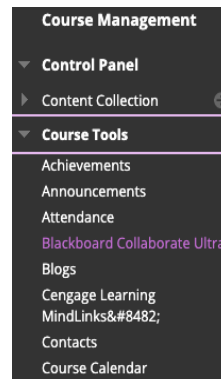


March 12, 2020

Dear Colleagues:

I have been testing Blackboard Collaborate Ultra for live-streaming of lectures, and have compiled some tips for setting up and using the software. These are based on my cursory observations, and there are definitely some useful tools that I missed.

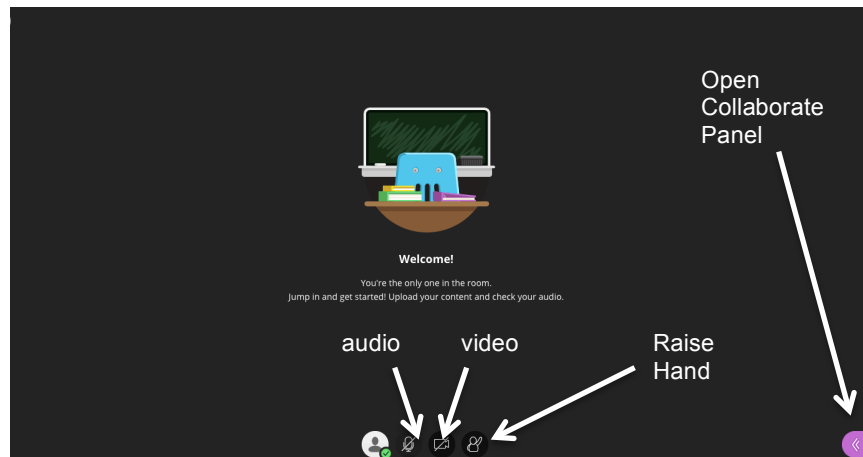
1. You must use Google Chrome, Firefox, or Safari to access the software. Other browsers are not supported, and will prompt an error message.
2. Be sure that your microphone and camera are configured and turned on.
3. Log into Blackboard and go to your class – see the instructions from Aru and Lewis for how to do this.
4. On the left sidebar, scroll down a bit and click on “Course Tools,” then “Blackboard Collaborate Ultra.”



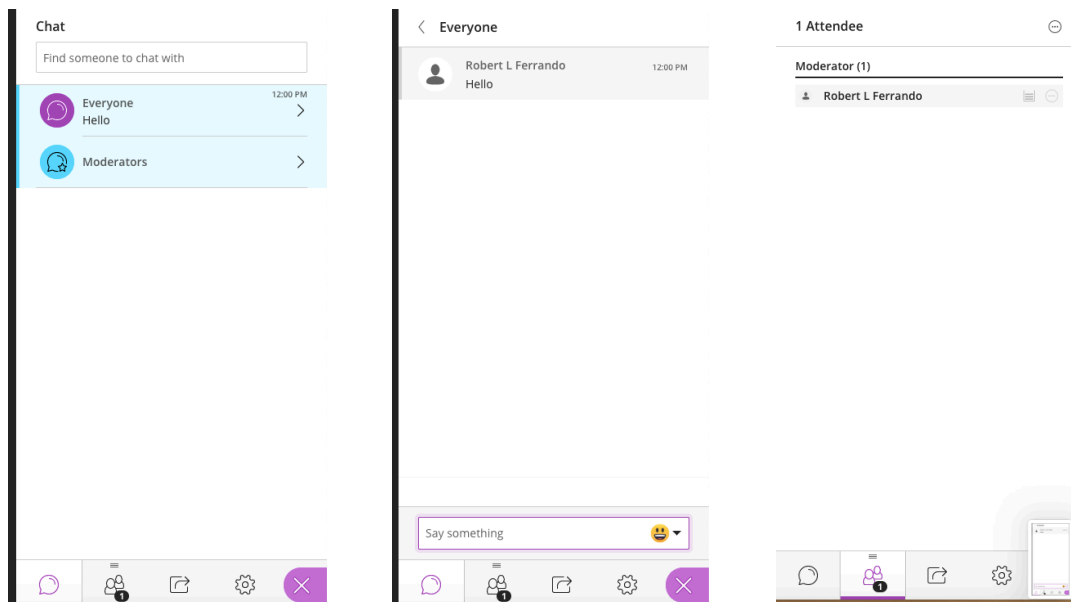
5. To set up a session, click “Create Session.” Enter a session name and time, and modify any settings. (I’m just leaving the default settings, unless I have a reason not to).

A screenshot of the Blackboard Collaborate Ultra session creation form. The form is white with a grey sidebar on the left. At the top, there's a 'Test Session' button. Below it is a 'Join session' button. The 'Anonymous dial in:' section shows a phone number '+1-571-392-7650' and a PIN '358 061 0762'. There's a 'Dial In' button. The 'Guest access' section has a checked checkbox. The 'Guest role' is set to 'Participant' and the 'Guest link' is 'https://us.bbcollab.cc'. The 'Event Details' section has 'Start' and 'End' date and time pickers. The 'Start' date is '3/12/20' and time is '11:56 AM'. The 'End' date is '3/12/20' and time is '12:56 PM'. There's a checkbox for 'No end (open session)'. At the bottom are 'Delete' and 'Save' buttons.

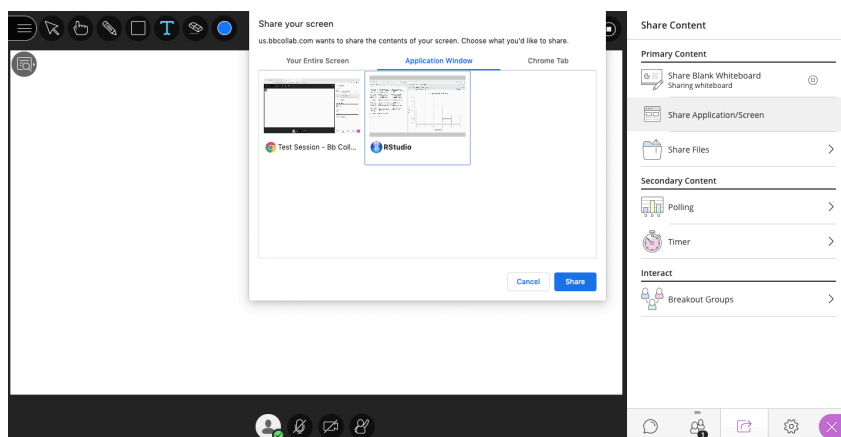
6. A dial-in number, PIN number, and link for guests should also be provided. This will be useful if you want to have a visitor in your class for any reason.
7. When finished, click “Save.” Your session will show up on the main screen.
8. Click the session, and then “Join Session.”



9. You will see a Welcome screen, and four icons at the bottom. Use the middle two icons to toggle audio and video sharing, respectively.
10. One way for students to interact is by clicking the “Raise Hand” icon. I think we will be alerted when a student clicks on this during the lesson.
11. Click the icon on the bottom right to open the “Collaborate Panel.” Most of your controls for the session will be found here.
12. Click the speech cloud to open a Chat Room. Then click “Everyone” to open a chat room for the entire class. I will use this chat room for students to ask questions during the lecture. I believe this is similar to how Facebook Live works.

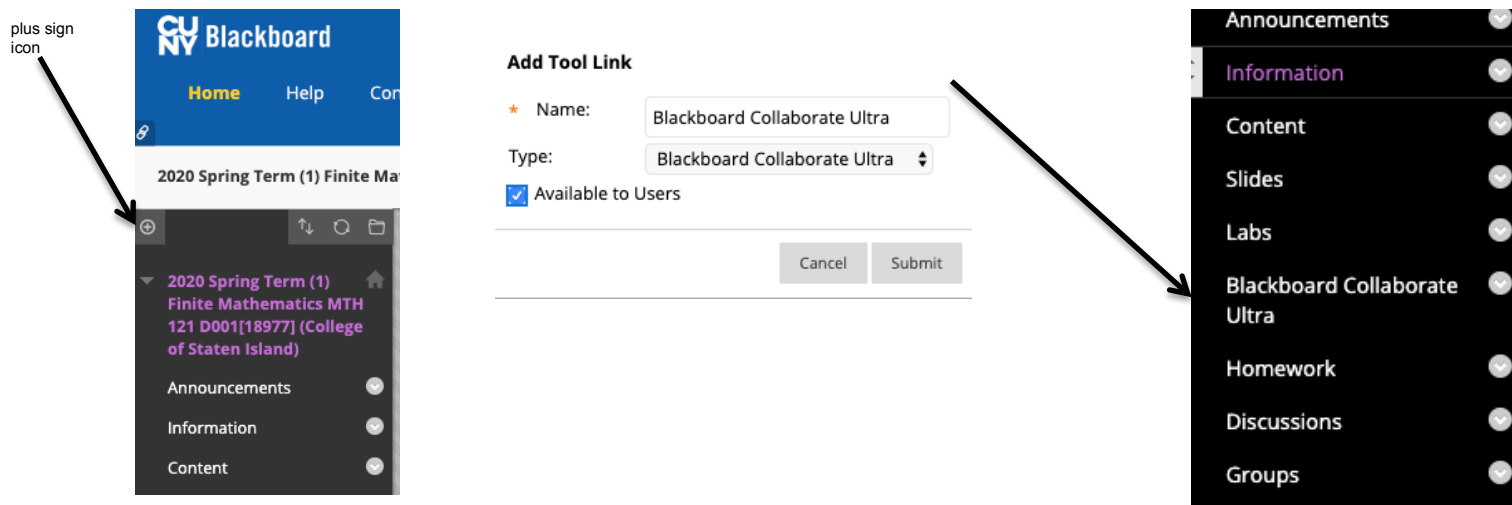


13. To take attendance, go to the icon directly next to the speech cloud for a list of attendees.
14. Next to that, there is an icon with a right arrow. This will allow you to “screen share” a blank whiteboard, which you can edit during the lesson. You can type, or write if you have touch-screen capability on your device.
15. To stop sharing the whiteboard, click the Pause button.
16. You can also “screen-share” web pages and applications (like Matlab, Julia, RStudio, etc.) by clicking “Share Application/Screen.”



17. When your session is finished, click the icon in the top left, then click “Leave Session.”
18. You can delete the session, if desired, by clicking on the session in the main menu, and then clicking “Delete.”

To add BB Collaborate Ultra to your main Blackboard toolbar, on the main Blackboard page, click the plus-sign icon, “Tools”, and select “Blackboard Collaborate Ultra” under “Type.” Under name, enter “Lectures,” or just “Blackboard Collaborate Ultra” if you want. Make sure to check “Available to Users,” so your students can see it. Then drag it to whatever position you want in the toolbar. This will make it easier for students to locate.



I hope that these tips are helpful. Please feel free to email me at robert.ferrando@csi.cuny.edu, or call me at (917) 449-0847, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Robert Ferrando