

Collaboration Tools

There are a few things that the users should consider before using the collaboration tool. In order for Collaboration tool to function properly, the users should be sure that the appropriate Java plug-in version is installed <http://www.java.com/> and pop-up blockers are disabled. Users may hold down the "shift" key when entering a collaboration session to disable pop ups.

Lightweight Chat and the Virtual Classroom

The Lightweight Chat is a simple tool similar to Instant Messaging that allows you to communicate in real-time or "synchronously" with your class. Participants enter a "chat room" and by typing messages can communicate immediately to the instructor or the entire class. This feature can be used to hold class discussions, meet with teams, or visit with a guest speaker. Instructors may choose to hold "virtual office hours" using the Lightweight Chat. The Virtual Classroom is more robust than the Lightweight Chat and users have the ability to use a Course Map, a Whiteboard and Group Features. Transcripts are saved and can be visited later by anyone in the class, whether or not they participated in the actual collaboration session.

Setting up a Collaboration Session

1. Select **Collaboration** from the **Course Tools** area.
2. Select **Create Collaboration Session**.
3. Type in the **Session Name** and Select the **Dates of Availability**.
4. Select **Yes** to make the session available to users.
5. Choose the **Collaboration Tool**.
6. Click **Submit**.

Setting up a Discussion Board

1. Select **Discussion Board** from the **Course Tools** area.
2. Click **Create Forum** and type in the **Name of the Forum** and the discussion prompt.
3. Select the **Forum Availability** and the **Date and Time Restrictions**.
4. Select the desired **Forum Settings**