

Centra: Quick Guide for SPH Students



<http://centra.communitytechnology.org>

- Overview
- Required Hardware or Software
- Log In/Attending a Session
- Set Up of Audio & Video
- Participating in an Event

Overview

Centra is a web conferencing tool that allows participants in disparate locations to interact in real time potentially sharing a presentation, audio, video, internet, chat, a whiteboard, and software applications. Sessions can be of any duration and are led by a designated person who manages the session.

Required Hardware or Software

Automatic Download of Software – this automatically happens the first time – and only the first time – you access Centra from a particular machine

Headset/Mic – required only if you wish to participate with live audio

Camera – required only if you wish to participate with live video

HINT: For best possible results, we recommend using a USB mic or a USB external sound card for isolation from electro-magnetic interference.

Log In/Attending a Session

You must be given a username and password to participate in a Centra session and this should be managed and communicated to you by the Leader of your session. After you log in, you can choose what event you want to attend from the center section:

- Upcoming* - events yet to happen
- Ongoing* - events currently underway
- Past* - events that have already happened

When you see the event you want, simply click on the “Attend” link to start the session.

The screenshot shows the Centra web interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Centra logo and the text "Alliance for Community Technology". Below this, there are links for "Help", "Tutorial", "System Check", and "ACT". The main content area is titled "My Schedule" and is for user "Nancy Pulsipher". It shows a table of events with columns for "Event", "Start Time", and "Duration". The table lists one event: "Test Session (MQN604859)" on "8/16/06 2:00 PM" with a duration of "1h 00m". Below the table, there are links for "Lead", "View Enrollment", "Unenroll", "Browse Content", and "Reports". On the left side, there is a sidebar menu with options like "My Schedule", "Enrollment", "My Profile", "Downloads", "Tools", "Event Manager", "Manage Users", "Manage Events", "Manage Images", and "Manage Surveys".

Set Up of Audio & Video

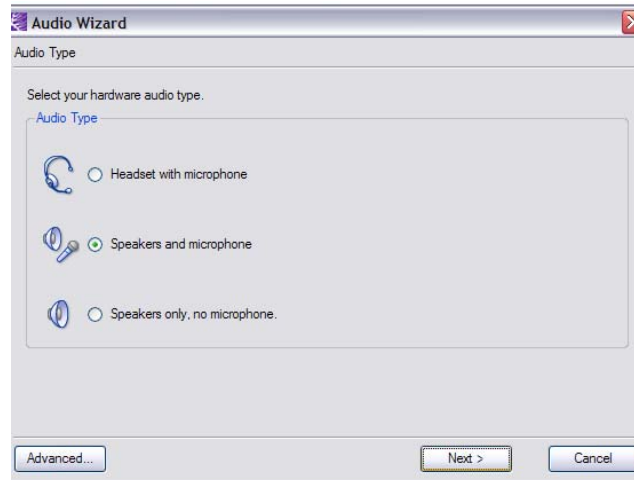
Most often, only audio will be used by participants. To test and ensure your audio capabilities are working properly, Centra provides the Audio Wizard under the Tools menu.

1) The first step in the *Audio Wizard* is to establish what type of audio you are using, either:

Headset with microphone

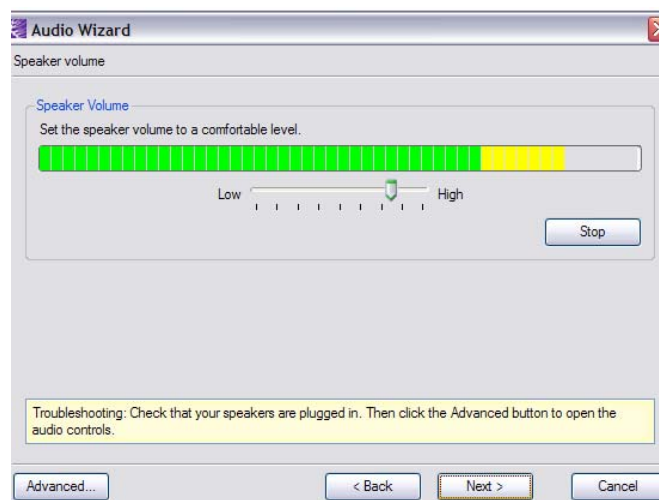
Speakers and microphone

Speakers only, no microphone – this means you will not be speaking during the session

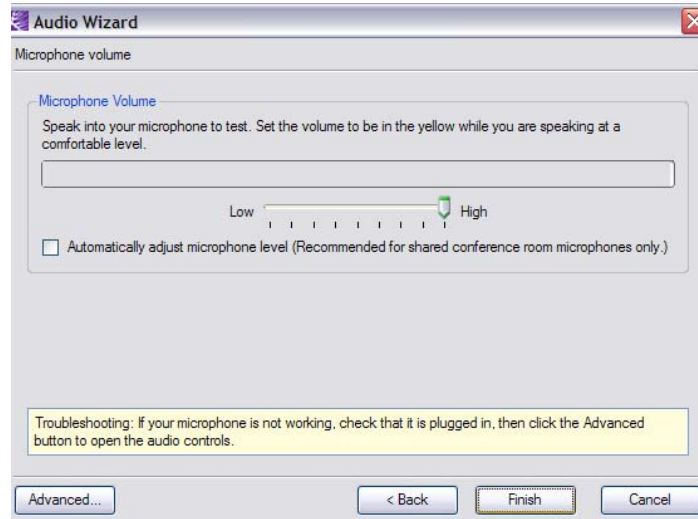


NOTE: In case your computer has multiple audio devices, you'll need to select the preferred one by clicking on the *Advanced* button.

2) The next step is to test your listening capabilities (speakers or headset). If you hear the recording then connections are working.

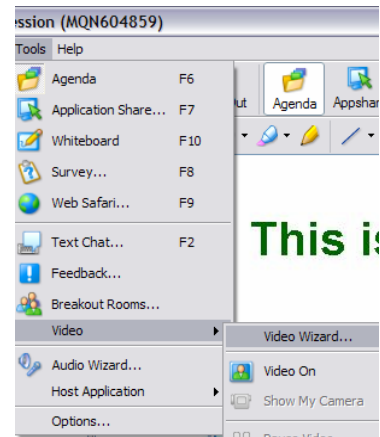


3) The next step will test your speaking capabilities. Speak into your microphone and if you hear your own voice the settings are working.



If you have trouble with any step in the *Audio Wizard*, click on the *Advanced...* button at any point in the wizard to double check what hardware has been selected. Make changes in the selections and test again.

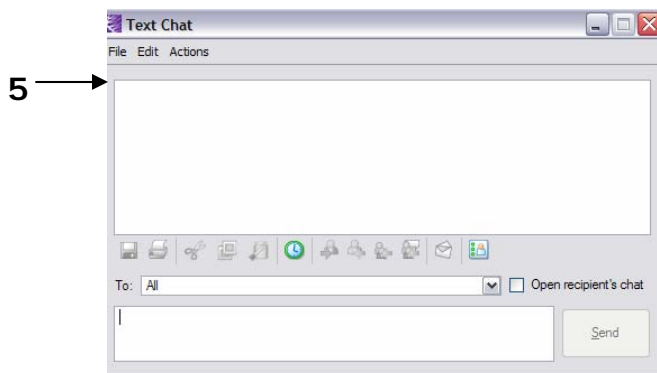
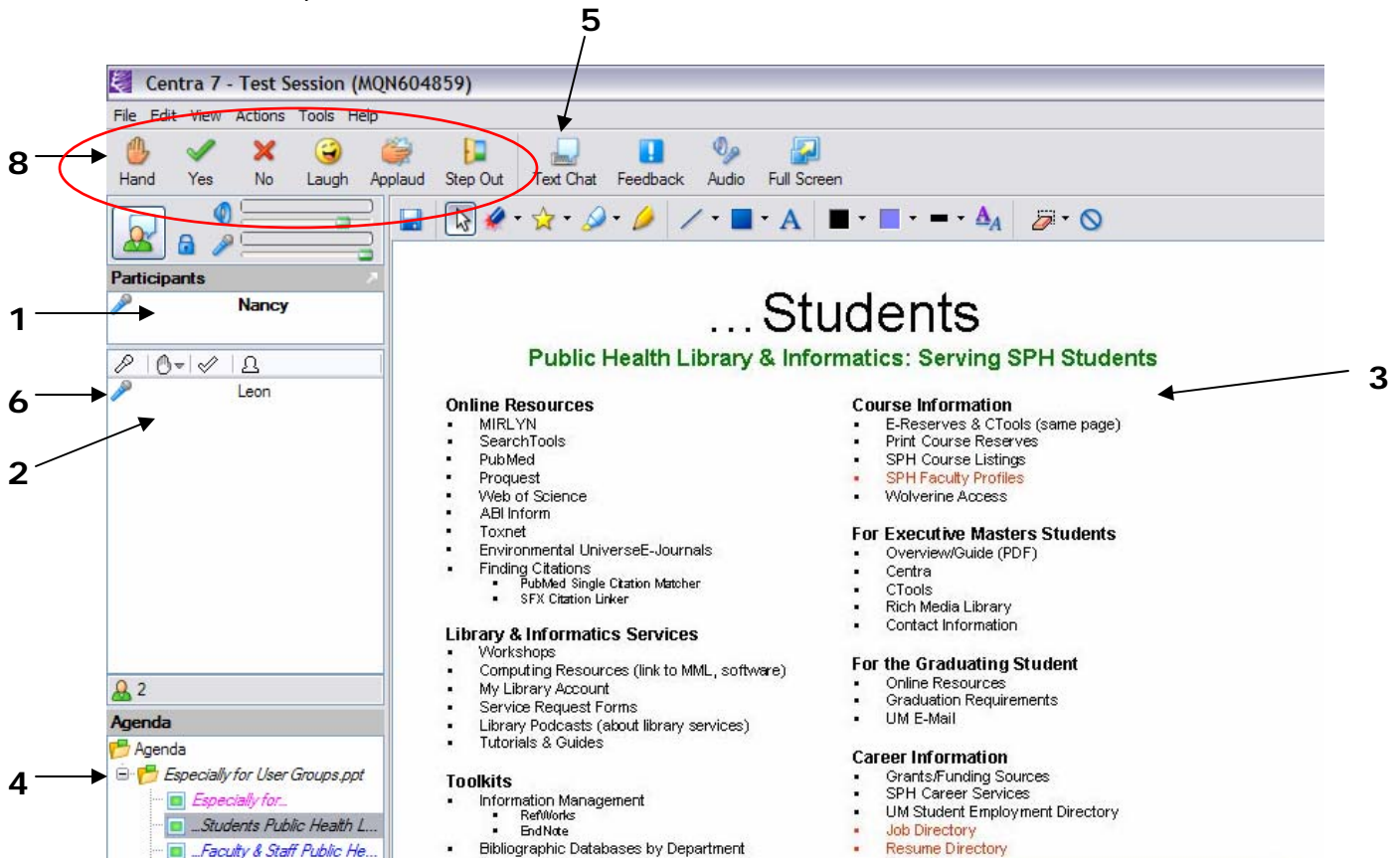
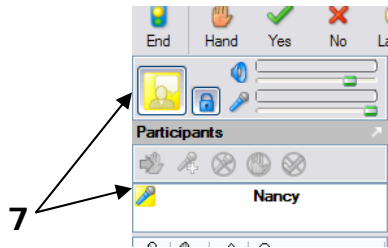
If you will be using Video, open up the *Video Wizard (Tools → Video → Wizard)* to perform the same test on video capabilities.



Participating in an Event

As a participant in a Centra session, you are able to speak, listen, chat, view the presentation, and interact via established response mechanisms. On occasion the Leader or Co-Presenter may give you control of an application or Presenter capabilities, but this is up to the Leader/Co-Presenter.

- 1 – Leader(s)/Co-Presenter(s)
- 2 – Participants
- 3 – Presentation Area
- 4 – Agenda (Slides)
- 5 – Text Chat (opens as a separate window in Centra)
- 6 – Microphone Indicates Active Audio
- 7 – Yellow Microphone Indicates Live Audio
- 8 – Response Mechanisms

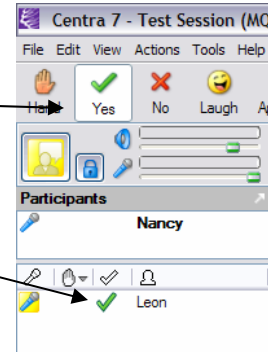


Public Health Library & Informatics, School of Public Health, University of Michigan
This guide was written primarily for School of Public Health students in executive education programs.

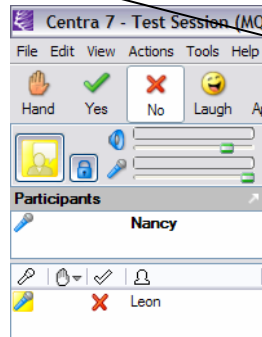
Established Response Mechanisms

Response Mechanisms allow participants to respond to the presenter quickly. When a participant chooses a response by clicking the button, a corresponding icon will appear next to their name.

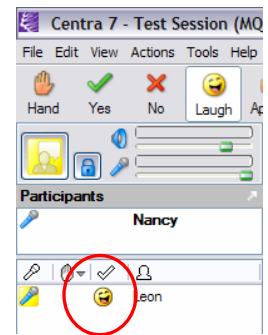
If asked a question, you can respond "Yes" by choosing the *Green Check Mark*:



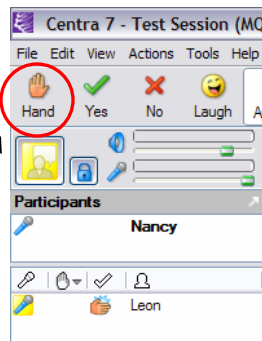
Or "No" by choosing the *Red X*:



If the Presenter tells a joke, you can indicate your approval of the humor by "Laughing:"



Or by "Applauding:"



You can also "Raise Your Hand" to draw the Presenter's attention to you to make a comment or ask a question.

If you need to step out of the Centra session, you can indicate your temporary absence by "Stepping Out." Click the button once to Step Out and a second time to Step Back In. Stepping Out will inactivate your tools (they will gray out) and will require the Leader/Co-Presenter to reactivate your microphone when you return.

