video is not required, but audio is strongly recommended.
 - **Note:** if your internet speed is slow or undependable, you may want to disable your video and only use audio in the session. Likewise, if your audio is not functioning in the Zoom session, ask the tutor to help you with using your phone for audio. More info is available at the end of this document, or here: https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362663-Joining-a-meeting-by-phone#h_e4f1ac0b-7a0c-4b14-976e-ccec6ad484b2.
2. Talk to the tutor about how best to **share your document**. It is usually easiest to use the "**Share Screen**" button in the toolbar at the bottom of the meeting room, and then select the "Desktop" or "Screen" option to share your entire screen with the tutor. Please note that **anything on your screen will be visible** to tutors if you share in this manner – if you want to, take a moment to tidy your desktop (closing any personal tabs or documents) before sharing.
 - **Note:** you may also want to make use of the whiteboard tool, or annotation tools that allow you to draw on the screen. More information about using these tools can be found here: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/115005706806-Using-annotation-tools-on-a-shared-screen-or-whiteboard>.

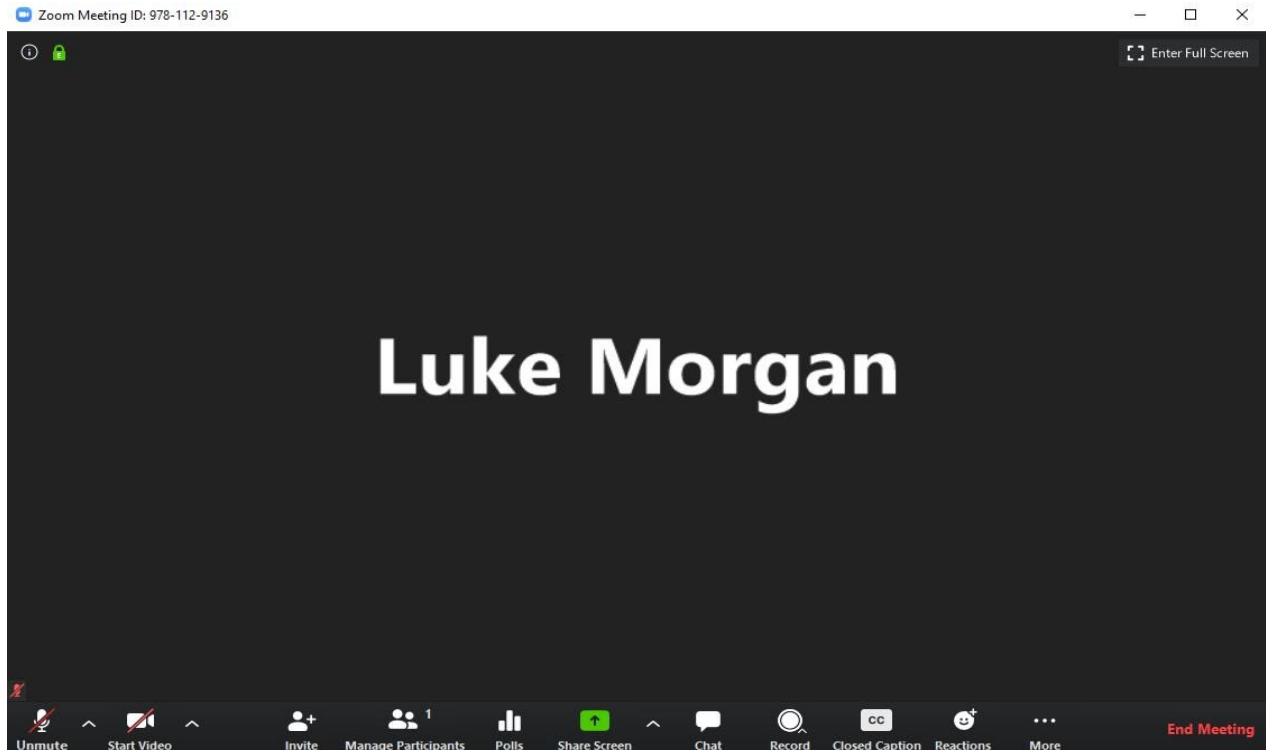


Figure 4: The Zoom meeting room (video disabled), with audio and video functions, share screen and chat icons.

3. Before you finish your session, **be sure to save your work** (on your own computer), end screen-sharing, and when you are finished, select “Leave Meeting” to exit.
 - **Note:** unlike WCO, Zoom **does not automatically save** anything that is shared, and does not log the meeting. Be sure to retrieve anything you wish to keep using the “Save” function in the screen-sharing toolbar, or by taking a screenshot of what is shared onscreen.

Troubleshooting Issues:

If you are having issues with audio or video, try these options to fix issues:

First, try exiting the meeting and reentering through the same link you accessed the first time. This sometimes resolves audio and/or video issues.

If video is still not working, turn it off and proceed with the tutorial. Since video is entirely optional for tutorials, the session should still be fully functional.

If issues with audio persist and you cannot speak to the tutor, type replies in the chat tool. The tutor will use a combination of audio and chat to help you troubleshoot.

Then, try these solutions:

- Check that the correct microphone and audio sources are selected in Zoom. Click the arrow next to the microphone icon in the meeting space toolbar to open audio options (described in **figure 5**).

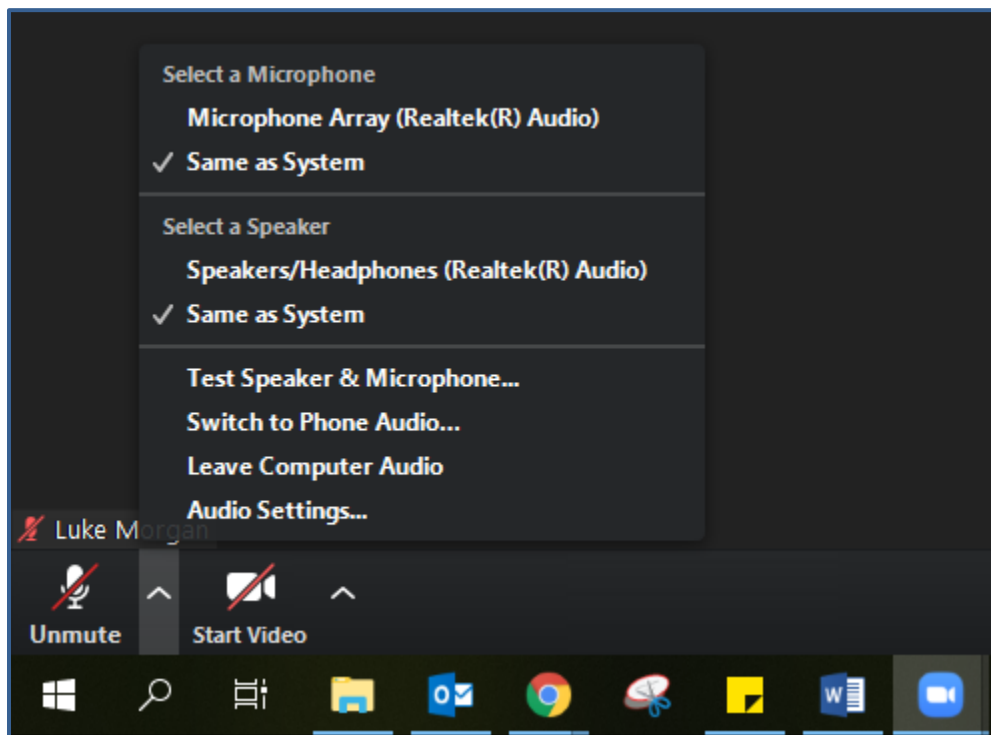


Figure 5: close-up displaying the options available when the arrow next to “Unmute” is selected. “Same as System” options for both microphone and speaker are selected.

Ensure that the correct options are selected (usually “same as system” unless you are using an external mic, headphones, or headset, which should be labeled and available in the list).

Test your mic and audio with the new devices selected to ensure they work.

- If audio still does not work, you can **use your phone for audio** instead of the computer. Follow these instructions to use phone for audio:

First, select the arrow next to the microphone icon to open options, then select "Switch to Phone Audio." A dialog box displaying the number to call, meeting ID, and participant ID will appear (see **figure 6** below).

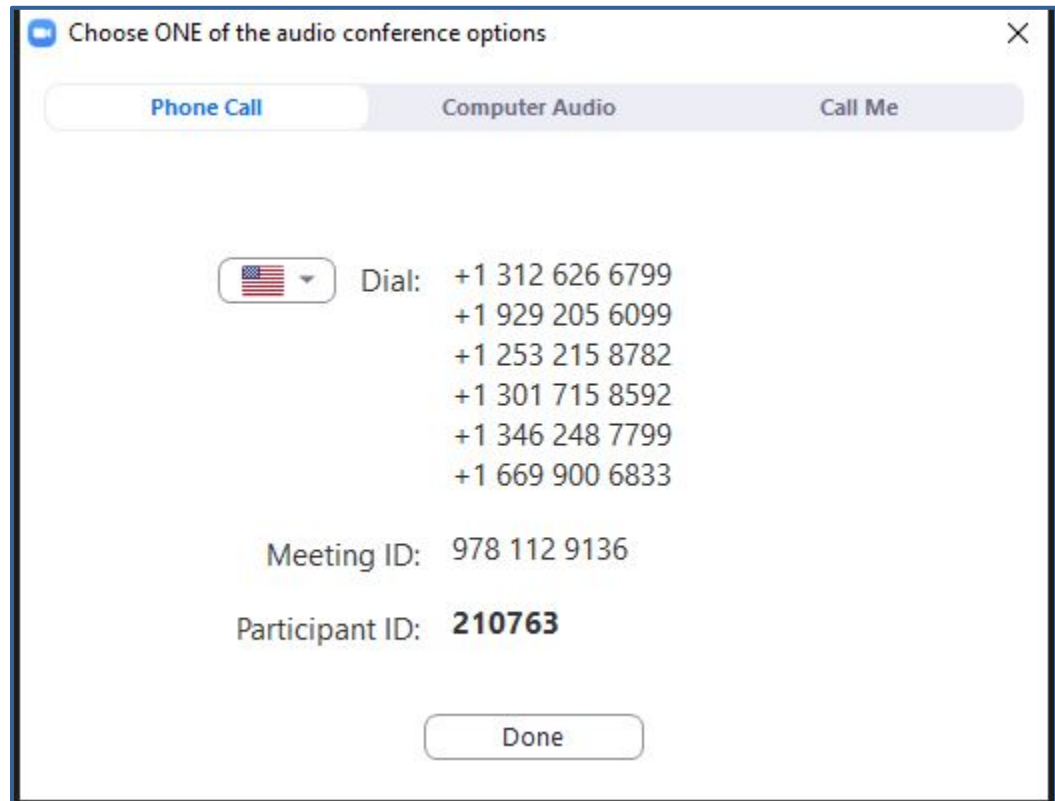


Figure 6: screen capture showing the dialog box that appears when "Switch to Phone Audio" is selected. The numbers to dial for audio access, meeting ID, and participant ID are listed.

Use your phone to dial the first number listed (1-312-626-6799). When prompted, enter the meeting ID followed by pound (#), and do the same for the participant ID. You can now use your phone for audio.

Note: your meeting ID and participant ID will not be the same as the example listed above; these are unique to each Zoom meeting.