Guide of Blackboard Collaborate

Online classroom tool on LEARN@PolyU

Blackboard Collaborate is a virtual classroom tool available on LEARN@PolyU platform. Teachers can engage and interact with students online using features such as video and/or audio chat, whiteboard, file and application sharing, breakout group, text chat, interactive polling, etc.

Teachers can also record the virtual classroom sessions for future review by students. Blackboard Collaborate is accessible via browser and users don't have to install any software to join a session. As for mobile device, Blackboard Collaborate is fully supported by Blackboard mobile app.

Blackboard Collaborate can support up to 250 attendees in the same virtual classroom. If you planned to host a large session between 250-500 attendees, please contact HOTS or 2766 5900 for further assistance. Please note that it will take 3 days to setup a large virtual classroom.

This guide will cover the following areas:
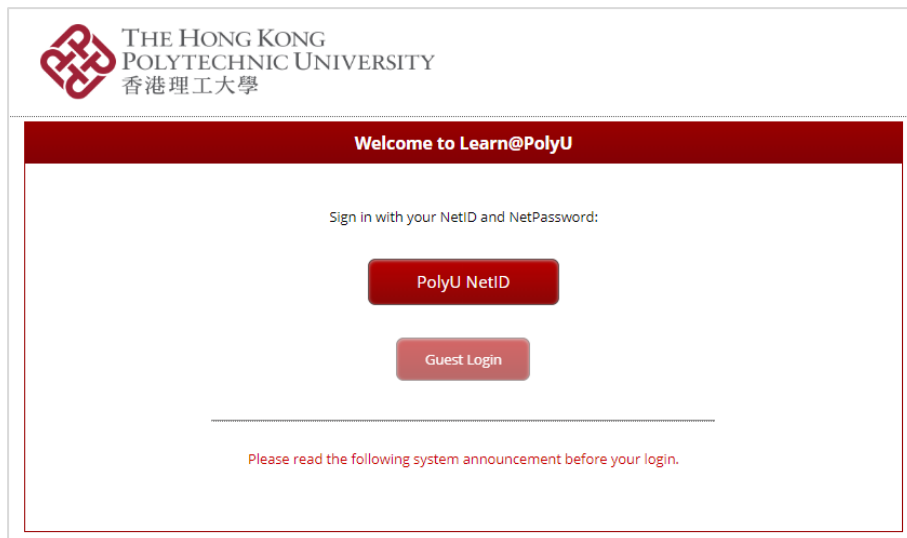
A. Join Blackboard Collaborate room

B. Blackboard Collaborate room features and settings
- Share your video and audio
- Session recording
- Share application/screen
- Share file
- Share whiteboard
- Polls
- Raise your hand
- Breakout groups
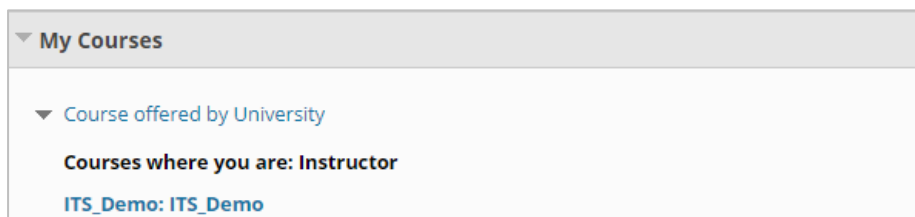
C. Best practice of teaching online by Blackboard Collaborate (For Teachers)

A. Join Blackboard Collaborate room

1. Login Learn@PolyU (https://learn.polyu.edu.hk)

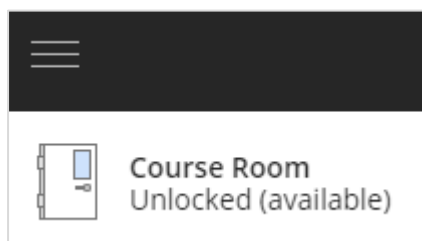2. Open your course in My Courses module (subject website)

3. Go to "Tools" on left menu

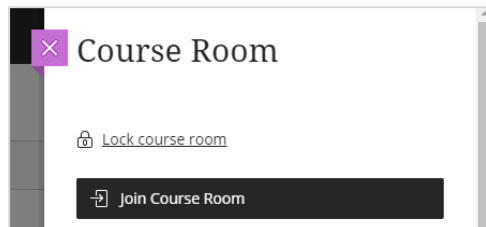4. Click "Blackboard Collaborate Ultra"

5. Click "Course Room"

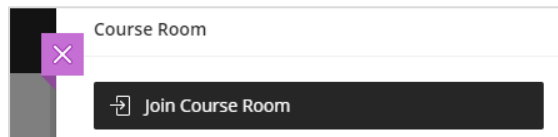6. Click "Join Course Room" button to open the room:

For Teachers:

Teachers can change the room settings in "Session Settings". After Saving the settings, teacher can click "Join Course Room" to start Blackboard Collaborate room.
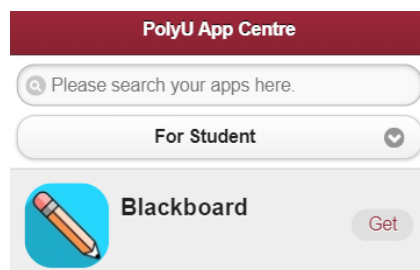

For Students:

Students can click "Join Course Room" button to join the room.

Tips for students: **Blackboard App**

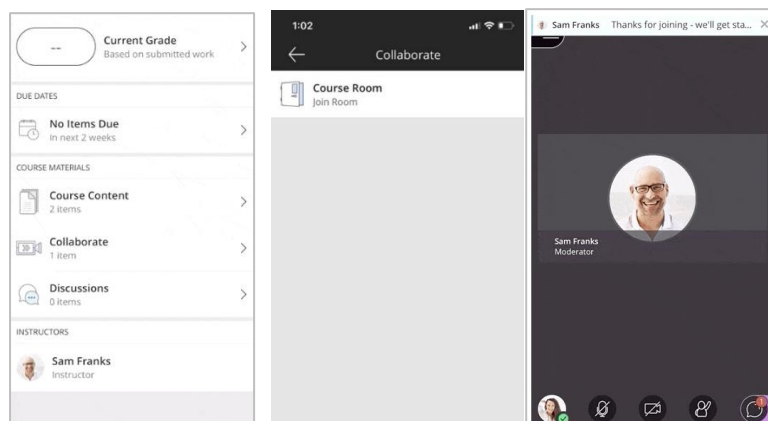Student can join the room in Blackboard App on any mobile device.

Download Blackboard App for Student:
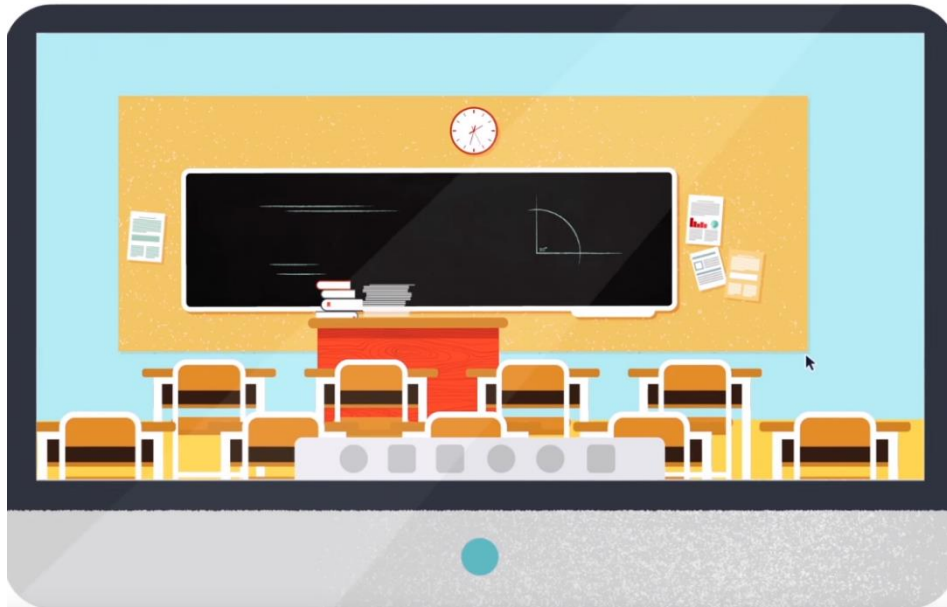

https://www.polyu.edu.hk/appcentre

If Blackboard App is used, students can join the room in 2 steps:

1. Click "Collaborate" in the course
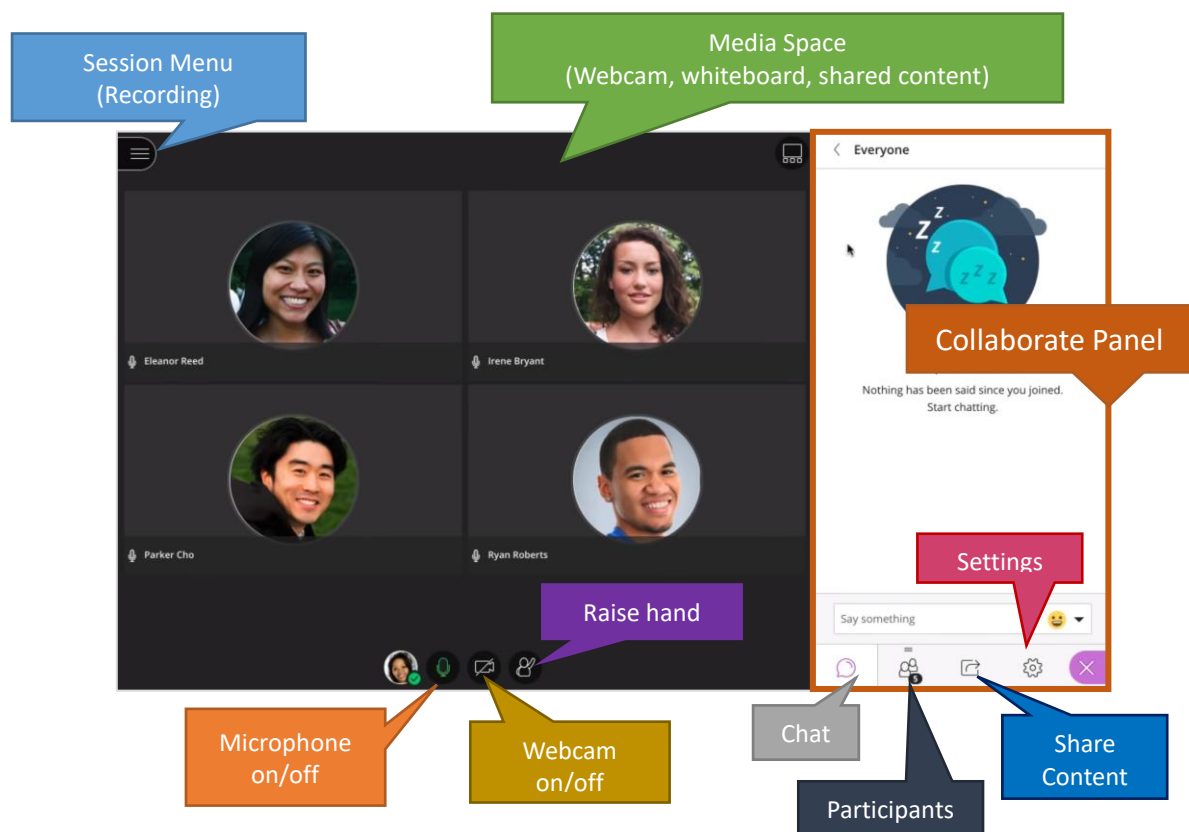2. Click "Course Room" to join the virtual class session

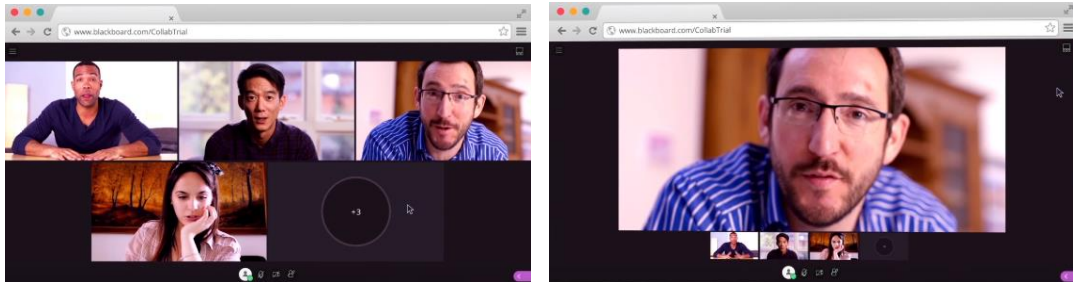# B. Blackboard Collaborate room features and settings

Please click HERE to view the 3 mins video tour of Blackboard Collaborate.

Overview of Blackboard Collaborate layout:

Session Menu (Recording)

Media Space (Webcam, whiteboard, shared content)

Collaborate Panel

Settings

Raise hand

Microphone on/off

Webcam on/off
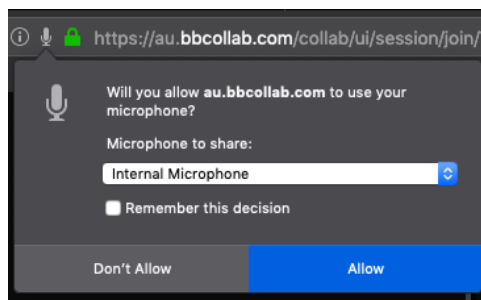
Chat

Participants

Share Content

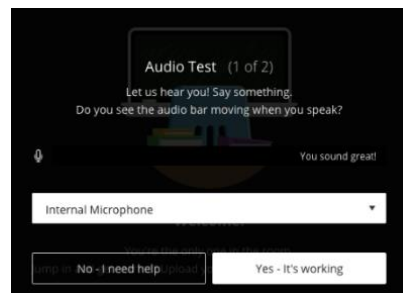- **Share your microphone audio and camera video**

You'll be asked to do this when you first join a session or when you first go to share your audio or video. Please give the browser permission to use audio and video when participate in a virtual class session.
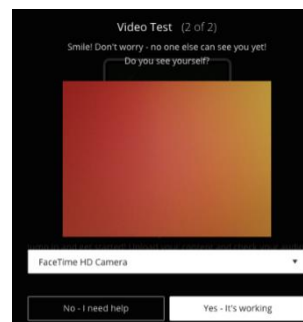
1. Select your microphone and test it
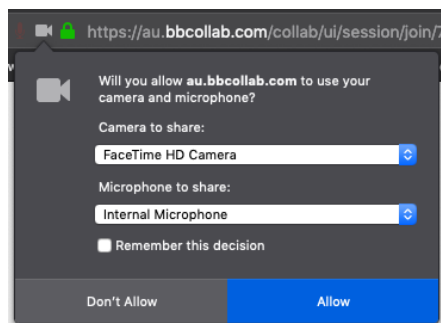

(Firefox)   *(Google Chrome)*
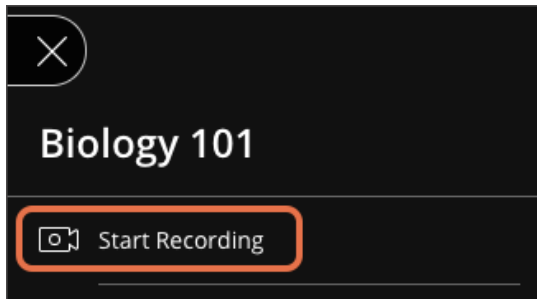
2. Select your camera and test it

3. You are hidden and muted after you complete the setup. You can click the microphone and video camera icons any time during a class session to turn them on or off.

- **Session Recording**

For Teachers:

1. To start recording, open the Session Menu and then click "Start Recording". The recording camera appears on with a red dot while recording is in progress.

2. To finish recording, open the Session Menu and click "Stop Recording". Recorded sessions are saved as MP4 file. Recordings include activity in the live session. If a session is being recorded, chat messages in the Everyone channel are being recorded as well. Private messages and chat messages in breakout groups are not recorded.

For Students:

1. Click "Tools" on left menu
2. Select "Blackboard Collaborate Ultra"
3. Go to Recordings page
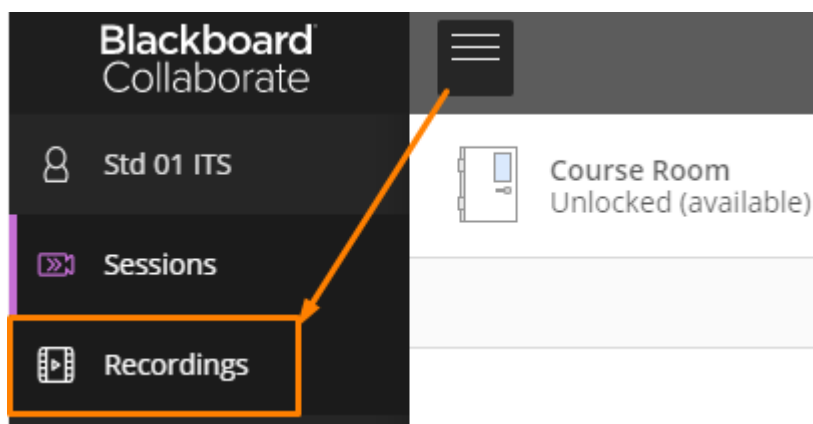
- **Chat**
  Teachers and students can use chat feature for communication. A pop-up notification stays on the screen for a few seconds then disappears. It tells you if you have a new chat message, if there are more than one, and what chat channel the comment is in.
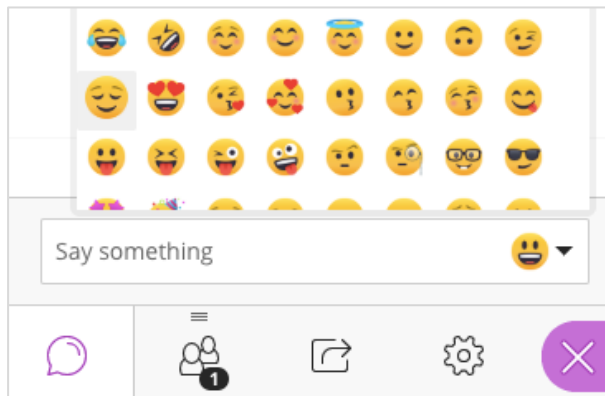
  1. Open Chat page on Collaborate Panel

  2. Select "Everyone" or search teacher/your classmate for chat
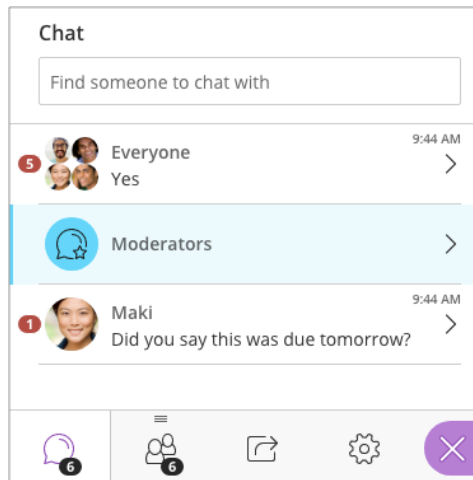
  3. Type your message and add an emoji

- **Share Application/Screen**

  Teacher can share desktop or a software application to teach students about a topic. Student can share application/screen to group member when teacher enable the Breakout Groups feature.
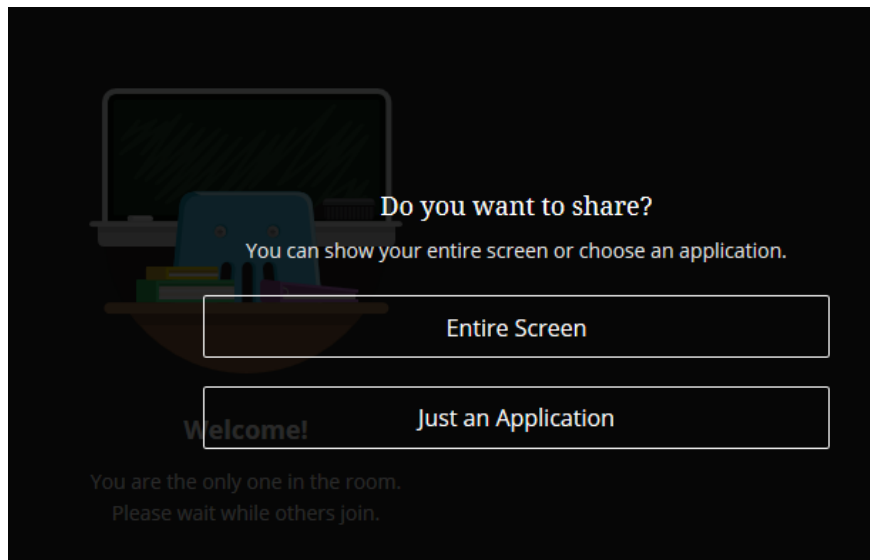
  1. Open Share Content page on Collaborate Panel

  a. Click "Share Application"

  b. You will be asked if you want to share your Entire Screen or Just an Application. Select which option you want.


  Reminder:
  a) When you share your desktop or application it is seen by everybody in the live session and anybody viewing the recording later. Make sure to close any windows and applications you don't want others to see before starting to share.
  a. Application sharing is not currently supported on mobile devices or for screen readers in Blackboard Collaborate. If you are using a mobile device or screen reader, you can share files and a blank whiteboard with your attendees. You can't share an application.
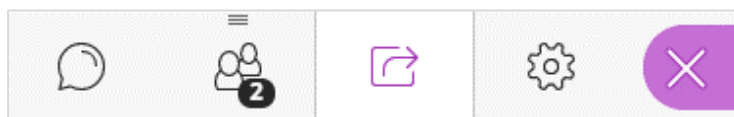
- **Share Files**

  Teachers can upload files stay in the session until they are deleted by the teacher so teacher can upload any time before the class. When the presentation is uploaded, each slide is optimized so all students can view quality slides no matter their network connection.

  Student can share files to group member when the teacher enables the Breakout Groups feature.
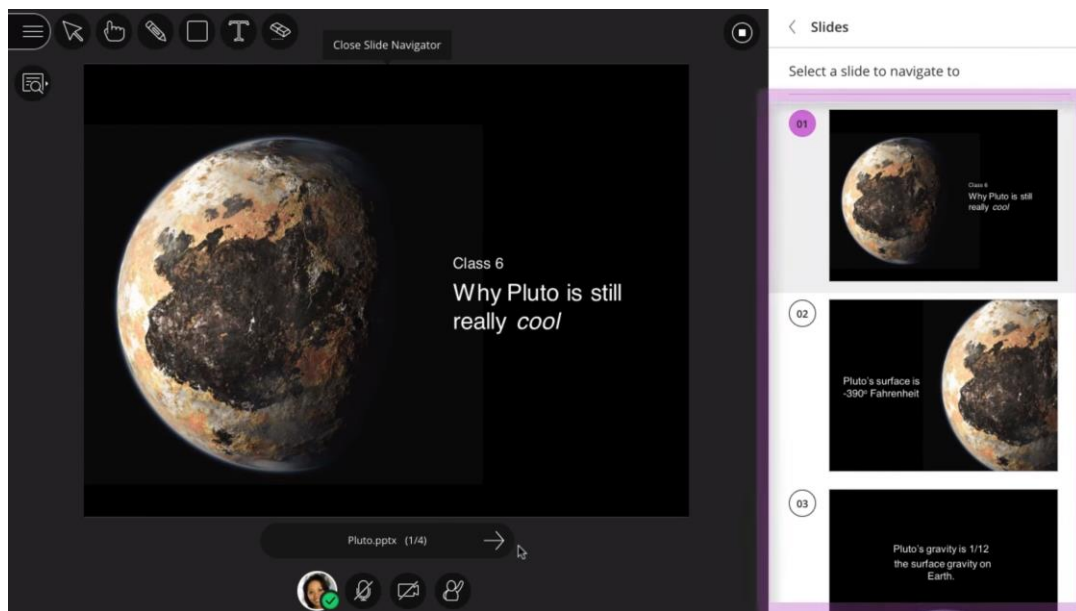
1. Open Share Content page on Collaborate Panel


2. Select "Share Files"

3. Select "Add Files Here" or drag a file into the box to upload it.

   Supported formats are GIF, JPEG and PNG images, PDF files, and PowerPoint presentations. You can upload multiple presentations, each of their size 60MB or lower, and the total size allowed is 125 MB or lower for each session.
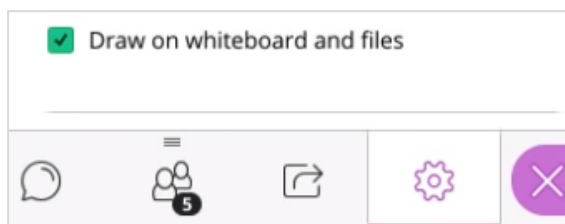
4. Select the file and Share Now when you're ready for students to see the file.
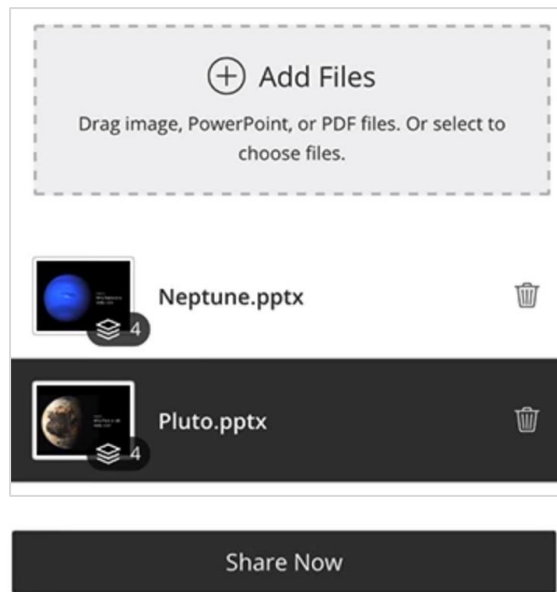
5. Use these tools to edit and mark up shared files:

| Select | Pointer | Pencil | Shapes | Text | Clear |
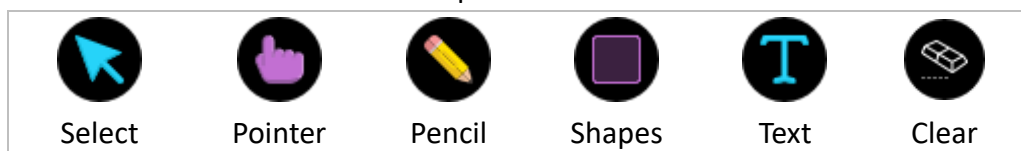
Tips: Teachers can choose to allow students to mark up shared file during a session in Session Settings. Open the Collaborate panel and select My Settings. Go to "Session Settings" and make your choice.
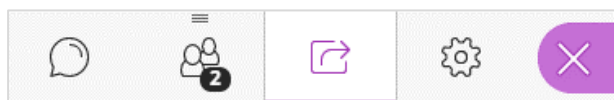
- **Share whiteboard**

  Collaborate with your students using the whiteboard. Open a blank whiteboard to draw or just jot down notes.

  Students can use whiteboard with group member when teacher enable the Breakout Groups feature.
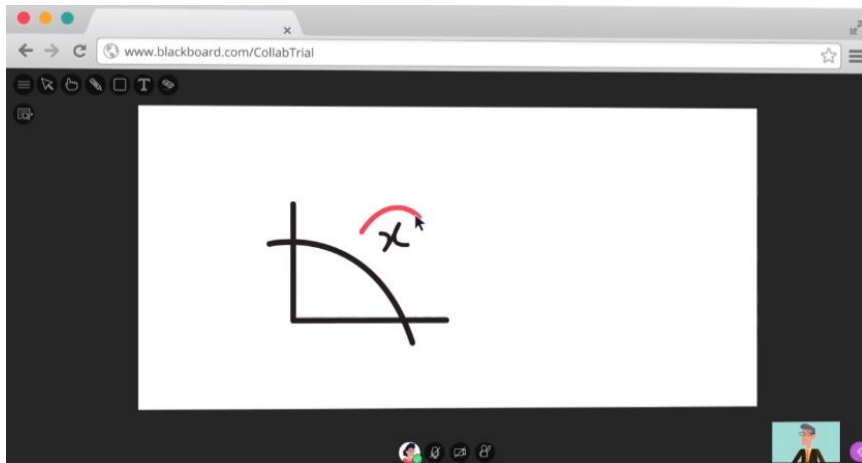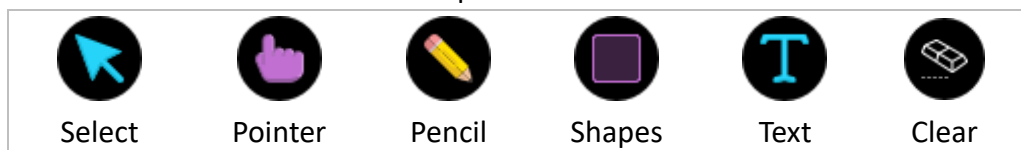

  1. Open Share Content page on Collaborate Panel

  2. Click the "Share Whiteboard" button

  3. Use these tools to edit and mark up the whiteboard.

     | Select | Pointer | Pencil | Shapes | Text | Clear |

  Tips: If you want to allow students to draw on the whiteboard with you, you can update the Session Settings in My Settings.

- **Polls**

Teachers use polls for many reasons. It might used for collecting feedback from students. Or for starting a discussion among students. It might also be used to see how well you understood what your students presented. After a teacher starts a poll, students are asked to make a choice. The choices pop-up disappears after the choice is submitted so students focus on the main stage again.

Students can create polls in their group when the teacher enables the Breakout Groups feature.
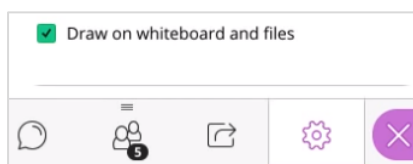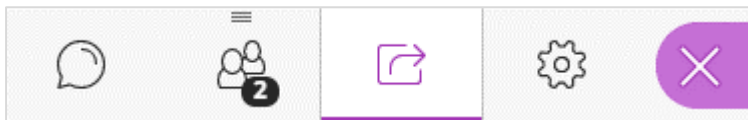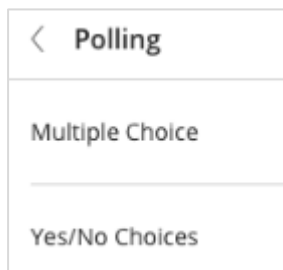
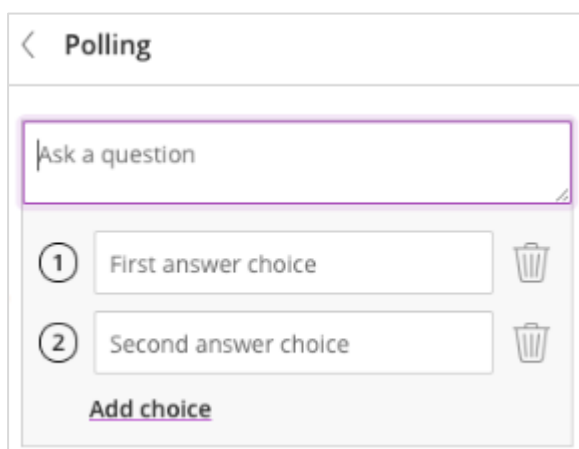1. Open Share Content page on Collaborate Panel

2. Click "Polling" Icon


3. Select "Multiple Choice" or "Yes/No Choices".

4. Teachers can type the poll question or leave it blank. Poll questions have a 110-characters limit.

5. Up to 5 answer choices are allowed in Multiple Choice polls. Teachers can type their answer choices or leave them blank. Answer choices text have a 90-characters limit. If you leave the choices blank, attendees will see a number (1-5) as their choices.

6. Click "Start".

Students only see the choice they make. Teachers are allowed to see an overview of the choices made. Teachers can also see the specific choice the attendees make. They can also see who have not yet responded.
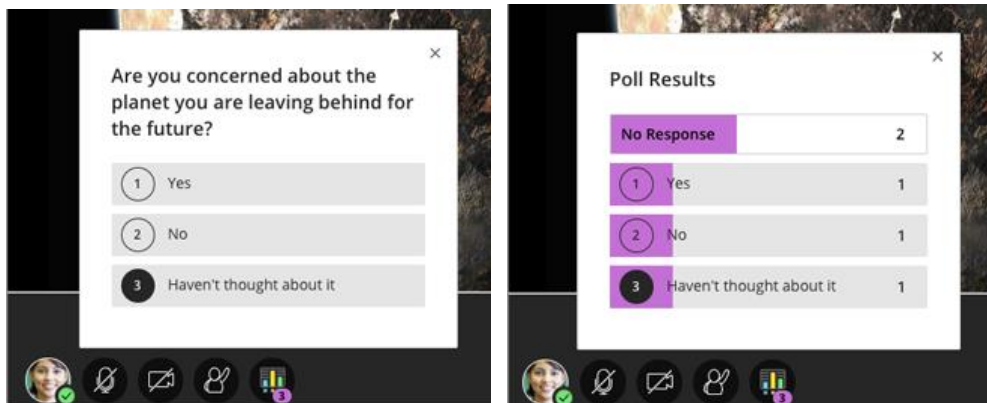
- **Raise your hand**
  Students can raise their hands to answer a question or draw teacher's attention.

1. Select "Raise Hand".

- **Breakout groups**

  To facilitate small group collaboration, the teacher can create breakout groups that are separate from the Main Room and assign attendees to the groups. Teachers can choose to let Collaborate create and randomly assign students into breakout groups; or the teacher can manually create the groups.

  Reminder:
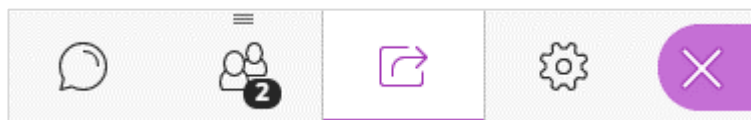 *If your session has more than 250 attendees, breakout groups will be turned off.*
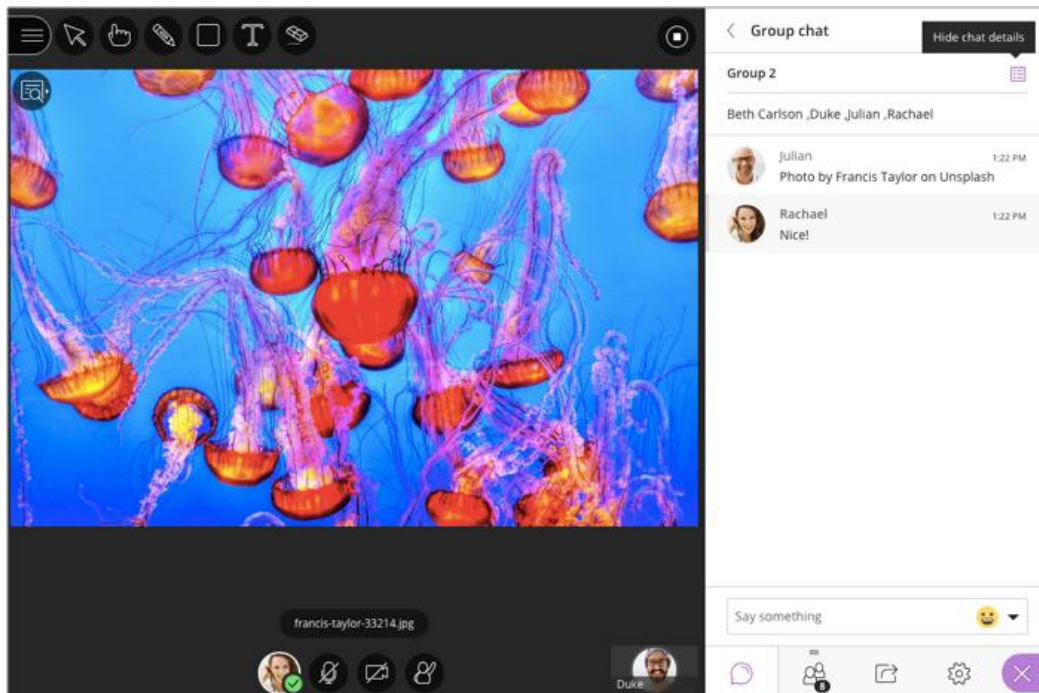
  Breakout groups have their own private audio, video, whiteboard, application sharing, and chat. Any collaboration that takes place in a group is independent of the Main Room (and other groups).
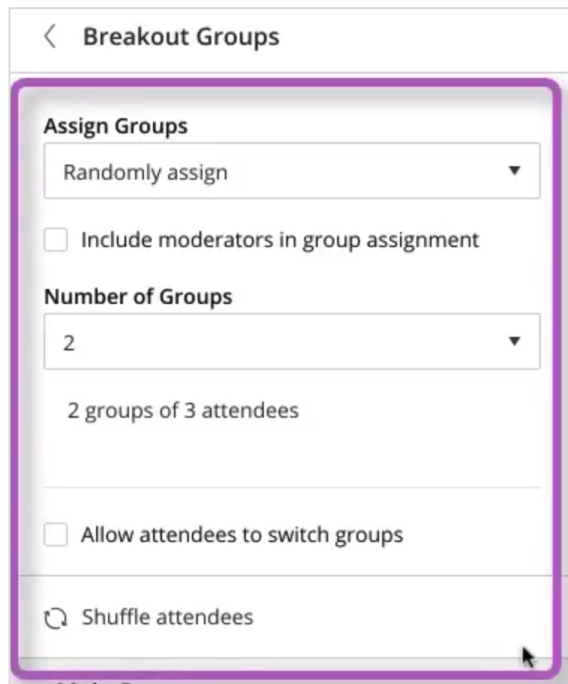
  1. Open the Share Content panel from the Collaborate panel.

  2. Select "Breakout Groups".

3. Assign groups. Select Randomly assign or Custom assignment.
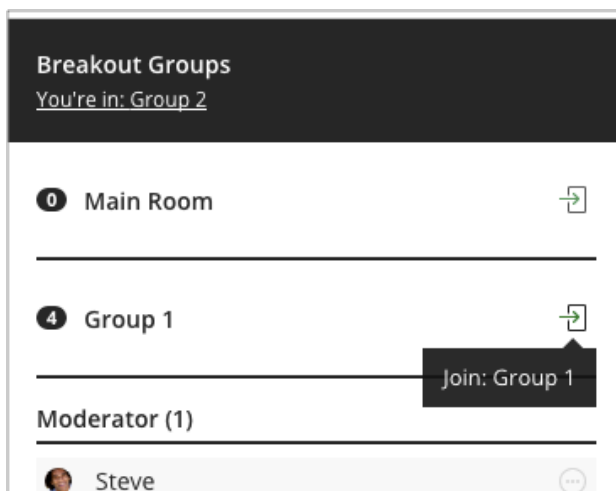   *Reminder: Randomly assign is only available when there can be four or more people in a room.*

4. Click "Start" to create the groups

5. Teachers can see how the other groups are doing, from the Attendees panel, by selecting "Join Group".

Video tour about breakout groups: https://youtu.be/D4dudLGevhw

Click HERE to know more information about Breakout Groups.

C. Best practice of teaching online by Blackboard Collaborate

Teachers can prepare for Collaborate room with these easy steps.

- Send an announcement email to your virtual class attendees inviting them to attend your session.
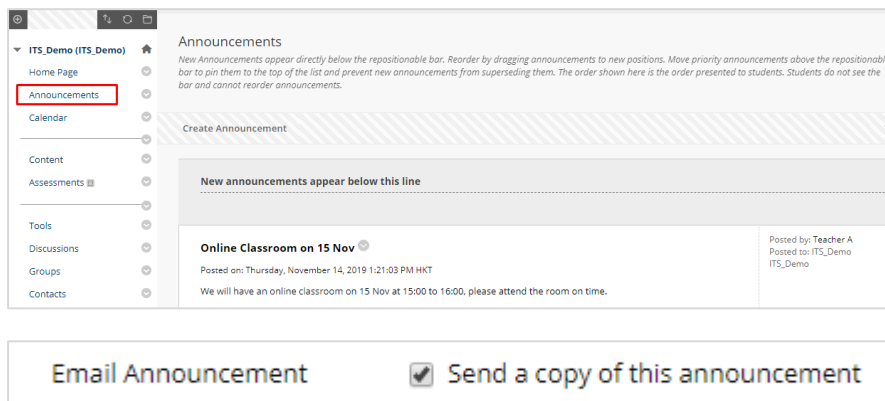
- Check your audio, video, and application sharing in advance. *(see Section B)*
- Determine audience participation. Use your personal and session settings to set how you want to interact with attendees during your session.

Online teaching using Blackboard Collaborate

Just because you are not physically in the same room with your students doesn't mean that your lecture should be drab.

- Allow early arrivers. Let your participants join the session early. This gives new participants a chance to get familiar with the room and what they can and can't do. Join the session early yourself and practice using the tools.
- Introduce yourself. Don't assume that your participants recognize your voice. State your name the first few times you speak. Let them get to know you.
- Highlight key points in your presentation. Move through PowerPoint presentations using the arrows available. Use the annotation tools on the whiteboard or in presentations to add text, pointers, or different shapes.
- Include Q&A. Encourage participants to ask questions. As more participants speak, the Ultra experience of Blackboard Collaborate automatically follows-the-speaker, displaying the name of the current speaker on the screen.
- Mute yourself when not speaking. Nothing is more distracting than hearing outside sounds like typing or a side conversation.
- Make eye contact. If you are sharing your video, look at the camera. It may feel weird but it helps participants feel more like they are a part of the online session and less isolated.

Source: https://help.blackboard.com/zh-hans/Collaborate/Ultra