



case study

## NCCU School of Law Uses Zoom to Enhance Virtual Education and Empower Communities

North Carolina Central University (NCCU) School of Law has been integral in providing educational opportunities for communities in and around North Carolina. Established in 1939, the NCCU School of Law has been recognized for its Virtual Justice Project, which uses the power of video conferencing to deliver legal education to participants. The initiative focuses on preparing students for law school through virtual pre-law courses and empowering communities through a series called “Know Your Rights,” which are sessions designed to educate citizens on their rights and promote self-advocacy.

These sessions provide communities with important legal information that’s not always readily available, such as the rights of tenants, what to do when you’re stopped by police, and what to do in a domestic violence situation. The NCCU School of Law also uses its Virtual Justice Project to deliver other educational opportunities to the community, which include sessions on health, diet, finance, and taxes.

### Challenge

Although NCCU School of Law was using a legacy communications tool for virtual classes, the tool’s lack of stability made it difficult to provide a consistent experience for students.

“The issue we were having was negotiating the speed of the call,” said Greg Clinton, Director of Information Technology and Facilities at NCCU. “It required a faster business connection to work well, and most of the connections our students were using were 3G or home-based internet access, so we had frequent disconnections. I also didn’t have the bench of engineers to manage the calls, so we would have 35 people or so on a call, and they would constantly drop because they were losing connection.”

The limited capability of the solution also made it difficult for NCCU professors to teach. Effectively delivering legal education in a virtual space requires a reliable communications platform that allows



**NCCentral**  
UNIVERSITY

North Carolina Central  
University School of Law

**Founded:** 1910

**Headquarters:** Durham, North Carolina

**Industry:** Education

**Challenges:** Unreliable video communications solution, delivery of legal education to remote students and participants, inability to effectively teach large groups

**Solution:** Zoom Meetings, Zoom Rooms

**Business Benefits:** Reliable video conferencing, effective delivery of legal education to remote participants, effective instruction of large groups

“We use Zoom as an extension of our real-life experience. I’ve used the screen sharing feature to write grants with other employees, students use Zoom for appointments with their professors. We use it to present to other universities about the Virtual Justice Project. We even bought enough licenses so our brick-and-mortar classes can turn into virtual classes when we have inclement weather.”

– Greg Clinton

Director of Information Technology and Facilities at NCCU School of Law

professors to interact with students in a meaningful way. Without the ability to see all of their students in real time, professors were missing a key component that makes in-person instruction so effective.

“In the study of law, we feel as though we want to be able to see the students all the time because you want to be able to see the confusion on students’ faces and call on them in real time,” Clinton said. “With previous virtual applications, it did not work because there were limitations on the number of people you can see at one time.”

## Solution

As the issues with NCCU’s legacy communications solution became clearer, Clinton tasked technology support analyst Mauranda Elliott with finding a communications solution that could meet the growing needs of the Virtual Justice Project. Clinton and Elliott evaluated a wide range of solutions, including GoToMeeting and BlueJeans, but they fell short in meeting NCCU’s needs for reliability and flexibility.

When Elliott presented Zoom, Clinton was impressed by its reliability and feature set. Clinton decided to put the solution to the test with two professors who teach large classes.

“The concern at the time was that we could not teach classes larger than 25 students over video because you start to lose the effectiveness of the instruction,” Clinton said. “So we piloted the solution with professors teaching first-year classes, with about 60 students. Our professors could clearly see their students’ faces, which really helped improve the classroom experience.”

After receiving positive feedback from these professors, Clinton decided to implement Zoom across the organization. He noticed immediate improvement with the virtual experience in the School of Law. With the ability to see students in real time, professors were able to provide more engaging lectures and meaningful interactions.

Clinton saw that Zoom was also being utilized in other successful ways across the university by students, professors, and other staff members to streamline operations and provide additional educational opportunities.

“We use Zoom as an extension of our real-life experience,” Clinton said. “I have used the screen sharing feature to write grants with other employees. Students use Zoom for appointments with their professors. We use it to present to other universities about the Virtual Justice Project. We even purchased enough licenses so our brick-and-mortar classes can turn into virtual classes when we have inclement weather.”

“It’s also been great for professors,” Elliott added. “With Zoom, professors do not have to make up classes on a Saturday or give their classes a pre-recorded lecture. I have even conducted Zoom classes for professors when I was over two hours away from the university.”

## Result

Providing valuable legal instruction and important rights information to communities is core to the NCCU School of Law’s mission, and Zoom provides a reliable video communications experience for instructors and students.

And while Zoom has been critical for improving the education of NCCU law students, it has also been essential to providing educational opportunities in the communities that need them most.

“We use Zoom to solve problems and to extend the knowledge base and resources we have here at NCCU to other places,” Clinton said. “It has become a natural part of what we do.”

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Zoom helps businesses and organizations bring their teams together in a frictionless cloud environment to get more done. Our easy, reliable, video-first unified communications platform for video, voice, content sharing, and chat runs across mobile devices, desktops, telephones, and room systems. Founded in 2011, Zoom is a publicly traded company on Nasdaq (ticker: ZM) and headquartered in San Jose, California.

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