

Policies and procedures regarding the use of the Codian Multi-Point Control Unit (MCU)

The Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR) is fortunate to have a network of Polycom videoconferencing units. The maintenance, scheduling, and use of these communication devices are not trivial matters. Many have learned to use the systems in point-to-point conferences, where their expectation of quality may depend on the importance of the meeting. A number of technical issues can arise during these conferences and we accept a certain amount of risk that things may not go well.

Today, the videoconferencing network increasingly is being used to connect multiple sites in meetings where we expect high quality video conferences. CIT wants to support you in that expectation. We have concluded, based on our experience, that high quality conferences can only be accomplished by implementing certain policies and procedures. This document will address videoconferences where three or more connections are necessary and the Codian MCU (Codian is a brand name) menu is used.

A MCU, like the Codian, links multiple videoconferencing sites into a single videoconference. The MCU, or “bridge” as it is sometimes called, is required for multipoint conferences with three or more participants. (Exception: Some videoconferencing equipment has built-in, limited multipoint ability.)

UNL Extension and the University of Nebraska’s Computing Service Network (CSN) partnered to purchase the Codian MCU.

Policy

1. Multi-point conferences will be supported from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. After hours conferences may be considered; however, there should not be an expectation for this service. Approval of after hours conferences would be based on availability of a consultant. Special arrangements may be considered.
2. An IT specialist or consultant will be assigned to answer questions and help you test the system before the conference begins. The consultant will be available during your conference to help resolve any issues that might arise.
3. Only Polycoms that have current software/firmware and that can be updated and maintained centrally, like the VSX Polycoms, will be supported on the Codian MCU. They are tested with the MCU. Since we don’t have the resources to guarantee a quality conference with other systems, we can not support any systems other than the VSX Polycoms. They must be registered and listed in the Codian MCU Master List and registered in the Global Management Server (GMS) (otherwise they won’t be listed on the registration page as an option) maintained by Cathy Fox. (Via Videos and web cams will not be supported on the Codian MCU, with the exception of Panhandle District internal conferences using currently owned Via Videos. Contact Carol Laurent to discuss this.)
4. The IANR Extension videoconferencing system and the multi-point control unit (MCU) are available for use by IANR Extension administration, faculty, and staff for communications related to its mission. At this time we do not have a business plan or the support staff to handle videoconferencing for non-IANR related video conferences.
5. IANR Extension faculty and staff should register to use the Codian MCU by completing the web form (listed below) at least five business days before the date of the conference.
6. *If use of the Codian MCU is cancelled with less than a 24-hour notice or a prescheduled videoconference does not occur, there will be a \$100 cancellation or no-show fee which will be the responsibility of the person(s) who made the reservation.*

Preparing for a Meeting:

Find an agreeable date for the meeting, which includes checking the Polycom and room availability at each site.

****Meeting participants are responsible for making local arrangements for scheduling the room and Polycom.**

****Confirm with participants the location site and Polycom that will be used.**

Procedure:

To schedule a multi-point conference, go to: <http://www.ianr.unl.edu/polycom/request.html>
Fill out the form and submit the request.

The following information will be needed.

1. Name of person requesting the videoconference
2. Unit affiliation
3. Phone and e-mail (For communication between the requestor and the assigned IT specialist who will facilitate the videoconference)
4. Conference/meeting information
 - a. Meeting title or name
 - b. Date
 - c. Start time (allow 15 minutes before the conference for testing)
 - d. End time
5. Number of sites participating (Identify them using the check boxes.)
6. Contact person at each site and his/her phone number and e-mail (Each remote site must have a designated **point-of-contact** to set up and test the equipment before the conference.)
7. Additional information as necessary, especially if Powerpoint presentations or other technical considerations are necessary. In these instances, more than a weeks notice would be appreciated and may be necessary.

This submitted request will be e-mailed to Cathy Fox, Diane Schroeder, and Al Stark. A consultant will be assigned based on the unit affiliation. The consultant will call or e-mail you to find out more about your conference and how we might assist you. Your consultant is your **primary contact** and expects your questions and ideas. They also will be available during the videoconference to address technical issues.

Video conference IT support specialists and their assigned affiliations are:

Cathy Fox, cfox@unlnotes.unl.edu, 5-6711 (from campus), 308-696-6711

West Central & Southeast Districts, Extension Departments on East Campus, and Ag Hall Admin

Diane Schroeder, dschroed@unlnotes.unl.edu, 402-584-3822

Northeast & Panhandle Districts

Al Stark, astark@unlnotes.unl.edu, 2-5615

Extension Departments on East Campus

If you have general questions regarding the videoconference system or these policies and procedures, please feel free to contact Cathy Fox at cfox@unlnotes.unl.edu, Bob Losee at rlosee1@unl.edu, or Roger Terry at rterry2@unl.edu.