

Presenting an AMTE Webinar: Guidelines and Best Practices

Thank you for your interest in presenting for the Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators' webinar series. In this document, we briefly describe the typical audience for the webinar and present some guidelines and best practices that will support high-quality engagement with the AMTE audience.

Who we are

The Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators membership consists of university-based mathematics teacher educators at two- and four-year universities, primarily in North America, and other mathematics teacher educators and teacher leaders such as curriculum directors and developers, independent professional development facilitators, and school district mathematics specialists. The membership includes researchers and professionals in schools and colleges of education, departments of mathematics, non- and for-profit educational entities, and state and local educational agencies and districts. Their work may include the teaching of mathematics and mathematics methods courses for preservice teachers, delivering professional development to practicing teachers, and engaging in research related to mathematics teacher education.

Focus of AMTE Webinars

The goal of the AMTE webinar series is to provide timely and engaging professional development to our membership to support their work in developing mathematics educators across the P-16 spectrum. The majority of our members are involved in some form of university-based teacher education coursework (mathematics or mathematics methods), which may include working with preservice teachers and/or practicing teachers. As such, any topic pertaining to design, teaching of, and learning in mathematics methods, mathematics for teachers, or professional development experiences would be of central interest. Issues of education policy that influence teacher education – such as requirements for licensure and renewal, assessments of teacher knowledge, teacher induction programs and policies, and merit-recognition teaching programs such as National Board – are also strong candidates for webinar content. While the AMTE membership is diverse in their responsibilities, integrating research and practice is a core priority.

In contrast to typical conference presentations, AMTE webinars are conceived as professional development opportunities for members. Perhaps the topic is an issue that large numbers of the membership face or one they want to know more about. Perhaps it provides important professional knowledge or skill development (such as writing for publication or approaches to addressing issues of race and class in teacher preparation courses). Or perhaps it advances a strategic AMTE priority. A session might focus on a presenter's experience or research, but it would then need to generalize from that experience in ways that explicitly address implications for audience members and their work. For instance, in November, 2014, Hollylynne Lee drew on her extensive knowledge of the use of technology in teaching and learning as well as her experience using animations in her mathematics teacher education courses to design a webinar framing a broad set of issues and available tools for others wanting to explore the use of animations

in mathematics teacher education. Issues that are primarily germane to mathematics classroom teachers can be appropriate, provided that there are substantial connections to and implications for the work of mathematics teacher educators. For example, a webinar that unpacks the functions strand in the Common Core might not in and of itself be a strong choice. A webinar that unpacks the functions strand and contains substantive information about how to support teachers in learning important mathematical ideas related to function would be a more appropriate choice for the audience.

Engaging our audience

Each webinar is 60 minutes in length. As a rule of thumb, we prefer to have presenters reserve the final 10-15 minutes for audience questions. While the current GoToMeeting platform limits audience engagement to text-based comments and questions, we have several recommendations for engaging the audience with your content, drawn from previous practices we have seen.

- Engage participants prior to the session by providing a reading or task for participants to do that immerses them in the webinar content
- Include links to ancillary materials, such as visuals, tasks, websites, or online video that deepens the webinar experience for participants
- Provide opportunities for regular audience feedback and questions by building in commenting opportunities across the presentation
- Design a prompt and create an online document (e.g., using Google docs) where participants can type responses, which you monitor and comment on either before or during the webinar
- Create a survey for participants to take prior to the webinar that gives you additional feedback on participants' backgrounds and experiences
- Use web-based interaction platforms, such as Google Forms or PollEverywhere, to collect real-time data from the webinar participants
- Explore ways of using social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Twitter) to additionally engage participants
- Work with the executive director to customize the post-webinar feedback questions to obtain tailored reflections on the presentation

Other tips and tricks

- If you have video capabilities, transmitting video along with slides can help engage your audience
- Multiple speakers can be a substantial asset to diversify your presentation, and having multiple speakers interacting on video can improve engagement
- Even though you won't have video or audio feedback, make sure to provide substantial wait time after key points in order to provide participants the opportunity to process important ideas
- Have a backup plan! If you're using a piece of technology or counting on an interaction to make your webinar work, make certain you have plan for what to do if it doesn't function properly the day of the webinar.

Timeline for webinar preparation

The PD Committee selects topics to be presented and invites presenter(s), conferring with the president and executive director about dates and times. Selection of topics may be made by committee members reaching out to AMTE members who have work that may be of interest OR through review of webinar proposals/suggestions submitted through the AMTE website (<https://amte.net/webinars/submit-idea>). Each fall the committee arranges a slate of spring and summer presenters in time for an announcement in the winter issue of *Connections*. Each spring the committee arranges a slate of fall and winter presenters in time for announcement in the summer issue of *Connections*. Announcements are also posted on the AMTE website.

For these announcements, presenters need to provide a title and a brief summary (1-3 sentences) of the presentation. The summary should make clear how the webinar will serve as a professional development session (beyond a presentation of research as might occur in a conference session). In other words, it should give members a sense of what audience members should expect to gain professionally.

The slate of presenters, with titles and descriptions, should be in place by early November (for the following spring and summer) and early May (for the following fall and winter).

Registration is generally capped at 75 but may be increased to 100 with the presenters' approval.

Timeline for Final Preparations

| Time (relative to webinar date) | Task |
|---|---|
| At least 1 month prior | Website director/webmaster posts info about webinar and opens online registration. The executive director emails members. |
| 1 week prior | Presenters, the president, and the executive director meet online to practice using GoToWebinar system. Website Director/Webmaster closes registration. If presenters want participants to do any preparatory work, website director/webmaster posts it on webinar page. The executive director sends follow-up email to participants regarding GoToWebinar registration process (and preparatory work, if included). |
| 1 day prior | Presenters send slides to the president and the executive director. Website director/webmaster posts slides (in pdf form) on webinar page. |
| Day of webinar | Webinar is conducted. Presenters, the president, and the executive director arrive online 30 minutes prior to start time of webinar. |
| 1 day after | Recording of webinar is posted on AMTE website. The executive director sends email to presenter and members announcing availability of recording and slides. |

Using GoToWebinar

Controls:

1. The “organizer” (executive director) has access to all controls.
1. Presenters (also known as panelists) have access to Chat and Questions Box.
2. Attendees may submit questions to the Organizer, who reads them to the presenters at the end of the presentation, interrupting as needed during the presentation for burning questions.

Slides:

1. The presenters have control of the screen, advancing slides as they’d like.
2. They also send the slides to the organizer and AMTE President prior to the call, so a back-up is available in case any glitches occur.

Outline of typical webinar

1. President welcomes attendees.
2. Executive director gives overview of logistics (question and chat boxes)
3. President introduces Presenters.
4. Presenters make presentation. Executive director interrupts as needed with “burning” questions from attendees.
5. Final 10 minutes: Presenters answer questions from questions box, with help of executive director as needed.
6. Executive director closes webinar (see below).

Closing the webinar

At end of webinar, executive director says:

1. Thank you for participating in the webinar, and thanks to the presenters for a great session.
2. The recording of the webinar (and any relevant links or handouts) will be posted on the AMTE website within a few days. All members will be notified by email when the recording is available.
3. Next webinar will be ____.
4. Thanks again!

After the webinar:

1. Executive director downloads the recording, sends to webmaster for posting, sends email to members when recording is available.
2. President sends thank you note to presenters and their supervisors, if requested.