

What is a TeleClass?

by Jacquelyn Strickland

A TeleClass is similar to a conference call, or a group dialogue. It might also be similar to a graduate school discussion with some shared information, some questions, and lots of discussion.

You and other participants call into a bridge line phone number at your class time. Please try to call on time, however if you are late, you can still join the call at any time.

You will be welcomed by the TeleClass Leader

You can listen and observe and/or join in the discussion. You can always ask questions of the TeleClass Leader.

Most TeleClass sessions last an hour or 1.5 hours. Some meet one time only, others meet weekly for 4-8 weeks, sometimes longer.

All you need is a regular phone - preferably a land line. The cost to call a bridge line is a standard long distance charge.

Suggestions on How to Participate in a TeleClass

Using an automated teleconferencing 'bridge' may be a new experience for some people. The phone number given to you upon registration is our special conference number for this group call. Please do not give this number to anyone else or call it at any time other than this group's designated time.

When you call the conference line, it will show on your phone bill as a normal long distance telephone call.

To make the call easy and of high quality, I've found the following instructions and tips work well.

1. At the program time, call the number given to you by your teleclass leader. Only call that number at class time, not before or after the class. No one is 'there' at that number except during the scheduled class time.
2. If you have call waiting, please disable it first before calling in. Please turn off all other phones as well, so that we may have a distraction free environment.
3. This phone bridge cannot support computer based phone technology, so please don't use computer telephone or use a computer/internet link to call in as it can cause the entire system to become disabled.

6. When you call in, the facilitator of the call will hear a beep so she will know someone has arrived, but no one will know that it's you. When you hear "Hi, who just joined the call?" feel free to say 'Hi, everyone, this is Mary from Chicago' or whatever. You will also be asked to say your name every time you share: "This is Mark, and I think..."

7. If you call in late, but please don't speak when coming in because you will interrupt the call. Listen quietly and come up to speed into the flow of the discussion.

8. Try not to breathe right into the mouthpiece, use your mute button to prevent any background noise and please don't put the phone on hold, particularly if you have 'music' on hold.

9. When the class is over, feel free to say goodbye to everyone and just hang up. Please don't stay on the line after the call is over as the telephone conferencing system needs to reset itself.

10. Unless you have free long-distance with your phone company, you will see just regular, long distance charges on your phone bill for dialing to the state where the bridge is located.

11. If you are calling internationally, it is a good idea to get an account with a low cost service carrier. I particularly like www.onesuite.com