Mobile Video Recording

If you have a smartphone, it probably has a good camera and camera app, suitable for video recording. This may be all you need to record face, your hands performing a procedure (including handwriting) or a variety of other things in the process of teaching.

App Settings

The video recording capability is in the same app you use to take photos. You'll need to simply shift from "photo" or "camera" to "Video." This is usually a pretty obvious option. (In the Android Example image, "Camera" will take still images, while "Video" records motion picture).

You need to choose a resolution. 1080p might be a good all-around resolution, but if you want or need higher quality (as in the Android Example image), and your device can record it, you can choose that instead. However, that will mean a larger video file.

You can experiment with third-party camera apps available in your app store. They can often do things the native apps in Android or iOS cannot, such as offer more focus modes, or turn-off auto-focus so you can force the camera to maintain focus. For instance, a popular and powerful app for Android is Open Camera. But if you are satisfied with the native app, it's probably easiest to stick with that.

Media Center Guides

The Canisius College Media Center has some excellent guides for using both Webcams and Smartphones as video recorders. These are a must-have if you are recording any video for teaching. If you are recording via smartphone, read through both guides, because the webcam recording guide has some good, general advice about preparing the environment, and positioning the camera.

Record Video With Your Smartphone

Recording and Web Conferencing

Top-Down Video Recording

You can use your mobile device to record top-down video. This can be handy if you wish to use handwriting, instruments, financial calculators, or even just discuss a photo or image in a book as a mini-lecture. This may be an essential part of your lecture or demonstration teaching, or it may simply be a creative way to teach with video, instead of using screencasting or filming yourself.

Simultaneous or Separate Audio?

With top-down recording (as with screencasting) you have the option of recording your voice while you are recording the video, or recording your voice narrative separately, and attaching it to the video later using editing software.

Recording simultaneously is obviously faster, although depending on what you are doing, it could be trickier to get a clean, clear narrative. It's probably best to try simultaneous recording first, and if you find that it's difficult, record the video and narrative separately.

Other General Tips

There are many other small steps you can take that can make video recording with your phone easier to do:

- Video files are large, compared to other digital data. So you need to be sure you have the room on your phone
  - Storage Management in iOS
  - Free Up Space On Your Android Device
- When you are recording a video, you probably want to disable notifications. Text messages, updates from apps, and even phone calls can be a nuisance that adds noise and breaks your concentration while you are trying to film. Both iOS and Android have a Do Not Disturb feature that can help with this
  - Do Not Disturb (Notification Control) on iOS
  - Do Not Disturb (Notification Control) on Android
- Budget time to experiment with your recording setup, and even rehearse a bit. Attempting to rush the process will probably make you frustrated.
- Be sure your mobile phone has enough power! If possible plug it into an adapter while filming.
• You can program external buttons to operate functions of the camera, such as the shutter (taking a picture) or the zoom function. For a few dollars, you can buy remote controls that can operate your camera via Bluetooth.
• Clean your camera lens. If your mobile phone is in your pocket or hands all day, it's likely that dust and grease have accumulated on it.
• Although tricky, given the general advice to look at the camera, you can find apps that turn your phone or tablet screen into a teleprompter. With careful use, this can allow you to professionally deliver a script.
• If you needed to record your mobile device screen, that's also possible without additional apps:
  • Record your Screen on iOS
  • Record your Screen on Android