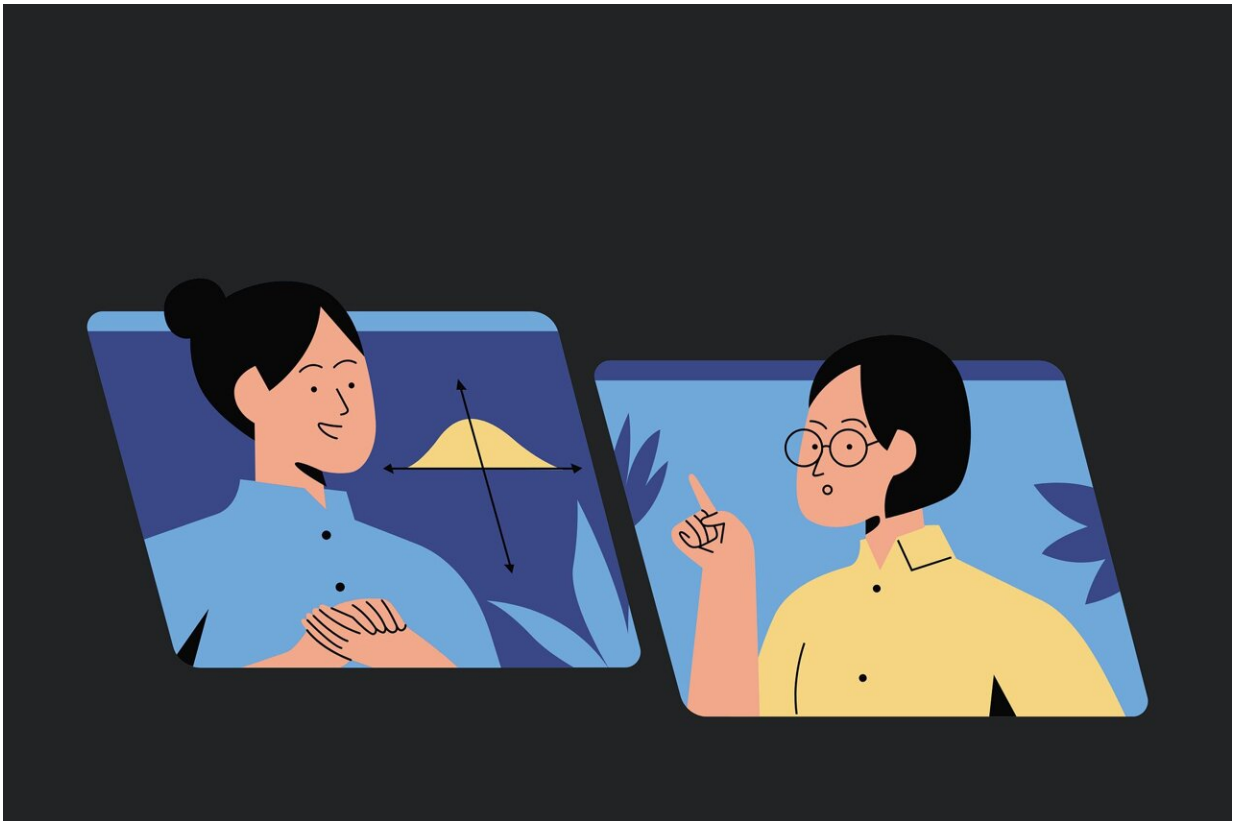


# The hidden impact of virtual communication for student teams

January 22 2024

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Higher education classrooms are increasingly becoming more virtual, as even students who attend in-person classes are opting to use virtual communication when working on team assignments. New research that

examined the team dynamics of undergraduate students finds that instructors often overlook the negative impacts of virtual communication on student teams who are enrolled in on-campus courses.

The study, led by Sharon Hill at the George Washington University and a colleague, finds that [student](#) teams who used [strategies](#) that mitigated the negative effects of virtuality were better able to offset those [negative impacts](#), leading to better information sharing and team performance.

Some of those successful virtual communication behaviors included being intentional about which [communication technology](#) was used for which task, as well as being aware of the negativity bias that persists in virtual communication and therefore crafting messages more carefully.

The paper, "The Impact of Team Virtuality on the Performance of On-Campus Student Teams," by Hill and Maria Ximena Hincapie at the Universidad de los Ande was [published](#) in the journal *Academy of Management Learning & Education*.

Hill, a professor of management at the GW School of Business, says this study is a wakeup call to all teams, as the research shows virtual communication challenges persist in settings from the classroom to the workplace.

For organizations operating in hybrid work environments, Hill says managers need to pay attention to how virtual communication methods affect their in-person employees who are working in the same office, but still using technology for much of their team communications. Hill adds that virtual [communication](#) can harm team dynamics in these co-located teams—not only in teams with members who are geographically separated.

**More information:** Maria Ximena Hincapie et al, The Impact of

Team Virtuality on the Performance of On-Campus Student Teams,  
*Academy of Management Learning & Education* (2024). [DOI:  
10.5465/amle.2022.0397](https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.2022.0397)

Provided by George Washington University

Citation: The hidden impact of virtual communication for student teams (2024, January 22)  
retrieved 3 May 2024 from  
<https://phys.org/news/2024-01-hidden-impact-virtual-communication-student.html>

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