Slack for Faculty Coordination

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What Slack is

Slack is a shared workspace for conversations organized by topic.

- Channels keep announcements, seminar, teaching, committee work, and research projects in separate places.
- Colleagues can reply in threads, share files and links, and search earlier discussions.
- Direct messages handle quick questions between individuals or small groups.

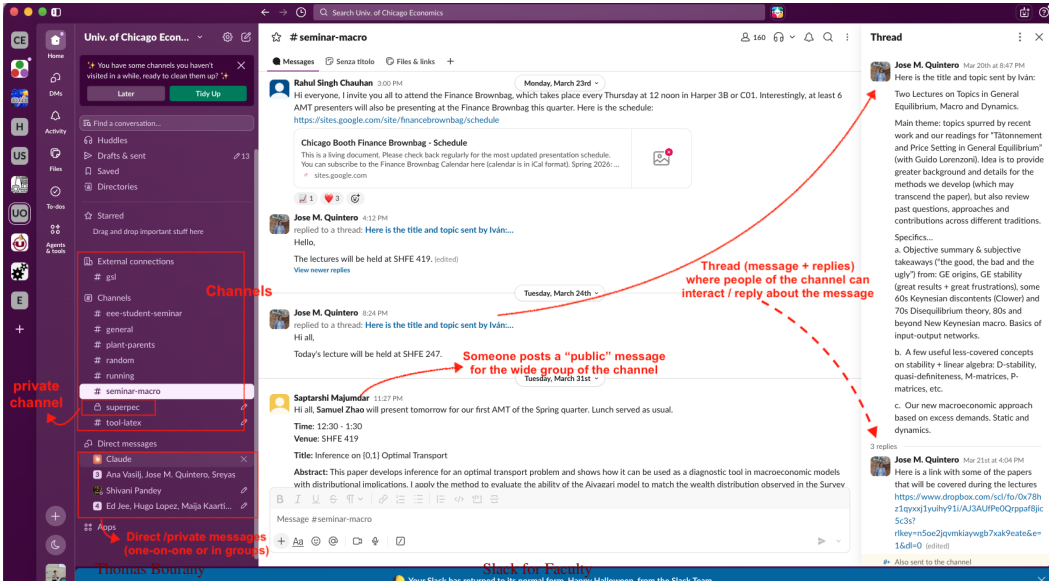
Information stays with the subject rather than in individual inboxes.

Advantages for faculty

- Less email traffic: colleagues follow the channels relevant to their work instead of joining every mailing list.
  - Conversations, shared links, and project documents remain accessible in their channels.
- Easier collaboration: research groups/teams keep discussion and documents together
  - Shared history helps a project continue when faculty or staff roles change.
- Lower barrier to asking: questions reach the right group without faculty-wide emails
  - New colleagues can find earlier context without relying on forwarded email chains.
- Asynchronous work: faculty who travel can catch up whenever convenient
  - Conversations, shared links, and project documents remain accessible in their channels
- AI-integration: agents/AI-tools can “look” through documents / slack conversations
  - Summarize channels / daily recaps or reminders / could write messages

The main gain is continuity in day-to-day coordination.

An example – workspace for UChicago PhD students



Slack vs. Discord for a faculty

Slack

- Slack $\equiv$ tech / startup environments
- Similar on channels/threads
- Search covers messages and files, apps connect calendars and document tools.
- Costly: 8 eur / person / mth, 85% education discount

Discord

- Discord $\approx$ gaming / social media
- Similar on channels/threads, Community servers also have forums / live interaction.
- Search covers messages and files; apps and bots extend servers.
- No cost / free

For faculty, Slack fits coordination around documents

A practical setup for EIEF

Slack for faculty and students:

- For faculty (25-35 persons), RED students ($\sim$30), admins ($\sim$6) visitors ($>$6 mths, $\sim 2-5$)
- Pro plan: for 75-100 person = 1200-1600 eur/year ($\sim$ 7000 eur/year w/o ed discount)
- always possible to add ”guests”, e.g. RoME students RAs?

Start with a few clear channels:

- `#announcements` for broad updates; `#teaching` for course-related questions.
- `#seminar-xxx` for seminar schedules / titles / abstracts, `#conferences` for conference reminders, `#students-workshops` for job talks, etc.
- `#research-opportunities`, `#funding`, for info colleagues may want to revisit.
- Dedicated channels for coauthorship projects / advising / RAship / committee. Private channels for restricted work.

Set a simple communication rule: use email for formal or official notices, and Slack for ongoing discussion, coordination, and shared resources.