

COLLABORATION TOOLS

Collaboration tools allow users to participate in real-time lessons and discussions. Examples include:

- Online classroom discussions
- Guest speaker lectures
- Lab demonstrations
- Live question-and-answer sessions

Two primary collaboration tools are available:

- **Chat:** Users exchange text messages online.
- **Virtual classroom:** A shared online environment where users can view links, share desktops, exchange files, and chat.

You can save and record both types of collaboration for future review.

INSTALL THE REQUIRED JAVA PLUG-IN

The Java 2 Run Time Environment is required to use the Blackboard Learn collaboration tools. The plug-in may be downloaded from the page that appears when a user joins a collaboration session, or may be found at <http://java.sun.com/products/plugin/index.html>.

Take care to uninstall any existing Java plug-ins before installing a new version.

ABOUT BROWSER POP-UP BLOCKERS

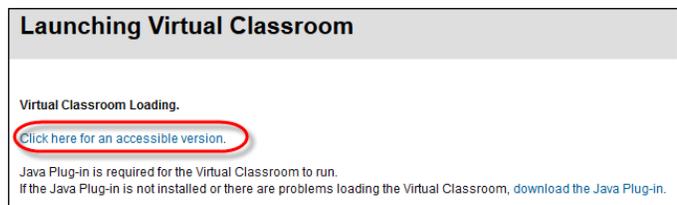
For the collaboration tool to work properly, browser supporting pop-up window blocking must be disabled or your institution's website made a trusted site.

ACCESS THE ACCESSIBLE COLLABORATION TOOL

An accessible version of the collaboration tool is available.

A link to this version appears when **Join** is clicked on the **Collaboration Sessions** page. This link will open the accessible version of the collaboration tool. Links to items that appear in the virtual classroom, such as items in the course menu and group browser, will appear in this version. Documents created on the whiteboard may be viewed if the session moderator takes a snapshot. A link will be created to the snapshot for users to view.

The sound of a door opening or closing is audible to all participants whenever a user enters or leaves a session through the accessible version.



CHAT

The chat tool allows you to interact with other users using a text-based chat. Chat is part of the virtual classroom. You can also access it separately.

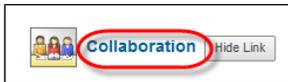
Use the chat tool when real-time discussion is required. Most students are comfortable with using some form of chat.

The chat tool was designed to be ideal for low bandwidth situations, such as when your students are connecting to your course using a dial-up connection.

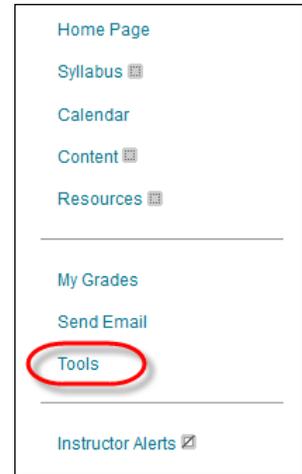
ACCESS CHAT

You can access chat in the collaboration tool from the **Tools** link on the course menu and from the Control Panel.

1. On the course menu, click **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **Collaboration**.



3. On the **Collaboration Sessions** page, you can view which tool sessions have been created in the **Tool** column.

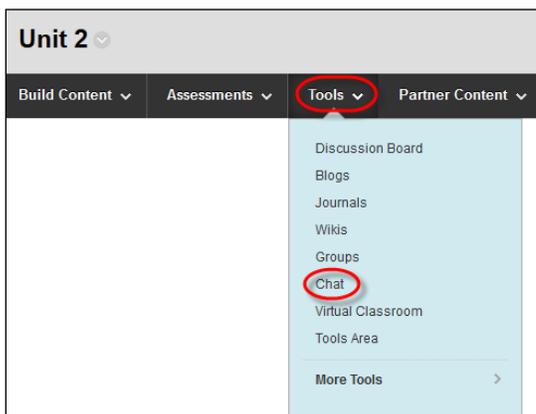


HOW TO ADD A CHAT LINK IN A COURSE AREA

You can manually add links to chat in course areas, such as a content area or folder.

For example, you set up a content area to include all the content and tools your students need for the week. After reading the weekly lecture, viewing a slide presentation, and completing two assignments, students then access the chat tool for the mandatory weekly session. Finally, they complete the weekly test, accomplishing all of these tasks in the same content area.

1. Change **Edit Mode** to **ON** and access the course area where you want to add a chat link.
2. On the action bar, point to **Tools** and click **Chat**.



- On the **Create Link: Chat** page, select the type of link. Also, you may link to a specific chat session or create a new chat session at this time.
- Click **Next**.
- On the next **Create Link: Chat** page, complete the **Link Information** to specify how it will appear in the content area. Select the options, if you want to change them.

- Click **Submit**.

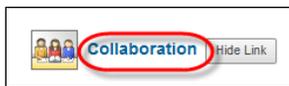
HOW TO CREATE A CHAT SESSION

You can create chat sessions:

- For the duration of the course:** Students can schedule meetings and use the session at any time.
- At a specific time:** Student attendance at these sessions may be mandatory.
- To group members only:** Students in a group can schedule sessions to discuss projects, divide up tasks, and brainstorm.

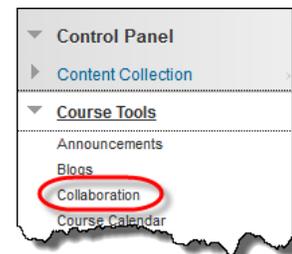
Use the following steps to create a chat session:

- On the course menu, click the **Tools** link. On the **Tools** page, click **Collaboration**.



-OR-

On the **Control Panel**, expand the **Course Tools** section and click **Collaboration**.



2. On the **Collaboration Sessions** page, click **Create Collaboration Session** on the action bar.



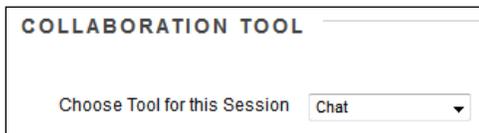
3. On the **Create Collaboration Session** page, type a **Session Name**.

A screenshot of a form titled "SESSION NAME". Below the title is a text input field containing the text "Week 1 Chat". To the left of the input field is a red asterisk icon and the text "Session Name".

4. Select the **Display After** and **Display Until** check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Display restrictions do not affect the session availability, only when it appears.

A screenshot of a form titled "SCHEDULE AVAILABILITY". It contains two rows of checkboxes. The first row has a checked "Start After" checkbox followed by a date and time picker. The second row has a checked "End After" checkbox followed by a date and time picker. Below these is an "Available" section with "Yes" selected and "No" unselected.

5. Make the session available.
6. In the **Collaboration Tool** section, select **Chat** from the drop-down list.

A screenshot of a form titled "COLLABORATION TOOL". It contains a label "Choose Tool for this Session" followed by a drop-down menu with "Chat" selected.

7. Click **Submit**.

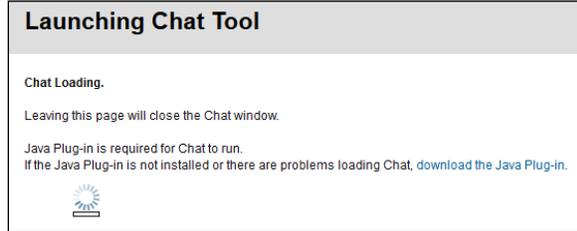
JOIN A CHAT SESSION

On the **Collaboration Sessions** page, click the **Session Name**.

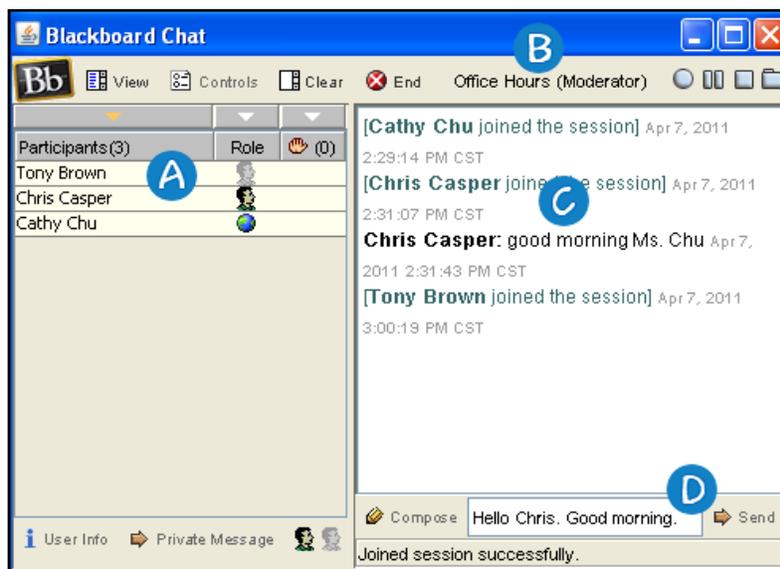


Session Name ▲	Tool
 Lecture Hall	Virtual Classroom
 Office Hours	Chat
 Week 1 Chat	Chat

A **Launching Chat Tool** page appears. Do not leave this page until you are finished chatting. The chat session opens in a new browser window and may take a moment to load.



NOTE: Chat will not work if pop-up blockers are enabled. Either turn off your pop-up blocker or make your course site a trusted site.

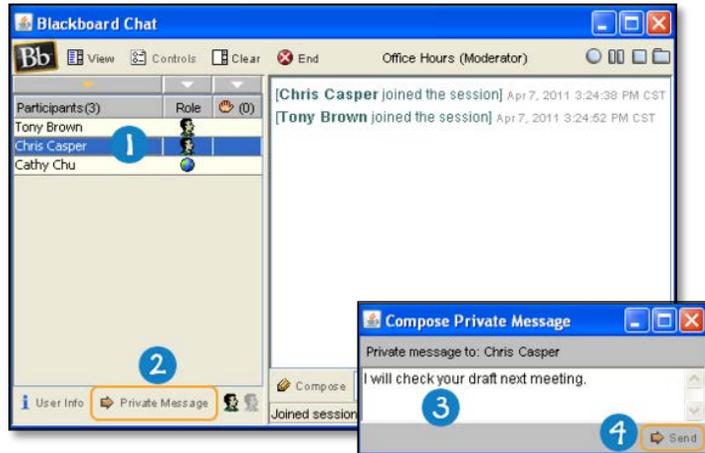


- A. A list of participants and their roles appear in the first column.
 - The chat session moderator is represented by a globe icon. The moderator is typically the instructor. The moderator can modify participant roles, grant passive users permission to participate, expel users, and record and end the session.
 - Active users are represented by a full color icon. An active user is typically a student. By default, active users can send messages as often as they want during a chat session.
 - Passive users are represented by a gray toned icon. A passive user also is typically a student, but might be a guest or observer. Passive users can observe the chat exchange, but must raise their hands (click on the hand icon) to request permission to send messages. If more than one user raises their hands, numbers are assigned to the handraise icons to represent the order they raised their hands.
- B. The title of the chat room appears at the top of the chat display panel.
- C. All messages appear in the chat display panel.
- D. Type your message in the **Compose** box and click **Send**. Alternatively, you can click the compose icon to open a new window, allowing for a larger area for typing.

HOW TO SEND A PRIVATE MESSAGE

You can send private messages to other users if this feature is enabled. Private messages are not recorded or archived. Private messages can appear with all your other messages in the chat display panel, or you can choose to display them in a separate panel. Private messages are always preceded by "Private Message from." Click **View** on the action bar and choose where private messages will appear.

NOTE: Only users who have an active role can send private messages.



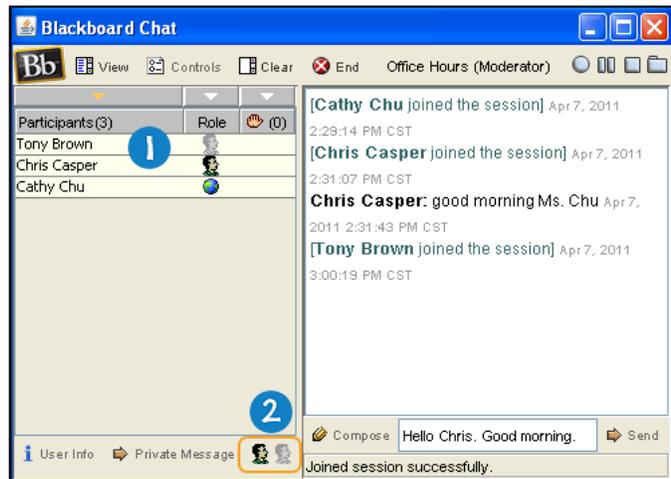
1. On the **Participant** list, select the recipient or recipients of your private message.
2. Click **Private Message**.
3. In the **Compose Private Message** pop-up window, type your message.
4. Click **Send**.

HOW TO MODIFY PARTICIPANT ROLES

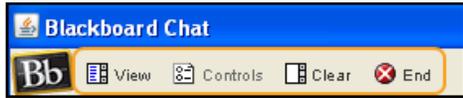
By default, participants are designated as active users when they enter a chat session. At any time, you can change the role to passive. Passive users can view the chat exchange, but can only contribute if they raise their hands and are granted permission by the moderator.

You control chat sessions to a greater degree when users are passive. For example, if each student must first ask for permission to participate, you are less likely to have a whole series of questions to respond to at once. You can also make a certain user passive if you feel he is dominating the conversation or responding inappropriately.

1. On the **Participants** list, click the name of a user.
2. Click an icon to activate or deactivate a user's permission to chat. The icon in the **Participants** list is updated.



MANAGE CHAT SESSIONS



- **View:** Choose where to display private messages.
- **Controls:** Select which features each role can use. By default, only active users can send messages and private messages.
- **Clear:** Clear your chat panel or the chat panel of all session participants.
- **End:** Stop a session. The session is ended and all users are dismissed. If you are recording the session, the recording is also ended, and it is no longer possible to add bookmarks to the recording.

VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

The virtual classroom environment includes a shared whiteboard, a group browser, a question-and-answer area, and a map that you can use to navigate to areas in your course. The session moderator establishes which tools users can access.

HOW TO ACCESS THE VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

1. On the **Control Panel**, expand the **Course Tools** section and click **Collaboration**.



2. Click the Virtual Classroom's **Session Name** to Join.



VIRTUAL CLASSROOM MENU BAR



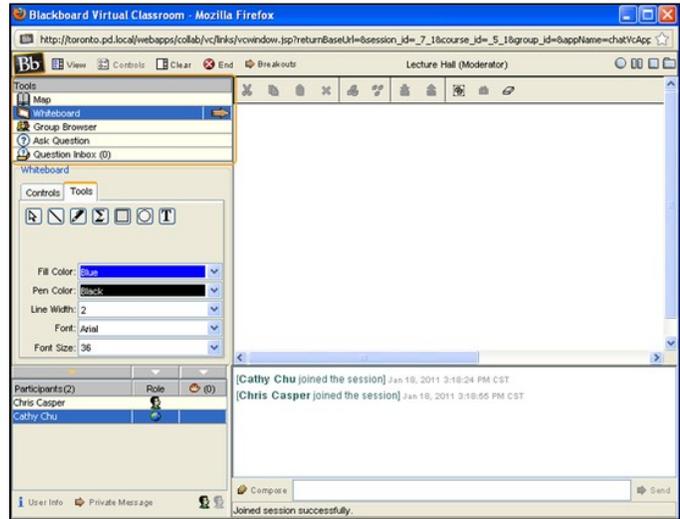
- **View:** Click **Show in-line** to view private messages within the chat area. Click **Show in separate frame** to view private messages in a separate window.
- **Controls:** Select the check boxes to grant access to tools for passive and active users. Clear a check box to delete access to a tool.
- **Clear:** Clear the currently visible chat display. If you are recording the session, this has no effect on the recorded chat text.
- **End:** Stop a session. The session is ended and all users are dismissed.
- **Breakouts:** Select the check boxes for the users who will participate in the breakout session. Users may only join a breakout session if they are selected by the creator of the breakout session. Users who enter a breakout session are still active in the main virtual classroom session. If a breakout session is closed, users are still active in the main session. Breakout sessions default to the same settings as the main session.

VIRTUAL CLASSROOM TOOL BOX

To begin using items on the **Tool** tab, click the name of a tool.

The following tools are available in the classroom tool box:

- Whiteboard
- Group Browser
- Map
- Ask Question
- Question Inbox



WHITEBOARD

The whiteboard tools allow users to draw images, type text, and present equations. The session moderator determines whether this function is made available to users.

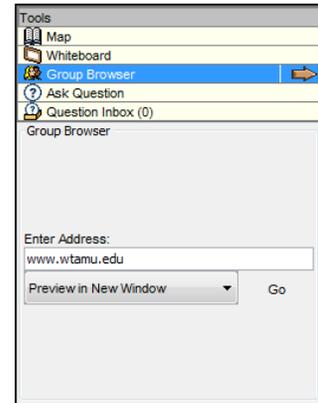
The following table details the functions available on the whiteboard.

To	Click
Select an item	<p>The arrow tool. Then, click an item for selection. The following actions may be performed on selected items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enlarge: Click the small black boxes that surround an item and drag it to the appropriate size. • Move • Cut • Copy • Paste • Delete • Group items: Click multiple items and click the Group icon. • Ungroup: Click an item in a group. Then, click the Ungroup icon. • Bring front • Bring back • Select all figures on the whiteboard
Draw free hand	<p>The pen tool. Choose the color of the pen in the Pen Color drop-down list. Next, choose the line width.</p>
Type text using the keyboard	<p>The text tool (T), and then the whiteboard area. A Whiteboard Text Input box appears. Type the text and click Insert. Use the options in the Tools palette for color, font, and size.</p>
Draw a straight line	<p>The line tool.</p>
Draw a rectangle or oval	<p>The rectangle and oval tools. Choose the color of the square from the Fill Color drop-down list to draw a solid shape. To draw the outline of the shape, click None for the fill color. The outline of the shape will be the color of the pen tool and have the selected line width.</p>
Input an equation	<p>The math and science equation editor icon. Input the equation and click Insert Equation.</p>

GROUP BROWSER

Use the group browser to explore the internet as a group. You can open a URL that is viewable by all users and appear in recordings. The session moderator determines whether this function is made available to users.

Click **Preview in New Window** to open a website in a new browser window. The preview window only appears to the user who opened it.

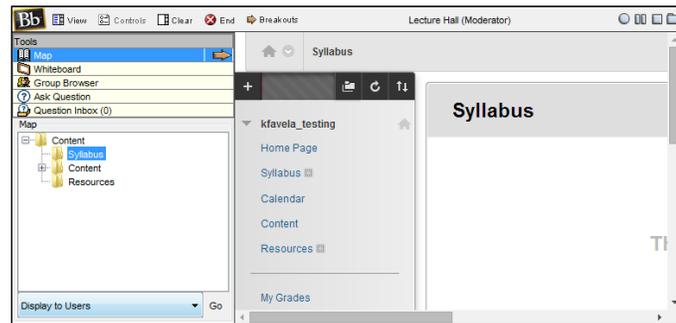


MAP

Use the course map to browse the course menu as a group. By default, the session moderator has access to operate the course map. Only active users can use the course map.

At any time, click **Refresh Tree** in the drop-down list to update the course map to match the course menu.

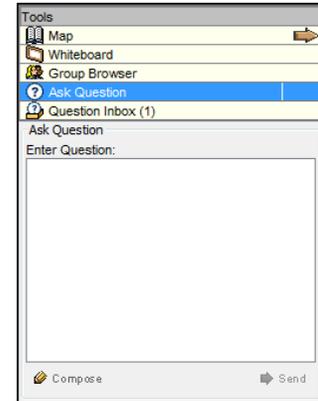
Click **Preview in New Window** to open the map in a new browser window. The preview window only appears to the user who opened it.



ASK QUESTION

Users are able to ask questions during a session. As users submit questions, the session moderator can view and respond to them. Only active users can ask questions.

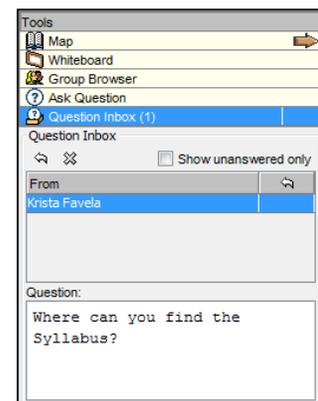
To ask a question, click **Compose**. Type a question and click **Send**.



QUESTION INBOX

Users can send questions to the question inbox.

The session moderator can select the **Show unanswered only** check box to show only unanswered questions. Mark a response **Private** to send it only to the user who submitted the question.



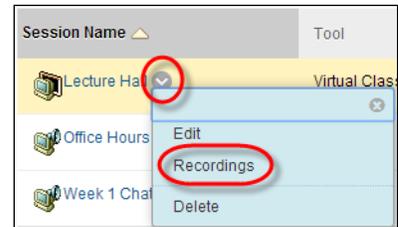
RECORD COLLABORATION SESSIONS

Session recordings allow users to review collaboration sessions, which are archived by date. A session will not appear in the list of saved recordings until the session moderator has stopped recording. If you do not stop the recording and exit the collaboration session, the recording will not end and no information is recorded in the recording duration column.

By default, session recordings are available to all session participants, including students. If you want, you can restrict availability and deny participants permission to access a session recording.

HOW TO ACCESS THE RECORDING SESSIONS PAGE

1. On the **Control Panel**, expand the **Course Tools** section and click **Collaboration**.
2. Access a session's contextual menu and click **Recordings**.



RECORDING CONTROLS

During a session, you can start, stop, pause, and restart recordings. You can make more than one recording for a session. If you click **End** to stop a session, the recording automatically stops.



- **Start:** Begin recording a session. You are prompted to name the recording.
- **Pause:** Pause a recording once it has started. Click again to restart the recording. Both the pause and restart will be marked and time stamped in the recording.
- **Stop:** End the recording. A stop marker and time/date stamp will be included at the end of the recording.
- **Bookmark:** Insert a bookmark anywhere in the recording of the session.

RECORD THE WHITEBOARD ACTIVITY

If you are recording a session, you can use the snapshot function (camera icon) on the whiteboard tool bar to capture the current state of the whiteboard and save it with the recording.

When playing the session recording, the whiteboard image shown will update to the time when the snapshot was captured.

