Get online teaching in less than 20 minutes!

Guide to using *discord*

There are many more advanced tools for online teaching available but few will bring you up to speed so fast as *discord*. Its not a fancy complicated tool but works really well in real life.

Its free and has a huge user community so all your questions are probably answered online

See you online in 20 minutes ☺

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Introduction – on-line lessons in < 20 minutes

One way to quickly get on-line teaching is to use the program called *discord*

I think this is a cool tool and it can exactly what we often need: Share a screen and discuss.

This tool is very well known by the students - used for gaming teams but works really well for teaching. Supports up to 50 students watching a live stream.

I was up and running in less than 20 minutes thanks to an introduction from my students (ask your local gamer for help).

You can share your screen and present a slideshow - the students can hear you and talk as well.

You can create several group rooms where students can meet and talk. And you can go in and out of the rooms and participate.

You can create a link and send to the class from inside - then they can join. If you want to see how it works drop me a mail (ervt@dtu.dk) and I can add you to my server.
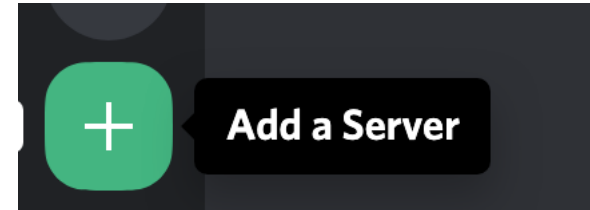
You can also make video calls – check https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mHBPYx7JRpQ

Lets get started!

Get started

1) go to https://discordapp.com and download the app.

2) Once the app is running create a server (click on +)
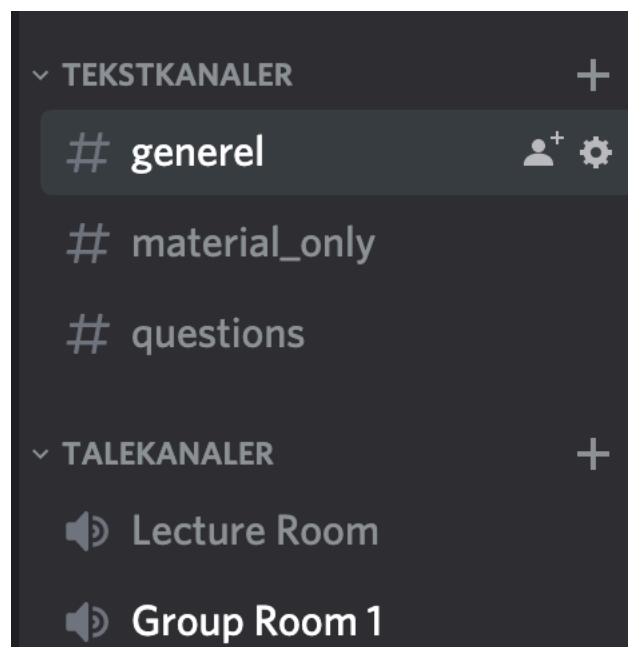

Give the server a name and your server is ready

Adding channels

Now it is time to add "channels". Channels are used to communicate with each other.

Channels come in two flavors:

1) Text channels for chat
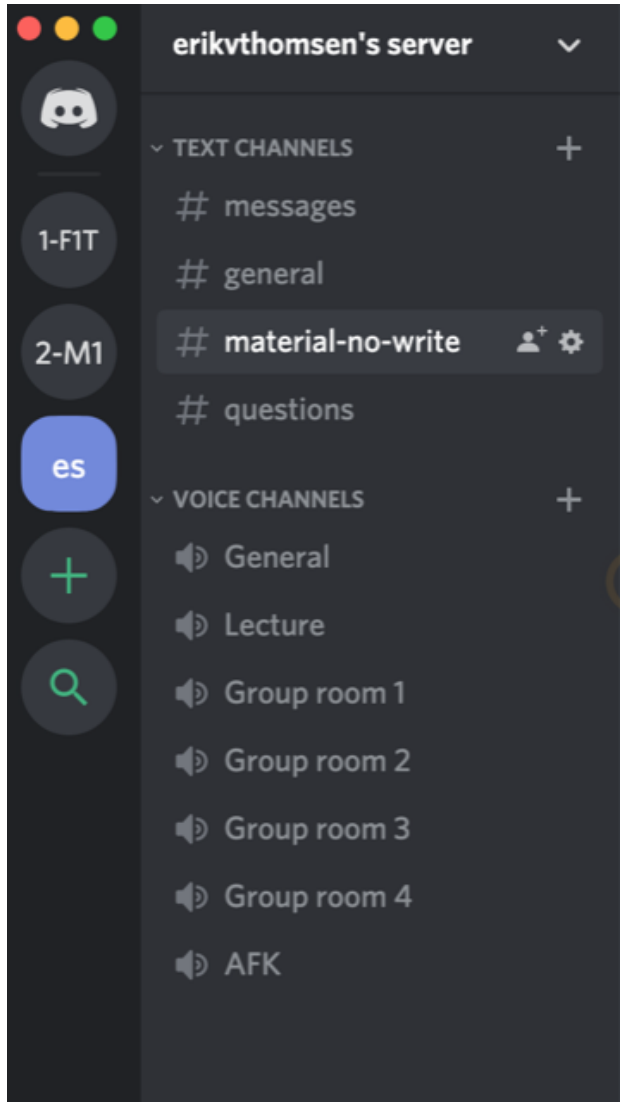2) Voice channels for talking together (also includes chat)

Only those in the forum can participate in the discussion.

Create the channels as you wish by clicking the + sign.

This is for chat

This is for talking together

Layout of the channels

In the 22601 Micro-1 one course we have organized the server with text and voice channels

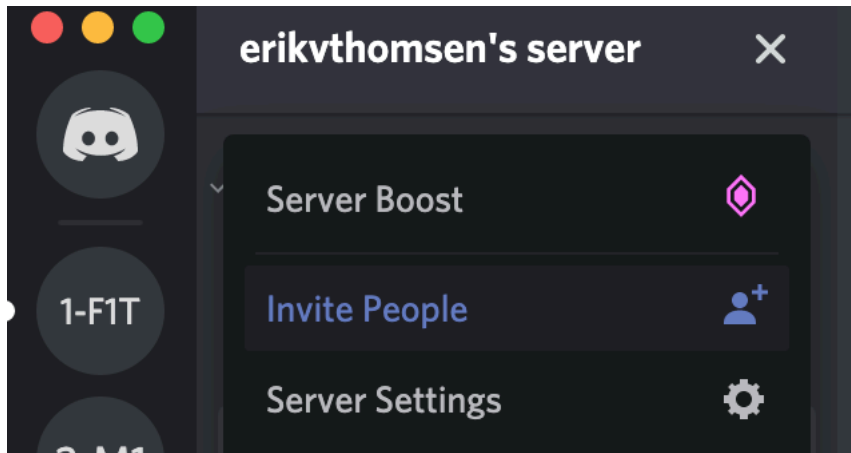*material-no-write*: For upload of material to the students

Questions: Students ask questions – answered by teacher, TA or other students

Lecture: The students join this voice channel to follow the lecture. We have some built-in questions and exercise and to work on them the students go in the group rooms.
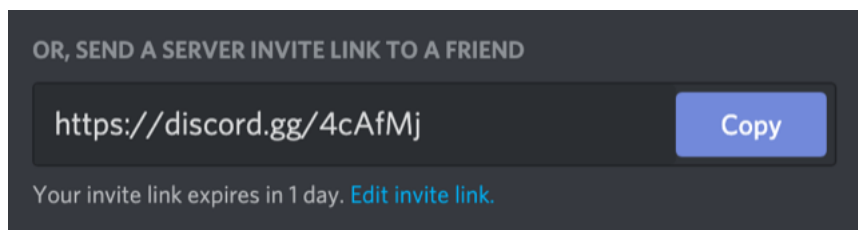
Group rooms: Only those in the group room can talk together. The students go to different rooms and form teams to talk and chat. You can go there as well and be part of the discussion. For larger courses each TA can have a group room to help the students in the room. Once the students has finished the discussions they go to the Lecture channel.

AFK: Away from keyboard. It lets people know that you will not be at your keyboard for a while, or that you will not be online for a period of time - students join this room if they go for a coup of coffee ☺
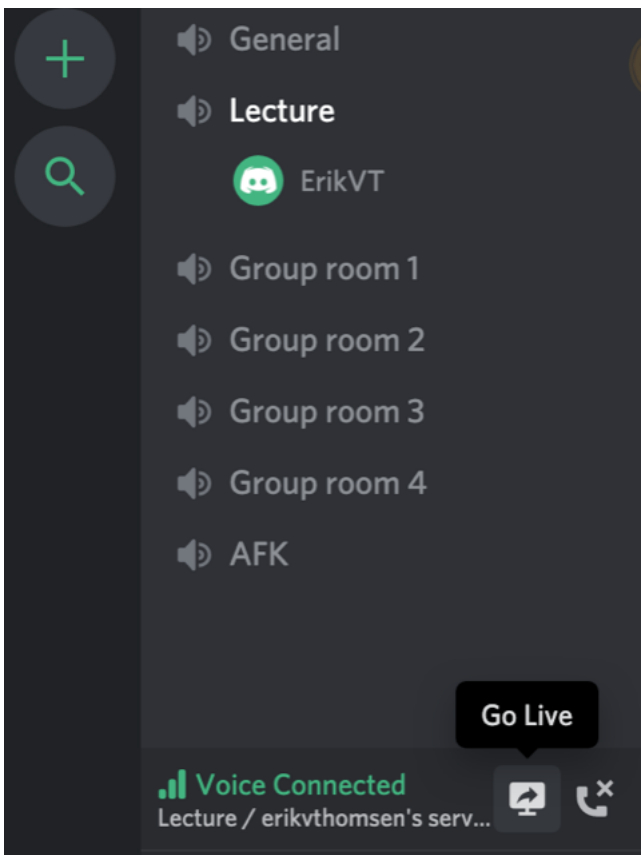
Invite the students

To invite the students: Click on the server name (here erikvthomsens server) and select invite people

Copy the link and send to the students - that's it. No hassle with inviting using email addresses that's need to be typed in.
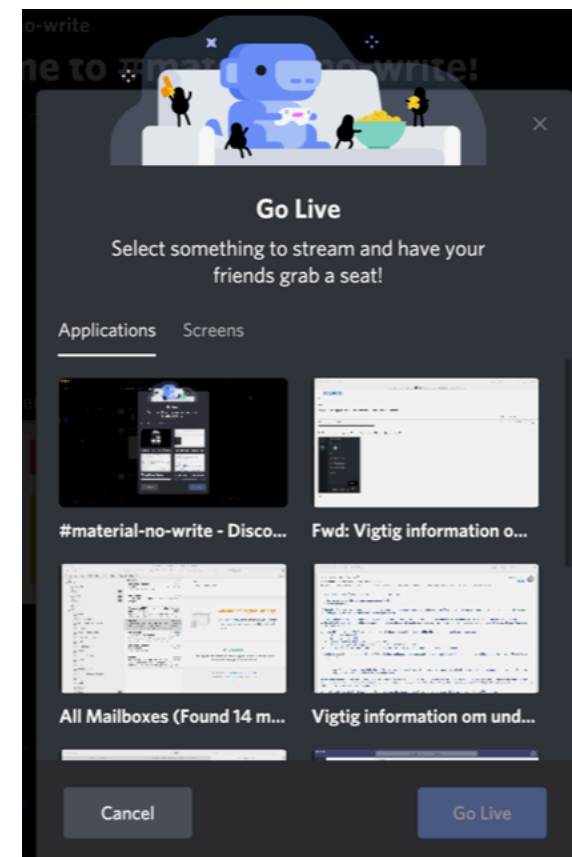
That's it - you are now ready to begin the lesson!

Start the lesson

When you are ready to give a talk:

1) start e.g. powerpoint (or something else) and load your presentation

2) Go in presenter view to show your slides. This creates two windows. The presenter and the notes view

3) In discord join the Lecture channel (click on it) and select go live

4) This shows a list of open windows – select the presenter window

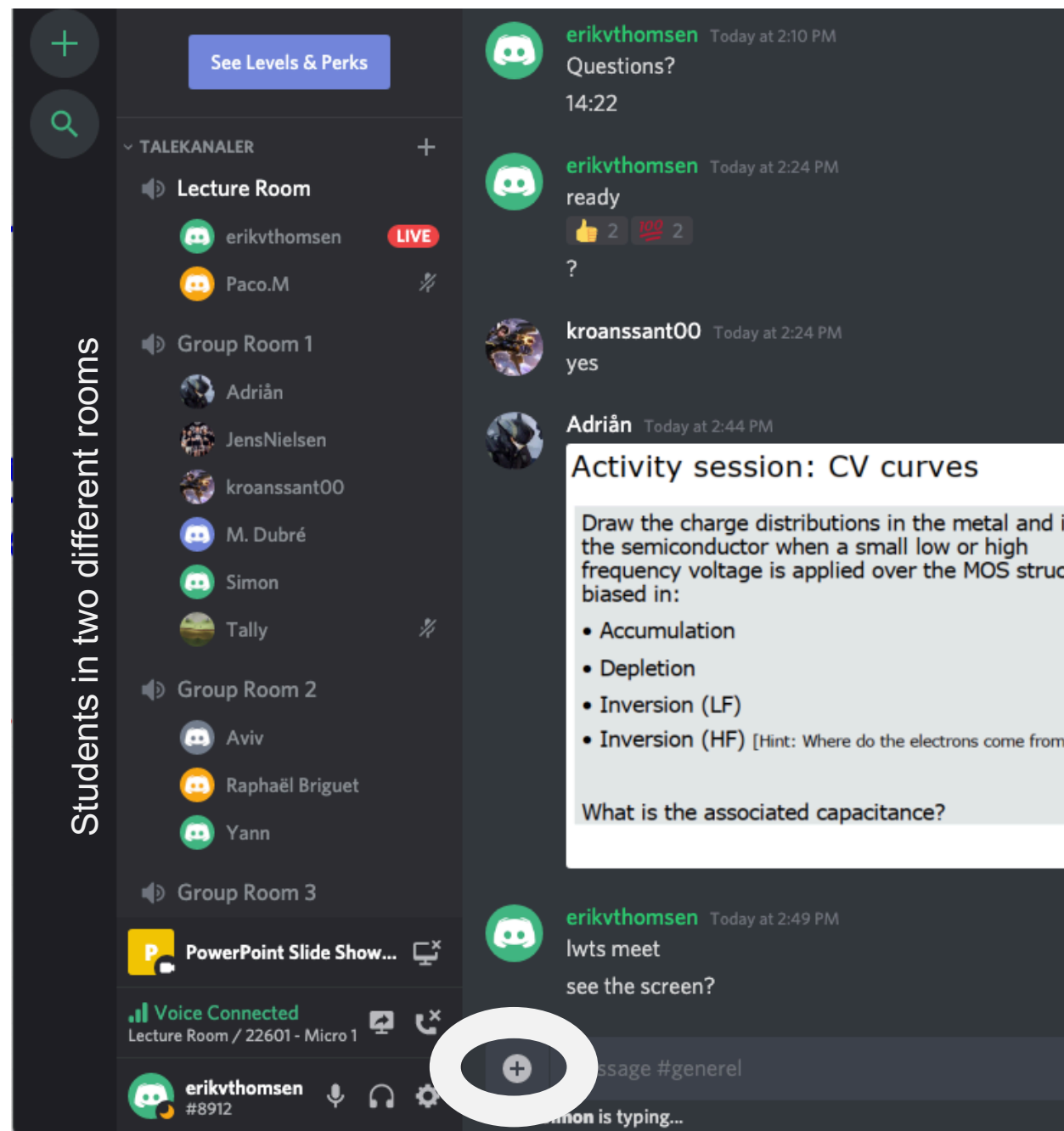5) You can now present your slides and the students can see your slides and hear you talk

Tips

In the course we spend 2 hours on presentations and a lot of small group discussions. During the presentations we are all in the lecture room.

During group discussions the students go to the group rooms to discuss. As teacher I can visit the different group rooms and participate in the discussions.

When leaving the lecture room the streaming stops – that's why we show a screen shot of the activity session so all remember what to work on. Its uploaded by clicking on the + sign

Once the discussions are over we all go to the lecture room and I continue the presentation ("select go line")

Finally, we solve problems for 2 hours and the students work in the group rooms. Teacher and TA can join as needed.

Students in two different rooms

Making video calls

You can set up video calls in discord.

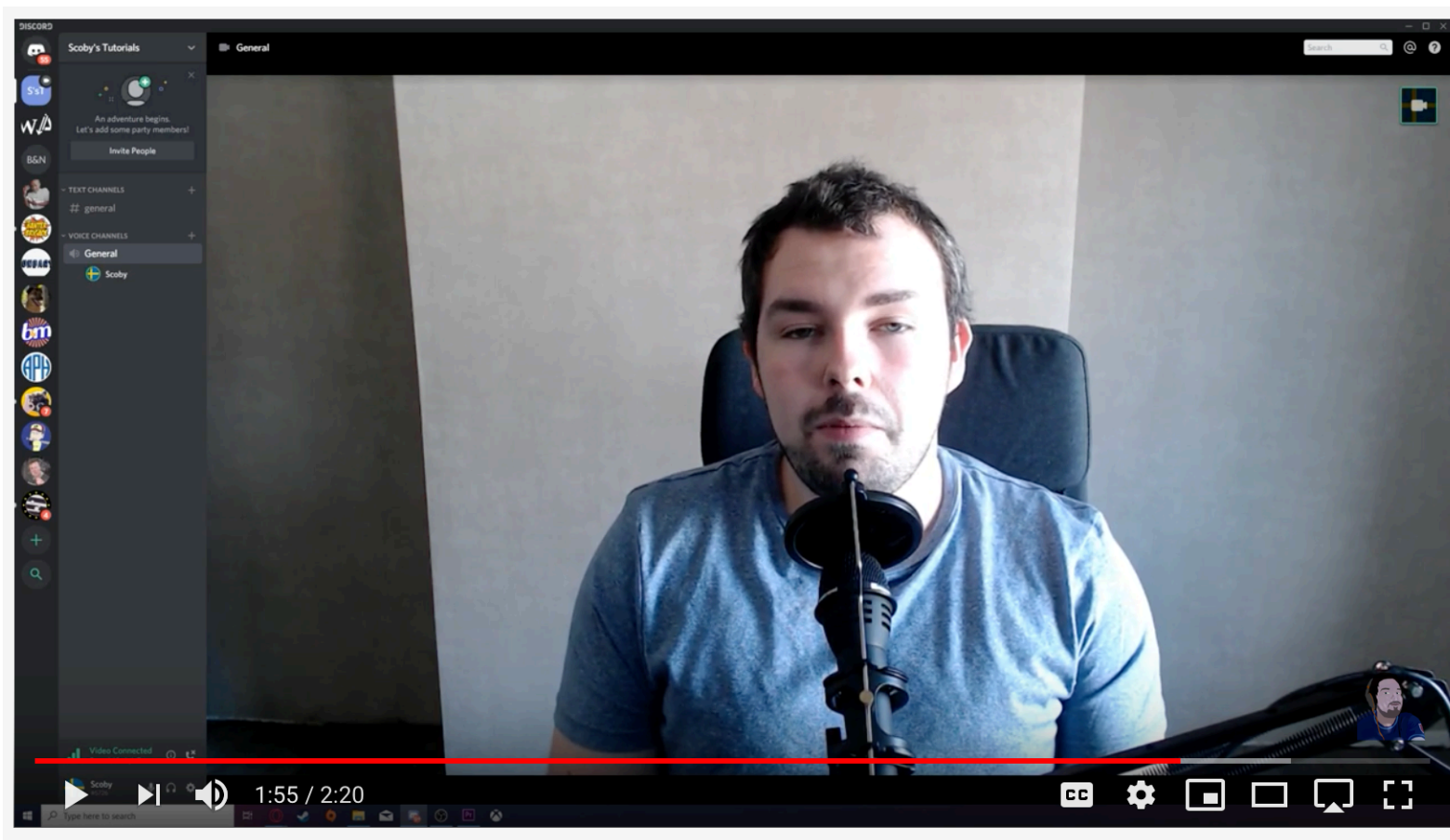See instructions here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mHBPYx7JRpQ

Image from the video call guide

Talking math

If your course is heavy in math why not chat math the elegant way. You can install a robot (called "bot") that automagically convert LaTeX into graphics. The bot listen to the chat and whenever it see some LaTeX it compiles it and put an image in the channel

I type an equation

The TeXit bot chew on the LaTeX and broadcast the image

Installing bots

Installing a bot is extremely easy!

1) Go to https://top.gg/search?q=Latex

2) Invite the TeXit bot to your server

3) Done! Ready to type LaTeX

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That all folks – stay tuned!