

UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD

FACULTY CENTER FOR LEARNING DEVELOPMENT

Instructors Guide to Blackboard Collaborate

Setting Up Recurring Blackboard Collaborate Sessions

For instructors who want to set a recurring date for their courses on Blackboard Collaborate, they can do so simply from the Blackboard Collaborate Ultra window on Blackboard. To start, you must choose the course you wish to use Collaborate with. After entering the class, click on Collaborate in the left hand menu.

My Courses

Courses where you are: Instructor

Preparing to Teach Online - Fall 2019

Preparing to Teach Online - Spring 2020

Rachel H - Student Worker Demo Course *(not currently available)*

Courses where you are: Student

BIO352: Molecular Cell Biology (Fall 20)

BIO442: Microbiology - Lecture (Fall 20)

Announcements:

> Review session recording

Choose the course you will use for Collaborate

+

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▼ Rachel H - Student Worker Demo Course 🏠

Announcement

Collaborate

Contacts

Course Information 📄

Course Documents

Assignments

Course Evaluations

Discussion Board

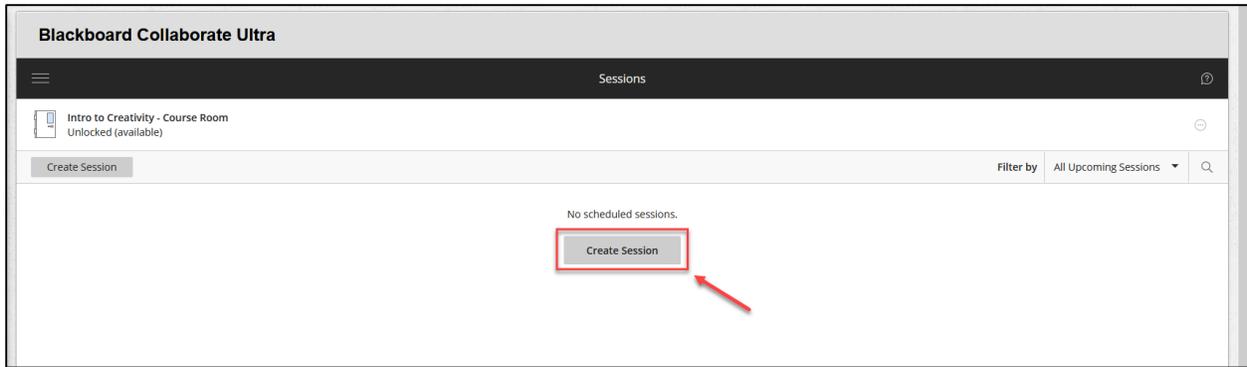
Recordings 📄

Tools

Alerts and Notifications

Note: If your course doesn't already have Collaborate in the left hand menu:

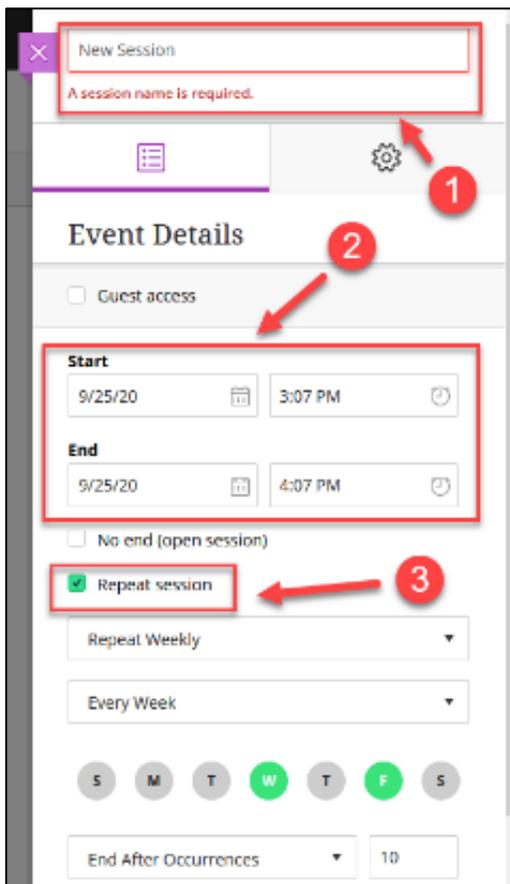
1. Click on the plus button at the top of the left menu.
2. Click on Tool Link.
3. Enter "Collaborate" under the Name field.
4. Choose "Blackboard Collaborate Ultra" under the Type menu selection.
5. Click on "Available to Users".



Creating a recurring session

To begin setting up a recurring session, you must navigate to the Blackboard Collaborate page in your Blackboard class. Once you have accessed the page, you should see in the middle of the page a button that says “Create Sessions”. Click on this button to begin the process of creating your reoccurring class.

Note: You may notice that there is a Course Room already created in Blackboard. As the instructor, you have a few options of how you’d like to treat this session. This will be covered later on in this document.



After clicking the “Create Session” button, you’ll be met with a pop-up menu on the right-hand side of your screen.

1: Creating a new session name

This is where you will name your class.

2: Start and End time of the course

For the **Start** and **End** fields, you must enter the first day your class will be open (under both **Start** and **End**) and the time your class starts and ends respectively.

3: Repeating the session

Collaborate has added in an option to save you time by allowing you to choose whether you want to repeat your session by a given period of time. Once you’ve clicked on the check box for “Repeat session”, you’ll be met with a few more options. You can choose how often you’d like your course to repeat, what days they’ll repeat on, and choose when you’d like your session(s) to be permanently closed.

4: Early entry

There are a few options you can choose from with how early you'd like your students to be able to access the session.

5: Creating your session

After filling out the necessary fields for your course, you can click on "Create".

Note: If the "Create" button is greyed out, it means you have not filled in a necessary field for your session.

Adjusting the Pre-made Course Room

As mentioned earlier, you may have already noticed that there is a pre-made course room for you class when you first click on the Collaborate link. As the instructor, there are a few options you have of controlling whether you'd like this room to stay open or not.

Locking the Course Room

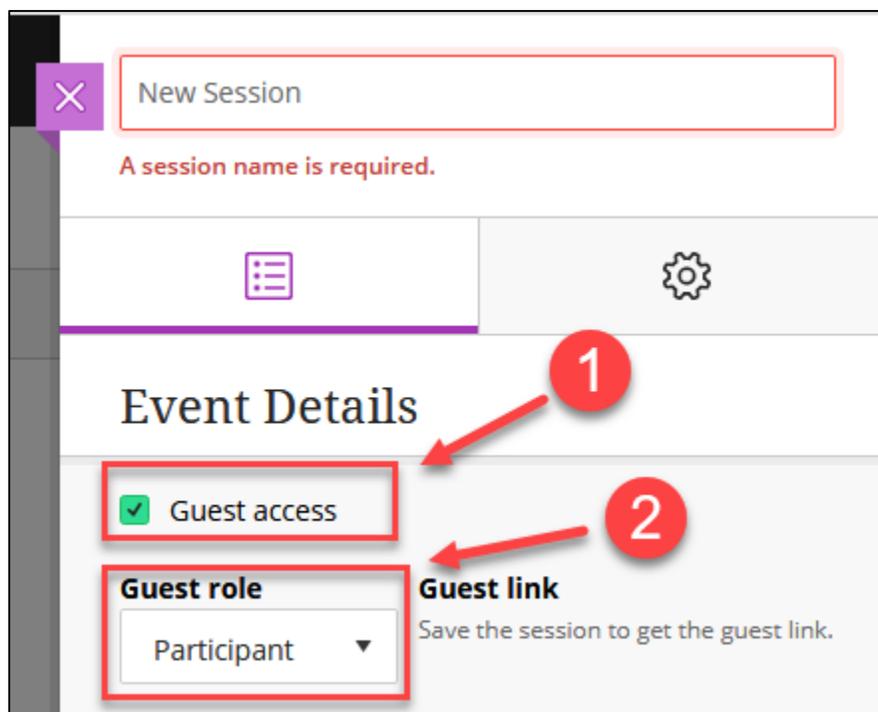
Locking the Pre-made Course Room

If you prefer to close this room for any purpose, you can simply click on the circle with the three dots inside of it. This will open a pop-up menu with a few options for you to choose from. One of those options should be titled "Lock course room". By simply clicking this option, you'll have

locked the room, allowing no one to access the Course Room session for the duration of your online class.

Creating a Guest Link

Another important feature when creating class sessions in Blackboard Collaborate is the Guest Access tab. This allows students to enter the class if you don't have a Collaborate tab in your Blackboard class. You can change the guest role to Participant, Presenter, or Moderator. Participant allows users with a link to log into your session and have the basic functions of someone participating in a class. Presenters are allowed the same functions as a Participant, but may share their screens to the entire class. Moderator's have complete control of how the class can operate when in a session.



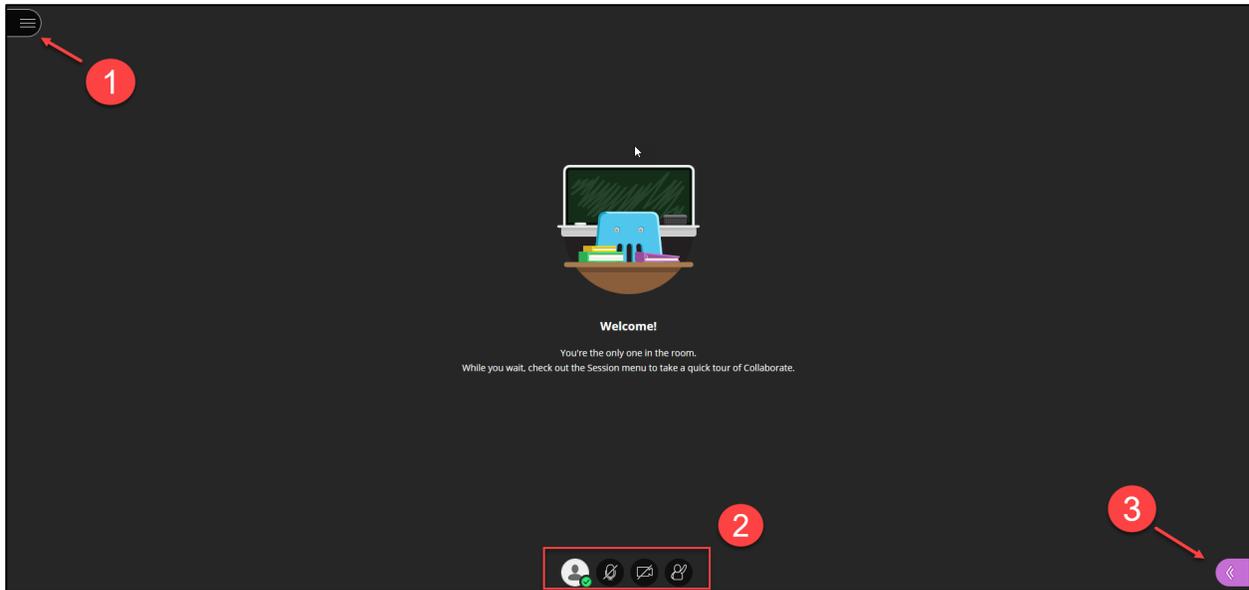
Obtaining the Guest Link

Once you've saved your session, you'll notice that there's now a link under the section called Guest Link. Send this link to all personnel that you want to attend your Collaborate session.

Note: If you change the Guest role (e.g. Participant to Moderator), you'll be given a new link when you save the session. Make sure every time you change the guest role and save your session that you send the new link to the personnel you made this change for.

How to Navigate the Blackboard Collaborate Sessions

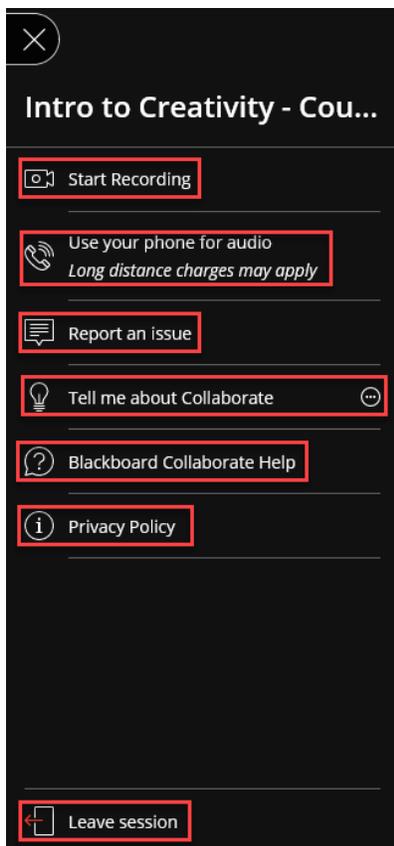
Detailed below is a step-by-step guide on how to navigate the Blackboard Collaborate Session.



The main window when entering the Collaborate session

1: Open Session Menu

By opening **Open Session Menu** tab, you'll have more options to experience and learn about Blackboard Collaborate or leave the session.



As the names suggest in each red box, you have the option to **record** the session, **use your phone for audio**, **report an issue** you're experiencing on Blackboard Collaborate, learn more about Blackboard Collaborate by click the **tell me about Collaborate** tab, search through common issues or popular pages on the Blackboard Help website by clicking **Blackboard Collaborate Help**, learn about Blackboard Collaborate's **privacy policy**, or – at the very bottom of the screen – click **Leave Session** to exit the session.

Clicking on **Blackboard Collaborate Help** and **Privacy Policy** will redirect you to Blackboard Help's respectively named web pages.

When you click on **Use your phone for audio**, it'll display a Dial In number and a PIN number you'll have to enter in order for your phone to connect to the Collaborate session.

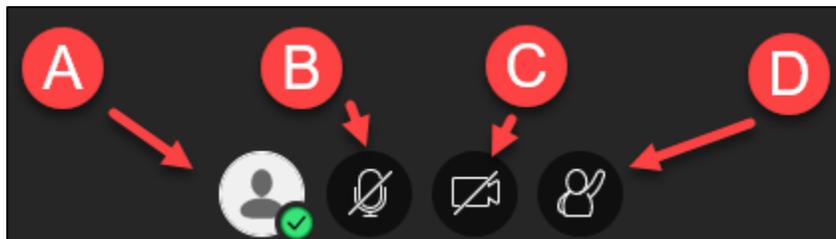
Clicking on **Report an issue** opens the Collaborate Panel and instantly directs you to the "Report an Issue" page where you can describe your issue in a maximum 1000 characters.

Clicking on **Tell me about Collaborate** will give you the option to choose two tutorials titled “Introduction to Collaborate” and “Learn about private chat. Both tutorials will give the user follow-all instructions.

Clicking on **Leave Session** will prompt you with a message asking how your experience was with options of rating the experience and submitting it and exiting, or simply skipping this step and exiting the session.

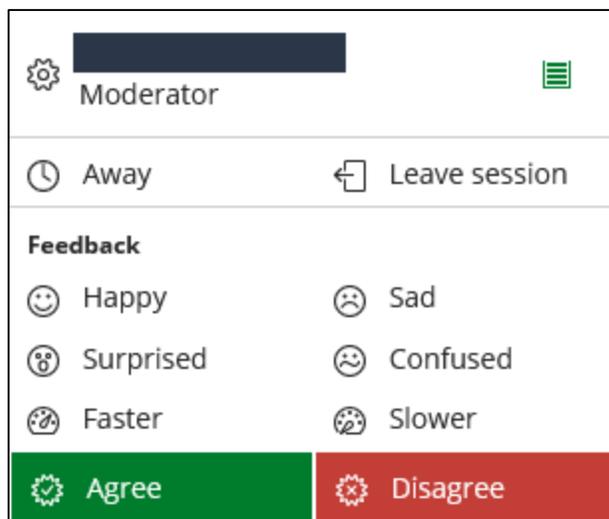
2: The User Experience

You have four main functions to control your experience and give feedback when using Blackboard Collaborate.



Utilizing the buttons at the bottom of the screen

- a. Your first option is the My Status and Settings tab. When you click on this tab, various commands will show up on how you can give feedback in your class, enter the settings tab, or even leave the session. You can give feedback by using the options under **Feedback**. You can also check your devices internet connection by observing the symbol highlighted below.



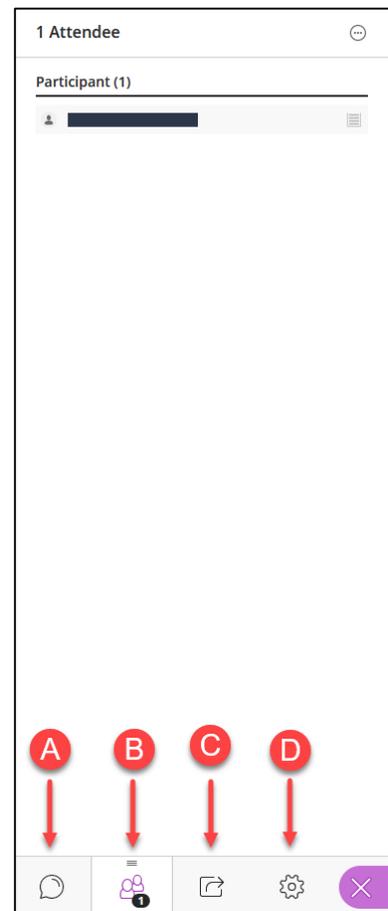
Feedback window

- b. You can simply mute and unmute yourself to speak to the class whenever prompted. You'll notice that your microphone is off when it is gray and has a slash through the microphone symbol. The microphone is on when it turns green and shows a white bar changing to various lengths of size.
- c. You can also turn your camera on or off when using Blackboard Collaborate. The look and function of the camera works similarly as the camera, meaning it'll be grayed out with a slash through it when it's off and green when turned on.
- d. The last function simply allows you to "Raise your Hand" to get the attention of the instructor for the class so that they may answer any questions you have regarding to the material being taught. Be mindful of any students who use this function to get your attention politely.

3: The Collaborate Panel

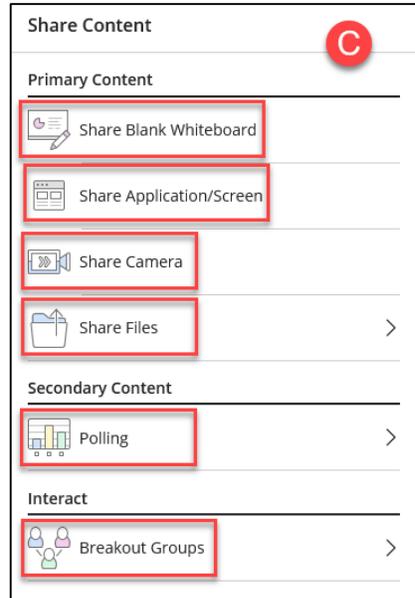
The Collaborate Panel allows participants to have more control over their experience when using Blackboard collaborate and even interact with the class. You'll also be able see the amount of people attending the class and who's in the class as well.

- a. This is the Chat button. You can use this feature for class discussions or ask questions if you're having difficulties with your microphone under the **Everyone** chat. There is an additional chat specific for **Moderators** to use as well if there is more than one moderator, or instructor, in the class session.
- b. This is the Participant list. You'll be able to see who is in the class and who the moderators are for the class.
- c. This is the Share Content button (Visual on the next page). As the moderator, there are a few options to choose from to enhance the classroom experience online. The first option is to **Share Blank Whiteboard**. As you might guess, this is a virtual whiteboard that you can draw on and manipulate using the features given to you in Blackboard Collaborate. Next is **Share Application/Screen**. This allows you to share your current screen, allowing you to run presentations and other programs while others may visually see what you're presenting. Third is **Share Camera**. This function allows you to turn your camera on. After is the **Share Files** function. You can send participants and other moderators files through Collaborate, allowing you to dismiss sending important content through other mediums, such as email, Dropbox, etc. Next is **Polling**. You can use this option to receive simple yes/no answers from participants or



use it for more thought provoking questions using the multiple choice section. Finally, is the **Breakout Groups** function. This function allows fluidity in how you, as the moderator, can either create particular groups for participants or allow students to change groups as they please.

- d. This is the Settings tab. From here you can adjust Audio and Video Settings, Notification Settings, Report and Issue, or upload a profile photo. In the Audio and Video Settings, you can setup or microphone and camera if not already configured, use your phone for audio, and adjust your speaker volume. In the Notification Settings, you can adjust whether you'd like to be notified of various settings.



Blackboard Collaborate Best Practices (For Students and Instructors)

Below are some recommendations for making your experience with Blackboard Collaborate better.

1. Google Chrome is the preferred browser for Blackboard Collaborate. Firefox can also be used. Never use Edge or Internet Explorer browsers.
2. Be sure to disable any streaming, chat or social media applications (e.g. Skype, Netflix, YouTube, Facebook), etc.
3. When entering the session for the first time, it will ask you to allow webcam and microphone. You need to permit both of these. A pop-up will appear for the first time. If you accidentally click no, you will need to click the lock icon at the top of the window in the address bar to change your settings. If you have further difficulty, contact ITS at helpdesk@hartford.edu.
4. If you have audio/connection problems, first try refreshing the browser window. If that doesn't work, try closing the Collaborate tab and re-enter. If you continue having issues, click the three-bar icon in the upper left to connect via phone.
5. The use of USB WIFI Adaptors with the Chrome browser are known to cause issues. If using a USB WIFI Adaptor, Firefox is the recommended browser.
6. You will need to allow third-party cookies and allow popups.
7. Your instructor may have disabled microphones and webcams at the onset. Be prepared not to hear anything until the time your class starts.
8. To chat, click the purple << tab in the lower right and click the chat bubble. Make sure you type your question to Everyone.

Getting Help with Technology at the University of Hartford

Faculty Center for Learning Development (FCLD)

FCLD provides consulting and instructional support to faculty and staff who are using technology in teaching and learning. The FCLD Faculty Lab in Mortensen 203a is available for faculty support and use and is equipped with instructional technology- related equipment including: PCs, Macs, scanners, and projectors as well as support staff. Faculty and Staff needing support with Blackboard or other instructional technologies, should contact FCLD.

Phone: (860) 768-4661 **Email:** fcl@hartford.edu

Website: <http://www.hartford.edu/fcl>

Student Blackboard Support

The following is student support for Blackboard only. All other support technical support issues need to be addressed to the Office of Technology Services (below).

Phone: (860) 768-4636 **Email:** bbsupport@hartford.edu

FAQ/Submit a Ticket: <http://www.hartford.edu/studentbbsupport>

Information Technology Services (ITS) Help Desk

For general computer and Internet/network support questions (not directly related to the classroom but rather passwords, Internet/email problems, Banner/Self-Service, campus Facebook).

Phone: (860) 768-4357 **Email:** helpdesk@hartford.edu

Website: <http://hartford.edu/ots>

Media Technology Services (MTS)

Faculty should contact MTS for assistance scheduling or implementing classroom technology (2-Way interactive video classrooms, Smart Podiums, laptops, etc.), for setting up WebEx accounts, or for scheduling and instruction for a wide variety of media equipment and resources like LCD data projectors, CD/cassette players, TVs and VCRs, digital video, and more.

Phone: (860) 768-4357 **Website:** <http://www.hartford.edu/mts>