Final Touches for Uploading Your Own Youtube Videos

If you are creating your own digital content, like a Youtube video, for use in a course, here are a few tips and tricks you should know before uploading your video. These steps help make your video more accessible, more useful, and reach your learners where they are.

Adding Captions

Captions are an important part of your video content. With captions, your video is more:

- Audible: If you are not using a lapel microphone and/or if there is background noise, captions help convey your point even when the audio is garbled.
- **Approachable**: The denser your content is, the more helpful captions are. Students can rewind the video and read the captions while listening to the audio until they grasp the content.
- **Available**: If your learners are doing homework while at work, commuting, or in a library, they can use the captions to follow along with your content even when they can't have the volume turned on.
- **Accessible**: Learners with physical or intellectual disabilities use captions regularly as part of their classroom accommodations. Adding captions when you upload a video means you don't have to go back and add them later.

Though Youtube will automatically add captions, they have no punctuation and often contain unfortunate mistakes based on perceived homonyms (voice recognition software is not as good as a human scribe!). After you upload your video, **you should check the captions to make sure they communicate what you intend**. Several comedians create routines based on so-called "caption fails," usually involving inappropriate language, and you do not want your video to be included in their repertoire!

It may be easier and faster to type or **upload your own captions** rather than editing the automatic captions.

- Instructions for Adding Captions to Youtube Videos

You can **force captions to start automatically on your video**. Some students may not be in the habit of using captions, but if you automatically start them, every student will be able to take advantage of your captions.

- Instructions for Forcing Captions to Start Automatically on Your Videos

Finally, you should **upload a custom thumbnail or screenshot for your video**. If not, Youtube will automatically pick a still image from your video as the thumbnail, and the options are usually not very flattering to the speaker. A custom thumbnail can be a simple Powerpoint slide. It should contain the name of the course and the content being covered, and helps to introduce the learner to the topic at hand.

- Adding a Custom Thumbnail to Your Youtube Videos