Skype: Getting Started at Saint Michael’s College

1) Contact the Saint Michael’s Information Technology (IT) Helpdesk at ithelp@smcv.edu, x2020 to put in a request.
   a. **Please note: 24 – 48 hour notice is necessary to coordinate support**
2) After submitting your request, someone from IT will contact you as soon as possible.
3) Work with your IT tech person to schedule a 15 minute training to learn how to use Skype and review the process for coordinating your Skype call
   a. Determine with IT and your Skype contact whether your request requires use of a personal account, or the Saint Michael’s College (SMC) Premium Skype account (http://www.skype.com/en/premium/)
      i. A regular Skype account allows for videoconferencing with one other contact. While multiple contacts can connect on a free Skype account, there will be no video capabilities for over two people. The SMC premium account allows up to 10 video feeds. If using the SMC account, you will receive the account information from your IT contact.
4) Determine a location for the call. Some rooms work better than others, and you should work with your IT tech person to determine the best fit for your call. Reservations for the room should be made with a 30 minute window for setting up and breaking down the equipment before and after the call time. Reservations can be made through the Special Events Office (x2615), or the Registrar’s Office (x2571, for a classroom). Recommended classrooms for easy setup tend to be seminar rooms like St. Edmunds 209 or 332. Large square classrooms are less adaptable to interactive calls.
5) Ask your contact for their Skype name well ahead of the videoconference. If your contact does not have a Skype account, he/she should set one up and give you the information. If using the SMC Skype account, you’ll need to send the contact information to your IT tech person ahead of time, which will allow them to send the invitation for you. **The other party must accept the invitation prior to the call.** If the call is a group call, the SMC account will be used and multiple contacts can be added at the same time.
6) Prior to the call, make sure all necessary equipment is coordinated. If you’ve reserved a classroom, a computer and podium system are already present. If in a Special Events room, a
minimum of a laptop, power cord and ethernet cable will be needed. Reservations for this equipment can be coordinated with Special Events when reserving your room.

a. Please note: A Logitech webcam (built-in audio/ microphone) will be available for circulation from the LLRC (SE 215)

7) Be present and ready for the call 10 minutes prior to the scheduled time. Skype allows for a test call, which is a good idea to make your conference fool-proof.

8) Helpful tip: Have a back-up phone present, as well as Skype chat enabled, as optional communication mediums. If connection is lost during the call, the webcam can be shut down and the audio used independently. If connections are lost, re-starting the call is a helpful tip. All of our classrooms have installed speakerphones.

The training will help cover many of these details

When establishing details with the other party, it is a good idea to make them aware of the technology set up that will be used on the your end. A helpful email template is below. Sending this ahead of time can reduce technology issues.

“We will be using a webcam with a built-in microphone on our end. To help reduce the potential for technical difficulties, please plug your computer in to a power source. If you have an Ethernet cable, use it to hardwire your computer to a network connection rather than using wireless. While wireless generally works well, it relies on a strong network signal. Using a direct network connection will prevent the video feed from freezing. Also, please be sure to check your microphone and speaker settings prior to the call. Many webcams already have built-in microphones, or you may be using a microphone built into your computer. Either way, verifying that your audio works through a Skype test call, or by calling us ahead of time, is helpful in reducing the possibility for any tech issues. We will be available 10 minutes prior to the interview. If you would like to run a brief test, please let us know.”

Skype: For the Other Participant

Ahead of time:

1) Be sure your contact has your Skype name

2) Accept the invitation to be a contact by logging into your Skype account

3) Make sure all necessary equipment is present: a laptop (or desktop), power cord and an ethernet cable. Wireless can be used, but we suggest plugging in for a more stable and reliable connection.
4) Have a webcam and microphone set up in whatever space you decide to use. Do a test run before the videoconference begins to see how your video feed looks. Be sure the audio is turned up on your machine. Testing ahead of time is important!

5) Be present 10 minutes prior to the scheduled call time. Optional: a test call (highly recommended) in order to verify that your speakers, microphone and webcam are functioning properly.

6) If possible, have a backup phone present, as well as Skype chat enabled, for optional communication. If the connection is lost during the call, the webcam can be shut down and the audio used independently. If you have audio problems during the conference, you can use the Skype chat feature to troubleshoot with our technician.