ISO warns of Zoom-bombing, offers safety tips

With the shift to remote learning and working during the COVID-19 outbreak, the Information Security Office (ISO) warns that members of the University of Utah community could become targets for malicious gate-crashers through online collaboration and video conferencing tools.

On Zoom, in particular, these uninvited guests take advantage of users’ lax or default settings to share their screens, often disrupting the session with unwanted images, videos, chat messages, and posts — a practice known as “Zoom-bombing.”

Instructors who use Zoom via Canvas have some automatic protections, including a default setting requiring them to designate students as hosts before they can share their screens, and single sign-on (SSO), which requires valid university credentials to log in.

Users hosting Zoom meetings outside of Canvas should protect their meetings by following Zoom’s recommendations for keeping Zoom meetings secure.

Recommended best practices include:

- Avoid using your Personal Meeting ID (PMI) for public events
- Avoid publicizing your classes or meetings via public social media and calendars
- Use the Waiting Room feature to control who you allow into meetings
- Manage screen sharing
- Allow only signed-in users to join
- Lock your meetings
- Set up two-factor authentication
- Put disruptive participants on hold
- Remove unwanted or disruptive participants
- Disable video of disruptive or inappropriate participants
- Mute disruptive or inappropriate participants
- Turn off file transfer
- Turn off annotation
- Disable private chat

If you’re an instructor with questions about using Zoom via Canvas, please visit Teaching & Learning Technologies’ (TLT) online course facilitation support page or email classhelp@utah.edu.

If you have questions about using Zoom outside of Canvas for meetings or instruction, your local IT support staff may be able to assist, or you may contact your respective help desk:
UIT Help Desk (801-581-4000, option 1) or ITS Service Desk (801-587-6000).

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