

Virtual Conference Toolkit

THE ARNOLD P.
GOLD
FOUNDATION
Gold Humanism
Honor Society



VIRTUAL CONFERENCE TOOLKIT

Table of Contents

- I. Virtual Conference Checklist
- II. Hosting a Virtual Conference
- III. One-Day Conference Agenda Template
- IV. Two-Day Conference Agenda Template
- V. Virtual Speaker Guide
- VI. Sample Evaluation Template
- VII. GHHS Brand Guidelines
- VIII. Virtual Platform Recommendations



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Event Planning Checklist

Pre-event planning

- ☐ Determine the theme for your conference. Create a unique theme that can capture the attention of your audience.
- ☐ Set an event date.
- ☐ Create a list of potential speakers.
- ☐ Determine if you will need sponsors for your event.
- ☐ Reach out to speakers and sponsors for your event.
- ☐ Create a draft agenda for your event.

Financial planning

- ☐ Determine the event budget.
- ☐ Decide if you will have a registration fee.

Event format planning

- ☐ Plan the duration of your event. A virtual conference can be 2 hours or several days. If you're changing your conference from physical to virtual, the duration of the conference should be less.
- ☐ Decide if your event will be streamed live, pre-recorded, or a hybrid of both.
- ☐ Decide whether to make your event public, or will it be for registrants only.
- ☐ Format your event with interactive tools like polls, surveys, and Q&As.
- ☐ Finally, decide if you will be providing an on-demand version of your event.

Event support

- ☐ Plan to recruit and involve moderators, technical support personnel's and someone to promote and market the event.
- ☐ Determine the function each moderator will play during the live event. For example, a moderator could be assigned to facilitate Q&A sessions, while another could be used in facilitation of breakout rooms.



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Choose software/hardware platforms

- ☐ Common streaming software platform often used by universities include Zoom and Webex.

Promote and market your event

- ☐ Create a landing page for the event. The landing page can include the agenda, speaker bio and headshot, sponsorship and registration information.
- ☐ Use your university's social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn.
- ☐ Send out bulk emails using your mailing list and work on a press release.
- ☐ Use logo from sponsors when sending out event promotional materials.
- ☐ Ask the speakers and sponsors to spread the word within their network. Some speakers have their own PR contacts and can easily utilize that resource to promote your event.

Technology preparedness

- ☐ Run at least one rehearsal before your live event.
- ☐ Determine if your speaker will need a moderator and assign someone to that role.
- ☐ Prepare a technical FAQ document for participants to use as a guide during the event.

Event day

- ☐ Take event photos for social media pages and the event web page.
- ☐ During the event, continue promotion efforts via social media.
- ☐ Test presenters AV and internet connections.
- ☐ Do a brief review of the platform features for your presenters.



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Post-event planning

Post-event promotion

- ☐ Send thank you and acknowledgment emails to speakers and sponsors.
- ☐ Share the highlights of the event on social media pages.
- ☐ Update your event web page with highlights, quotes, videos, and pictures of the event.

Participant follow-up

- ☐ Reach out to event participants, thanking them for their support and involvement.
- ☐ Send participants a survey to determine the area of strengths and weakness of the conferences.

Financial follow-up

- ☐ Collect receipts and registration data.
- ☐ Update the conference budget



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Hosting a Virtual Conference

Before the live event of your conference, consider the following items:

- Choose the right platform for your needs. For example, consider whether you need tools like breakout rooms and polls, and whether integration with other programs your institution uses is important.
- Learn how to use the platform tools to engage with your audience. Many platforms, such as Zoom, have tutorials and guides.
- Make sure you have a reliable internet connection to run a live virtual event.
- Purchase a good quality camera and microphone. A computer laptop camera and mic will work, but a separate camera and microphone will offer a higher quality video and audio.
- Be prepared for any technical issues that may occur and have a contingency plan. For example, consider what your backup would be if a speaker has technical difficulties.
- Have moderators and an IT technician as a part of your event team.
- Prep your instructors and moderators by creating a rehearsal session of the conference.
- Consider whether you want your conference to have a specific hashtag that attendees can include when posting on Twitter. For example, #GoldSoutheast2020 or #GHHSCalifornia2020.
- Consider whether you would like coverage from your institution or participating institutions. For example, you could reach out to your medical school's communications department to let them know about the event and invite one of their staff members to write a story about the conference for your medical school website.
- Designate someone on your team to be the "photographer" and take occasional screenshots of the event to post on social media during and after the conference.
- Make a list of all the social media handles of the speakers and presenters, so you can tag them easily during the conference if you are posting live or in any posts after the conference. Be sure to include the social media handles for their institutions, as well.



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Hosting a Virtual Conference

On the day of the live event, consider the following items:

- Enter the session at least 1 hour before the start time of the event.
- Test your video and audio before the event to prevent AV issues during the live event.
- Open any documents, programs, or websites that you wish to share with the audience.
- Close all other programs, including Outlook, so unexpected messages do not pop up.
- Allow your audience to join the session 15 minutes early to review AV, the platform interface, and any engagement tools.
- You could prepare a welcome slide with a prompt encouraging people to share their name, role, and location in the chat box before the first speaker begins. Such a slide could also include the conference hashtag and encourage people to post on Twitter. If you think there will be personal stories shared that you do not want made public, you may not want to encourage live tweeting – or consider noting that only speaker opinions, slides, etc. should be shared.

Following your event, consider the following items:

- Follow up with emails, phone calls, or other communication thanking the program audience, presenters, and sponsors for their participation.
- Send a survey to assess the quality of the speakers and the event itself.
- Consider posting the recorded session on your website and social media and including it in communication to the conference participants. Consider writing a recap and posting photos with captions to capture the event for others to learn about its success.



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One-Day Virtual Event Schedule Template

9:00am-9:10am	Opening Remarks	University Dean
9:10am-9:20am	Welcome Introductions should include an overview of the Gold Humanism Honor Society, the event theme, ground rules, and review of the platform features along with when and how to use them and a run-through of the agenda for the rest of the program.	GHHS chapter advisor(s)
9:20am-9:30am	Icebreaker activity Use the platform features to facilitate introductions among the program participants. For instance, the polling option could be used ask audience members where there located in the world. (Here is video with quick and easy icebreaking activities .)	Moderator (student representative)
9:30am-9:45am	Break Use music to lighten the mood of your conference. The best time to use music is during the break times between sessions.	



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9:45am-10:00am	Keynote Address	Keynote Speaker
	Select a Keynote speaker that will bring a wow factor to your event. The speaker should have relatable stories while being able to inspire the audience.	
10:15am-10:30am	Presentation (1) Moderators should use the presentation sessions to collect questions from the audience to be use later during the question and answer session. The questions can be collected using the platform's features.	Presenter (1)
10:30am-10:45am	Break	
10:45am-11:00am	Presentation (2)	Presenter (2)
11:00am-11:15am	Presentation (3)	Presenter (3)
11:15am-11:30am	Question and Answer Session Moderators can use this time to verbalize questions received from program participants to the presenters.	Moderator
11:30am-1:00pm	Lunch Break	



VIRTUAL CONFERENCE TOOLKIT

1:00pm-1:30pm

Breakout Session

Presenters

A virtual platform can place participants into breakout rooms. For instance, in a conference with 100 participants, you can break them out into four groups using the breakout room function. A presenter with a presentation can be assigned to each breakout room, or each break out room could focus on a group discussion questions with moderators controlling the rooms. If you plan on using the Zoom platform, you can find additional information on how to use the breakout room function [here](#). Extra time is added into this session to account for the time needed to place the participants into those rooms. Questions given by the speakers can prompt the break session.

1:30pm-2:00pm

Panel Discussion

Panel presenters

Similar to a live presentation, a moderator is needed to conduct a panel discussion in a virtual environment. The moderator can facilitate the questions from the audience using the platform chat function. Another option is to have the moderator facilitate questions using the raise hand function. Since a panel discussion will have several speakers extra time is needed in this session to allow for multiple speakers to engage with the audience.



VIRTUAL CONFERENCE TOOLKIT

2:00pm-2:15pm

Break

2:15pm-2:30pm

Closing remarks

University President



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Two-Day Virtual Event Template Schedule

Day 1

1:00pm-1:10pm	Opening Remarks	University Dean
1:10pm-1:20pm	Welcome Introductions should include an overview of the Gold Humanism Honor Society, the event theme, ground rules, and review of the platform features along with when and how to use them and a run-through of the agenda for the rest of the program.	GHHS chapter advisor(s)
1:20pm-1:30pm	Icebreaker activity Use the platform features to facilitate introductions among the program participants. For instance, the polling option could be used ask audience members where there located in the world. (Here is video with quick and easy icebreaking activities .)	Moderator (student representative)
1:30am-1:45pm	Break Use music to lighten the mood of your conference. The best time to use music is during the break times in-between sessions.	



VIRTUAL CONFERENCE TOOLKIT

1:45pm-2:15pm

Breakout Session

Presenters

A virtual platform can place participants into breakout rooms. For instance, in a conference with 100 participants, you can break them out into four groups using the breakout room function. A presenter with a presentation can be assigned to each breakout room, or each break out room could focus on a group discussion questions with moderators controlling the rooms. If you plan on using the Zoom platform, you can find additional information on how to use the breakout room function [here](#). Extra time is added into this session to account for the time needed to place the participants into those rooms. Questions given by the speakers can prompt the break session.

2:15pm-2:45pm

Virtual Poster Session

Poster presenter (s)

To conduct a virtual poster session during the conference the presenters will need to use the share screen function on your platform. Instead of using a physical posters the presenters can create their presentation as PDF document or other digital formats. We recommend 5 minutes per poster presentation.

2:45pm-3:15pm

Break

3:15pm-3:30pm

Day 1 closing remarks

Chapter Advisor



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Day 2

9:00am-9:15am	Opening Remarks	Chapter Advisor
9:15am-9:30am	Keynote Address Select a Keynote speaker that will bring a wow factor to your event. The speaker should have relatable stories while being able to inspire the audience.	Keynote Speaker
9:30am-9:45am	Presentation (1) Moderators can use this time to verbalize questions received from program participants to the presenters.	Presenter (1)
9:45am-10:00am	Break	
10:00am-10:15am	Presentation (2)	Presenter (2)
10:15am-10:30am	Presentation (3)	Presenter (3)
10:30am-10:45am	Question and Answer Session Moderators can use this time to verbalize questions received from program participants to the presenters.	Moderator
10:45am-11:00am	Break	



VIRTUAL CONFERENCE TOOLKIT

11:00am-11:30am	Panel Discussion Similar to a live presentation a moderator is needed to conduct a panel discussion in a virtual environment. The moderator can facilitate the questions from the audience using the platform chat function. Another option is to have the moderator facilitate questions using the raise-hand function. Since a panel discussion will have several speakers, extra time is needed in this session to allow for multiple speakers to engage with the audience.	Panel presenters
11:30am-11:45am	Day 2 closing remarks	Chapter Advisor



VIRTUAL CONFERENCE TOOLKIT

Speaker Guide

Presentation preparation

Plan out your presentation to the best of your ability. In a 30-minute presentation, you might plan for an introductory remarks, Q&A segment, and a wrap-up. We recommend that you submit a copy of your biography, headshot and session description to your host.

PowerPoint

If you're using a PowerPoint during your presentation, please send your final slide deck at least two days ahead of the scheduled event. Please try to avoid text-heavy PowerPoint slides and instead use slides that have images and brief phrases.

Technical preparation

If your host schedules a technical rehearsal, we recommend that you participate in the technical rehearsal to familiarize yourself with the platform used for the virtual event.

Moderating

Determine who will be your moderator. Depending on the format of the presentation, a moderator will be needed. The moderator will provide you with technical support, Q&A facilitation, and other tasks during the live event. A very important task for the moderator is to compile questions from the audience using the chat function. The moderator can also read those questions out loud to the audience and the speaker.

Q&A

If you plan on having a Q&A portion of your presentation, consider collecting the questions before the webinar. Collecting the questions before the webinar will allow you to vet them and pick the most relevant. Another option is to use your virtual platform chat function to collect questions from your audience.

Duration

Virtual events are done in less time when compared to live events. If you normally have an hour presentation, consider cutting that presentation down to 30 to 20 minutes.



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Speaker Guide

Engagement in a virtual environment

The virtual environment requires speakers to take a more active role in engaging the audience. You can engage your audience through tools such as polling, Q&A, whiteboard, the chat function, and the utilization of breakout rooms. If you plan on using the Zoom platform, they offer several online guides on how to use Zoom's interactive tools.

Common distractions

Please be sure to close all unnecessary applications, especially Outlook, Instant Messenger, etc. It's important not to have any personal or confidential information displayed on screen during a live event. Your phone should also be on silence mode or turned off. Please ensure that kids, pets, or whoever, won't interfere or make noise during the recording of the webinar. Find a quiet room, where you won't be disturbed.

Dressing and presentation background

The right lighting, background, and outfit color are important when presenting in a virtual conference. If possible, sit in a location with a plain background and adequate lighting. (Here is [short video](#) with lighting tips.) The lighting in the room should be bright, but it should never come from the back of you as to avoid casting a shadow. If it's not possible to sit in a plain location, be sure that the background is neat and tidy. When choosing your outfit for the recording, try to stay away from bright or contrasting shades such as black, white, or red.

Technical considerations

When doing a virtual conference look directly at the camera rather than the screen. You'll engage the audience more when you look at the camera verses the screen. Also, be sure to align your camera at eye-level, an angle that is too low or too high will distract the audience.



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Sample Evaluation Form

Name:

School/Organization/Practice name:

Business address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Email:

1. This topic was pertinent to your current needs and interests.

- 1- Strongly disagree
- 2- Disagree
- 3- Neither agree nor disagree
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly agree

2. Overall, how knowledgeable did you find the speaker about the subject being discussed?

- 1- Poor
- 2- Fair
- 3- Good
- 4- Very good
- 5- Excellent

3. How likely are you to use the strategies identified in your work/studies moving forward?

- 1- Not at all likely
- 2- Not likely
- 3- Not sure
- 4- Likely
- 5- Very likely



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Sample Evaluation Form

4. How likely are you to recommend this conference to a colleague?

- 1- Not at all likely
- 2- Not likely
- 3- Not sure
- 4- Likely
- 5- Very likely

5. How satisfied were you with the information presented in the event.

- 1- Very dissatisfied
- 2- Dissatisfied
- 3- Neutral
- 4- Satisfied
- 5- Very satisfied

6. Will your learnings and experiences from this conference help you practice humanistic care?

- 1- Strongly disagree
- 2- Disagree
- 3- Neither agree nor disagree
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly agree

7. How would you rate the platform and its features used for this event?

- 1- Poor
- 2- Fair
- 3- Good
- 4- Very good
- 5- Excellent



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Sample Evaluation Form

8. What did you like most about this event?

9. What did you like least about this event?

10. What would you recommend to improve the conference?

11. What was your main priority when attending this event and were you able to fulfill it within the virtual platform?

12. Do you have additional feedback and suggestion you would like to share?

13. Suggestions/Topics for future meetings:



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Brand Guidelines

GHHS Logos



Color Guide

If you'd like your printed event program colors to match our gold color, please use:

- **Pantone 10122C** (metallic gold)

For plain gold for digital and non-metallic printed uses, please use:

- **R 210 / G 160 / B 43**
- **C 0 / M 28 / Y 98 / K 11**
- Hex **D29F13**

Font

If you would like your event marketing to match the Gold Foundation's font, please use:

Source Sans Pro

This is a free open-source font, available in multiple weights. Here is [one download option](#).



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Conference Platform Recommendations

Zoom

Zoom is a popular, user-friendly platform used by many institutions. Zoom allows polling, breakout rooms, call-in through phone options, and more. Below are alternative platforms that offer similar features while providing additional capabilities.

GoToWebinar

GoToWebinar is an online platform used to create online video conferences. Some of the features include custom registration, branding, and event management. For a full list of the services and features of GoToWebinar, please click [here](#).

Cisco WebEx

WebEx lets you host online meetings with HD video, audio, screen-sharing capabilities, and audience monitoring. WebEx has free features that might be good to explore; click [here](#) to review those features.

Adobe Connect

Adobe Connect offers similar features to GoToWebinar and WebEx. It stands out in the marketplace by providing rich recording and editing tools. For more information regarding Adobe Connect, please click [here](#).

Vfairs

Vfairs has technology that enables people to network, access content, and listen to speakers from anywhere. It offers distinctive aspects of a conference, without having to rent a venue. Vfairs replicates standard live conference features, including a virtual lobby and information desk. To learn about features of Vfairs, please click [here](#).