

COLLABORATE FACILITATOR GUIDE

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BEFORE YOU START

Collaborate, Blackboard's real-time video conferencing tool, allows you to add files, share applications, and use a virtual whiteboard to communicate with students online. Collaborate opens right in your browser, so you do not need any additional software to join a session. [Bb's Getting Started Guide is located here](#), and some of our [best practices](#) are below. Links throughout the guide go to Blackboard's help site.

AUDIO AND VIDEO

For highest quality audio, we recommend using a headset or headphones with a built-in microphone, so the sound of your voice is focused on a mic close to you (not taking in ambient sound around you from a built-in computer mic). We also recommend setting the example for your students and using your video! A video provides even more of a connection between learner and instructor.

INTERNET CONNECTION

For best streaming quality, we also recommend using a wired internet connection if possible, to minimize the chance of your wi-fi being interrupted. However, we recognize that this isn't always feasible! In your pre-session test, if you're using wi-fi, be sure to test the strength of your signal to check if connections get dropped in any particular spot.

PRE-SESSION TESTING IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED!

We recommend doing a practice session with another person to ensure everything looks and sounds as clear as possible. Test out the tools you may use, upload any of your session materials, in order to get a feel for how things work and to troubleshoot any technical issues without an audience adding pressure! You can both join the open Course Room using the same directions as below.

PREPARE AN AGENDA AND MATERIALS

Synchronous sessions go most smoothly when you and your learners know what to expect. Before your session, we suggest preparing:

- A short agenda of topics to cover, that you can share ahead of time with students if you choose
- All files (PDF, docs, slides, etc.) that you are going to share
- A list of any activities you are going to facilitate, in the order they will happen, including:
 - Questions for discussion
 - Whiteboard collaborations
 - Surveys/Polls
 - Small group breakouts

Having a plan of action will create a smoother experience, calm any nerves, and ensure that you cover all materials in the session that you plan to – while also planning spaces for the impromptu discussions and questions that will arise!

We also suggest you join your session *early*, before your students, so you can test your audio and video by yourself, and so the session is ready to start ASAP.

Bb Collaborate's Page for Moderator Help: <https://help.blackboard.com/Collaborate/Ultra/Moderator>

GETTING STARTED

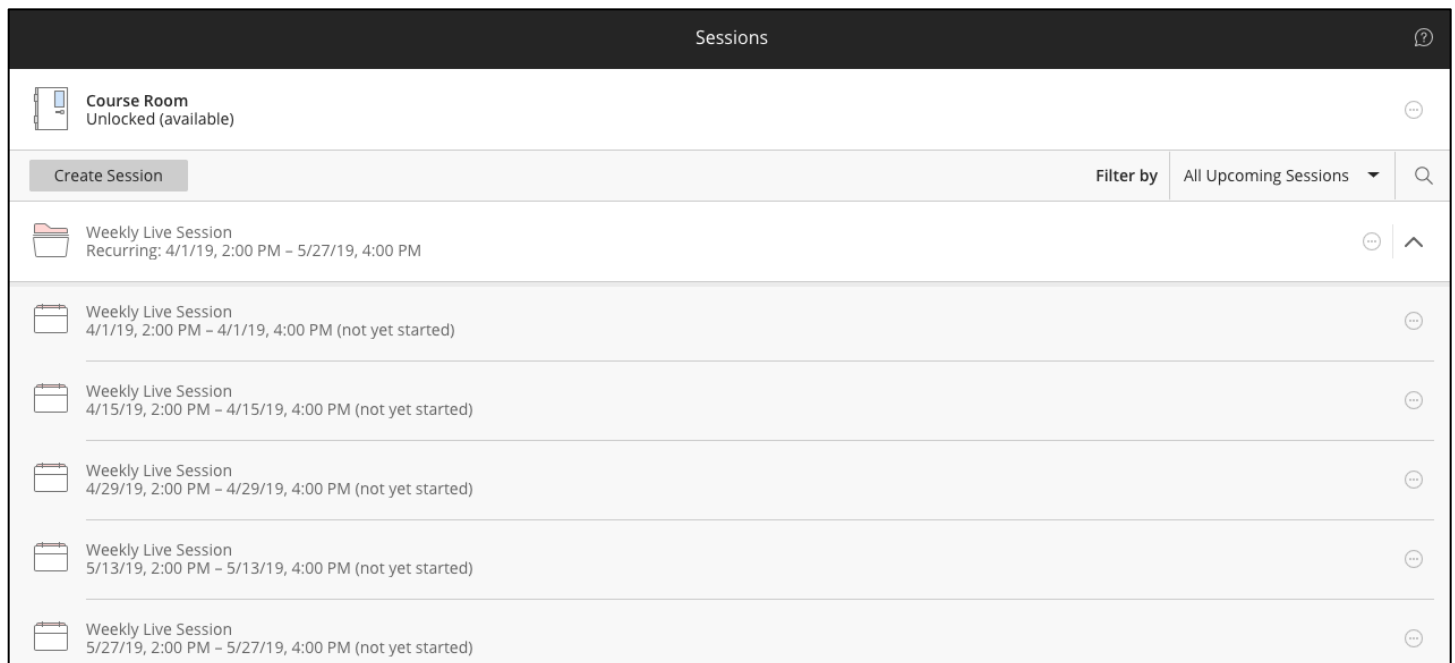
ACCESSING BLACKBOARD COLLABORATE AND CREATING A SESSION

Collaborate can be accessed on Blackboard through the Blackboard Collaborate tool. This could be under **Sync Sessions**, **Virtual Office Hours**, or **Tools** on the left-hand menu. [Instructions are available here from the ITL on accessing the course and starting a session.](#)

COURSE ROOM (ALWAYS OPEN) VS. SCHEDULED SESSION

The Course Room is an open session dedicated to the course – this can be your launch point for all your classes and any impromptu meetings if you don't want to have dedicated, scheduled sessions. To join the Course Room at any time click **Join Session** and you will be taken directly into the Course Room on Collaborate. Students can use this space at any time as well.

You can also create a Scheduled Session, one session or a recurring series of sessions, if you know what dates and times you will be having your sessions.



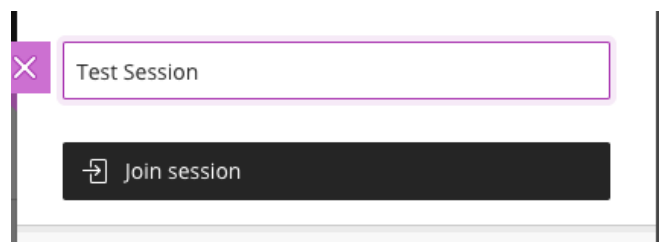
The screenshot shows the 'Sessions' interface in Blackboard Collaborate. At the top, there is a 'Course Room' section with a folder icon and the text 'Course Room Unlocked (available)'. Below this is a 'Create Session' button. To the right of the button is a 'Filter by' dropdown menu set to 'All Upcoming Sessions' and a search icon. The main area displays a list of sessions, each with a folder icon, the session name, and the recurring schedule. The sessions listed are:

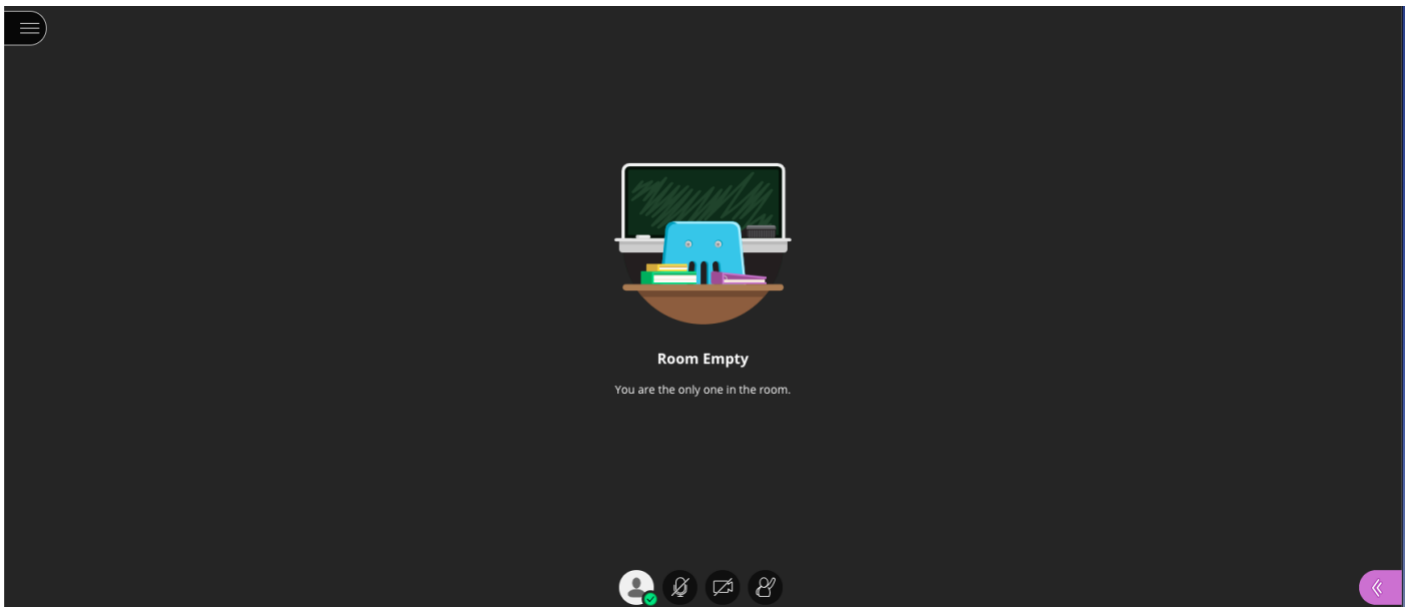
- Weekly Live Session Recurring: 4/1/19, 2:00 PM – 5/27/19, 4:00 PM
- Weekly Live Session 4/1/19, 2:00 PM – 4/1/19, 4:00 PM (not yet started)
- Weekly Live Session 4/15/19, 2:00 PM – 4/15/19, 4:00 PM (not yet started)
- Weekly Live Session 4/29/19, 2:00 PM – 4/29/19, 4:00 PM (not yet started)
- Weekly Live Session 5/13/19, 2:00 PM – 5/13/19, 4:00 PM (not yet started)
- Weekly Live Session 5/27/19, 2:00 PM – 5/27/19, 4:00 PM (not yet started)

JOINING YOUR SESSION AND SETTING UP

JOIN A SESSION

1. Click the Course Room or the name of the session you want to join.
2. Click Join Session
3. The session (or Course Room) will open in a new tab or window in your browser.



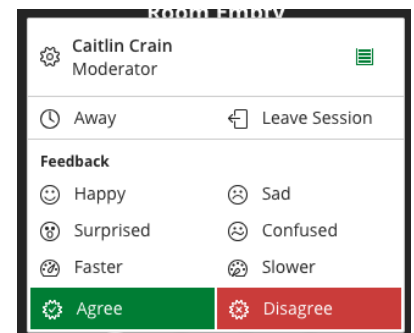


CHANGE [AUDIO, VIDEO AND OTHER SETTINGS](#)

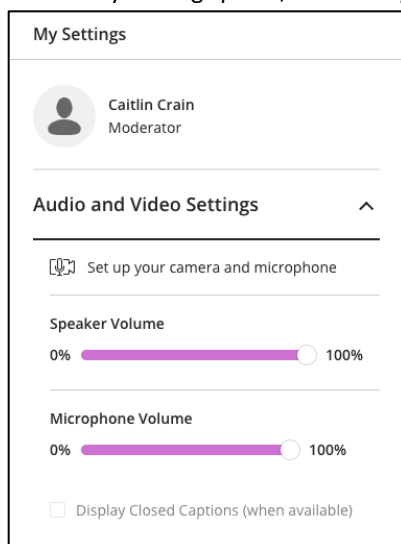
At the bottom of your screen, you have four buttons – My Status and Settings, Audio, Video, and Raise Hand.



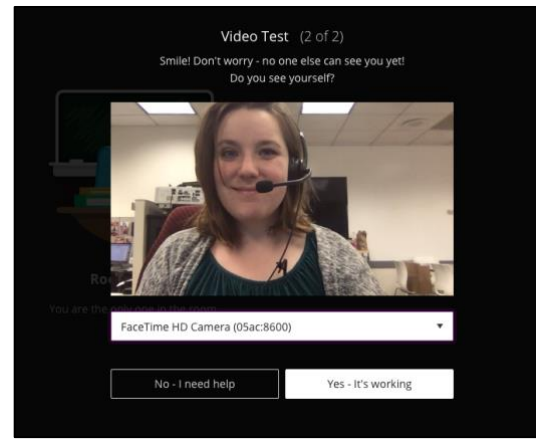
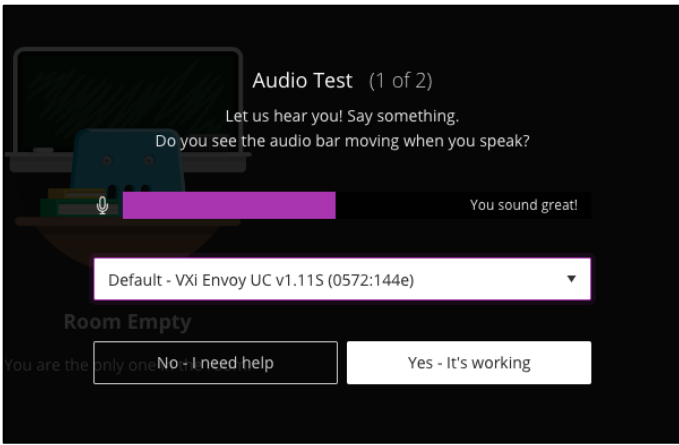
1. The first button opens **My Status and Settings**. This panel gives you access to your settings and allows you to set a “feedback” status you can show to your participants. They will have the same options as well. To edit your settings, hit the gear next to your name. You can also access your settings by hitting the purple corner arrow for the **Collaborate** tab.



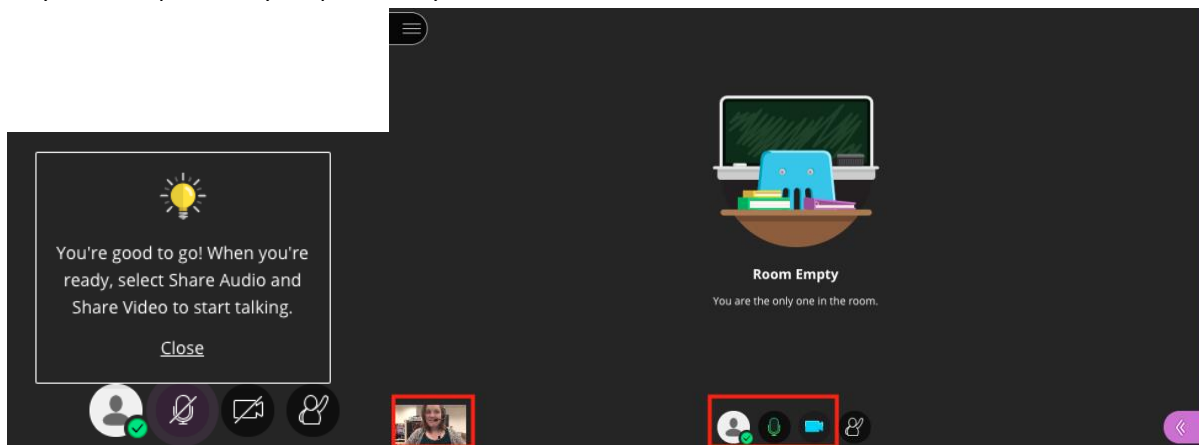
2. On the My Settings panel, click **Set up your camera and microphone**



3. Follow the prompts to test your audio and video – select your microphone and camera and test that the sound and video is working.



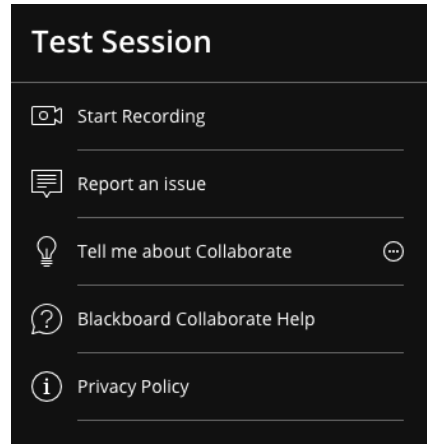
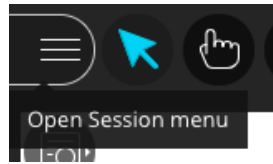
4. When you've selected your default audio and video, you are good to go – when you are ready, click the microphone and camera at the bottom of the session room to share with the participants. As you lead your session, you can see the levels on your microphone as you speak, and your video will be in the bottom left corner.



DURING A SESSION

[RECORD SESSION](#)

To record a session, open the session menu on the top left and click **Start Recording**. To finish recording, open the session menu again and select **Stop Recording**.



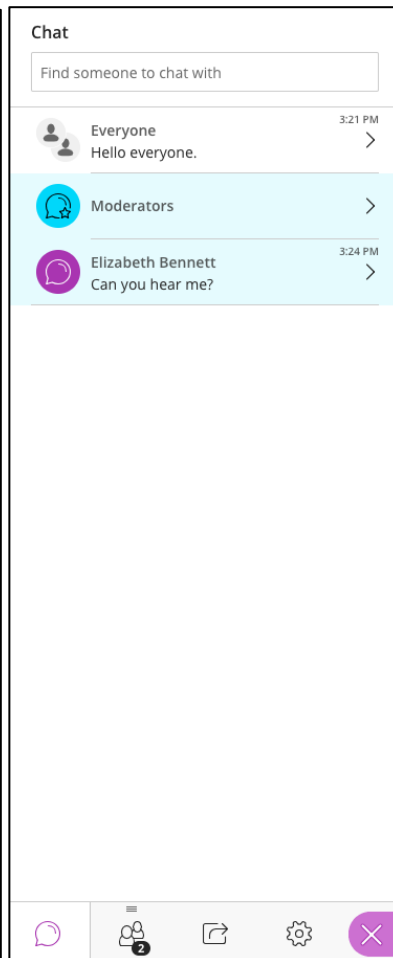
[VIEW ATTENDEE LIST AND CHAT WITH PARTICIPANTS](#)

Click the purple **Collaborate** arrow in the lower righthand corner to open the tab. You will see the list of attendees. To chat with them, click the Chat bubble button, which will open the Chat tab. You can chat with everyone in the group, just the moderators, or select a particular participant if you want to speak privately.

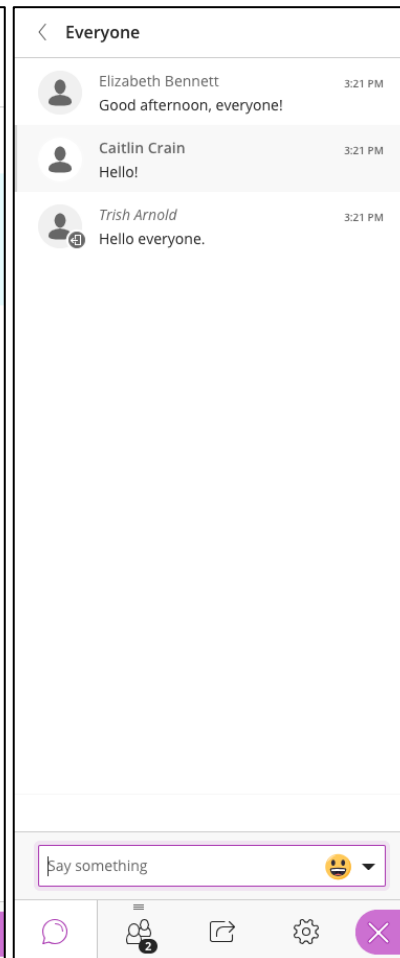
Attendee List



Chat Window

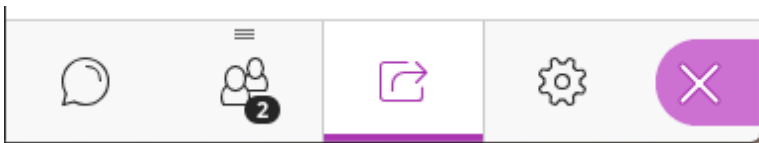


Everyone Group Chat



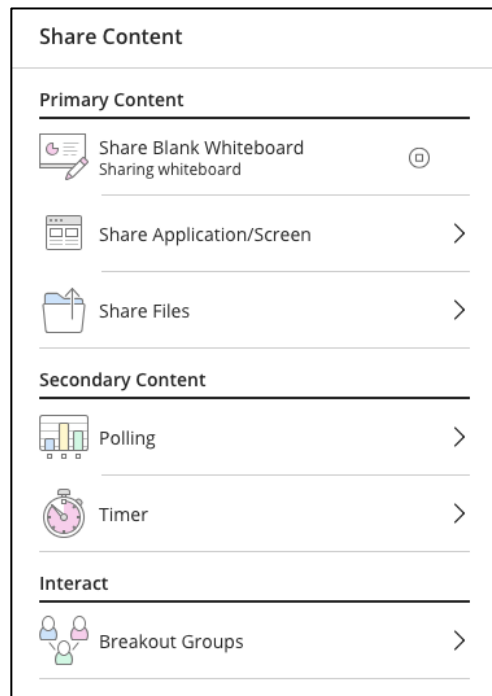
SHARE CONTENT

On the purple **Collaborate** tab, click the Share button:



You will be given a menu of options on what to share. For more directions on using each tool, visit [Blackboard's Guide](#).

- [Whiteboard](#)
- [Application](#)
- [Files](#)
- [Polling](#)
- [Timer](#)
- [Breakout Groups](#)



MANAGE ATTENDEES

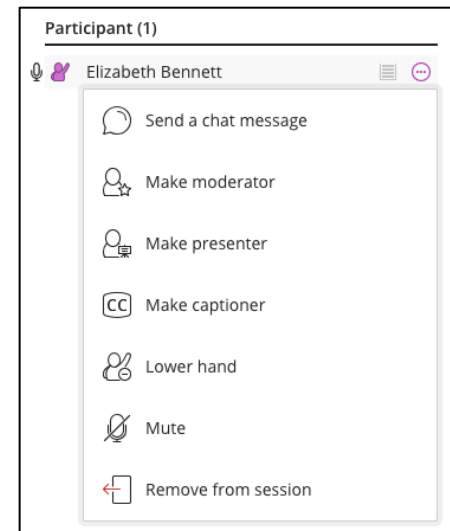
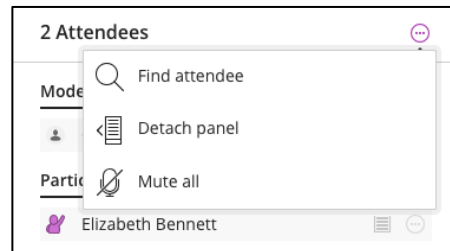
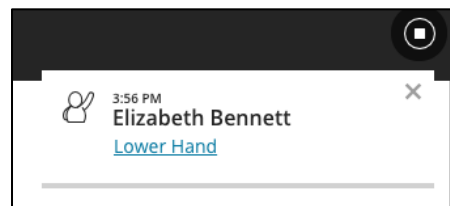
Participants will be able to chat and interact with you throughout the session.

- Using their audio and video
- Using chat
- Raising their hand, which will give you a notification (shown to the right)

At the top of the **Attendee List**, you have the option to Mute All participants.

In the **Attendee List**, click the menu next to an attendee name and you have options to individually:

- Send a private chat message to a participant
- Make them a moderator, presenter, or captioneer
- Lower their hand, if they've raised it
- Mute their audio
- Remove them from the session



END SESSION

To end a session, open the Session menu on the top left corner. Select **Leave Session** from the bottom to end the session.

