



Brandeis University

The Mandel Center
for Studies in
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Using the Videoconference Facility in ASAC 204:

Policies and Procedures

Abraham Shapiro Academic Center (ASAC) Room 204, which is equipped for distance learning via videoconference, is managed by the Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education. The Mandel Center welcomes requests to use the facility from the university community. This document explains the policies and procedures for using the facility.

Equipment

The room is equipped with a H.323 Tandberg 2500 video conference system, Crestron control panel, audio conference backup, two cameras (one oriented to the instructor/screen end of the room, and the other oriented towards the audience end of the room), four ceiling microphones, an LCD projector, a Windows PC, internet connectivity, one external laptop connection, international VHS, and DVD/CD player.

The video conference unit can accommodate three sites in addition to the ASAC room. For sites beyond the total of four, a bridge can be arranged through an outside service provider, such as Affinity or V-Span.

The system allows users to attend live meetings or classes. Any recording or streaming requests require additional system configuration, and would need to be arranged well in advance through LTS Media Technology Services.

Availability

Conferences, seminars, and classes sponsored by the Mandel Center and involving its faculty and staff receive initial priority in room scheduling, followed by other residents of ASAC and other university instructors. Other meetings and events may be scheduled by the Mandel Center staff on behalf of other university groups based on availability. The facility is only available for use during regular business hours.

The contents of this policy document are informational only. Brandeis University and the Mandel Center reserve the right to change any policies or procedures at any time.

Technical Details

In order to make a video call, two choices are available:

The preferred choice is through an IP connection. The far-end equipment can use the internet to connect to us. Because most places now have internet connections already, and those charges are typically flat-rate, using IP to make the connection doesn't cost anything extra. The video image is usually acceptable at 384 Kbps bandwidth (a “384 call”). The direct IP address of the unit is 129.64.84.14.

The second choice is to dial up through an ISDN connection, essentially a multi-line phone call through a third-party vendor, such as Verizon. One ISDN line supports 128 Kbps; in order to achieve the appropriate quality (a “384 call”), systems use 3 ISDN lines. Though ISDN is very reliable, it is also very expensive. Extensive, additional per-minute charges apply for outgoing calls in the United States and many other countries. (See below for more about costs.)

To make an ISDN call to the Mandel videoconferencing system, the number is 1-781-893-4384. This number connects the caller to the Brandeis gatekeeper, allowing our IP-based systems to cross over and connect to ISDN-based units. The auto-attendant will answer and then, the caller must dial extension 65021 using their videoconferencing software. The far end system will need to have active direct inward dialing (DID) capabilities. The methodology varies by vendor, and the far end user will need to consult their local technical support staff.

To place an ISDN call from Brandeis, you will need to first dial 86 to contact the gatekeeper, followed by the entire phone number, for example: 86-1-703-435-3825 connects a call to a test site in Virginia.

To repeat, the addresses to reach the videoconference facility in ASAC 204:

| | |
|-------------|-------------------------|
| IP address: | 129.64.84.14 |
| ISDN number | 1-781-893-4384 – 6-5021 |

Guidelines

1. The physical capacity of the room for a conference is 20 people.
2. **VERY IMPORTANT:** Users must schedule a one-time test call, ahead of the actual call, which will also serve as a training session on the use of the equipment.

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3. Users must book the room starting 30 minutes prior to the time of their meeting. They should dial and connect the call, which will remain open until the start of the meeting.
4. Users who are planning to make an outgoing long distance call should use their university-issued long distance PIN code.
5. The doors to the room and to the media closet are to be kept locked. If users need access to the room, they should contact staff at the Mandel Center, who will unlock the room prior to each meeting.
6. In order to accept inbound calls, users should touch the appropriate response on the Crestron touch-pad panel in the room when the call comes in.
7. The room walls are lined with soundproofing material. They should not be used for hanging any posters, flipcharts or papers, with any adhesive materials. In particular, please do not use pushpins!
8. Use of electronic devices, such as mobile phones or PDAs, is not allowed. They may cause electronic interference, affecting the quality of the call.
9. When there is more than one simultaneous conversation in the room, it can become difficult for far-end users to hear. We recommend keeping side conversations to a minimum. It is also helpful to select “mute” if the far-end user will be making an extended presentation, to avoid distractions from the participants in the room.
10. There are two auto-focus cameras in the room. The camera designated “Near End” should be selected if the far-end user is presenting or during open conversation; this will allow the far-end user to see the people in the room. The camera designated “Back End” should be selected if an instructor is presenting in ASAC 204; this will allow the far-end user to watch as a member of the audience. The cameras are controlled (pan/tilt/zoom) from the Crestron touch panel.
11. Audio conferencing is available as a backup. The extension number to use for the audio conference system is 1-781-736-5021, directly dialed. Only one party can be connected at a time with the audio conferencer.
12. No food or drinks are allowed in the room.

Costs and Support

The Mandel Center welcomes requests to use the videoconference equipment from the university community.

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| LTS Media Technology Services: | \$35 per hour |
| ISDN calls, outgoing: | charged at cost |
| ISDN calls, incoming: | no charge |
| IP calls, outgoing or incoming: | no charge |

Please note that ISDN charges can be very substantial. When the call originates in ASAC 204, the cost of the call will be reported by IT Services to the Mandel Center; the university group that has made the call with then be responsible for the cost. If you do need to make an outgoing ISDN call, you should budget approximately \$2/minute for domestic calls and \$12/minute for international calls. When the ISDN call originates elsewhere, these charges are not billed to the Mandel Center, but they should still be taken into consideration when determining whether a videoconference is worth doing.

Contacts

To schedule the room, including scheduling a test call:

Gloria Athanas, Senior Executive Coordinator 1-781-736-2083

If Gloria Athanas is not available, please contact:

Marcie Quaroni, Senior Events and Projects Coordinator 1-781-736-2085

Other contacts:

Brandeis LTS Classroom Technology Emergency Line 1-781-736-4632
 Tim O'Neil, Brandeis LTS Media Technology Services 1-781-736-4429