

### **WHY WOULD YOU USE THIS FEATURE?**

The Chat feature allows the students/instructor to interact with each other in real time using a text-based chat.

### **TO MAKE CHAT FEATURE AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS:**

1. In the control panel, click on manage course menu in the course options section.
2. Click modify next to communication. In #1 check the box that says Available for Student/Participant users. In #2 check available for collaboration. Click submit. Click OK.
3. Notice that the red words “This item is currently unavailable” are no longer under communication. Click OK.
4. Students can now find the chat feature in the collaboration area when they click on the communication button.

### **TO CREATE OR MODIFY A CHAT SESSION:**

1. In the control panel, click Collaboration in the course tools section.
2. Click +Collaboration Session at the top of the window to add a session.
3. Complete the Add Collaboration Session page and click Submit. Click OK. You can also click manage or remove next to the session to make changes.
4. Also on the Collaboration Sessions page you will find the drop down menu for Filter and Search by.

### **HOW DO I CHAT?**

1. Click Communication on the course menu.
2. Select Collaboration.
3. Click Join next to Chat.
4. Launching Chat Tool page will open. It may take a moment.
5. The Blackboard Chat window will open. You will see your name and that you have joined the session along with any other participants.
6. Type your statement in the Compose box at the bottom of the Chat window. Click Send or press enter to place your statement in the chat area.
7. You will view comments in the chat area. There is a 1000 character limit for chat messages.
8. A chat can be **recorded**.
  - Find the four buttons on the far right side of the chat window. These buttons are for the instructor to control the recordings of a chat. The buttons provided are play, pause, stop and bookmark. Bookmark allows the instructor to mark an area that may be of importance.
  - Once you send a new message, you will see that it is noted when you are recording a chat.
  - Students cannot see or use the record feature.
  - Chats can be viewed by clicking on the Recordings button on the Collaboration Sessions page.

**Additional settings within the Chat Window:**

**Private Messaging:**

1. Select a username in the participant list on the left side of the chat area.
2. Click private message at the bottom.
3. Type your message inside the window provided. Click Send.
4. If you click on the View icon, you have the option to separate your private message chat area from your regular chat area. Students can use the View feature.
5. Private messages can be sent from instructor to user or user-to-user. This function can be used so a chat can take place privately without the other students in the chat being involved. Private messages are not recorded.

**User Information:**

To view user information, select a user in the participant list. Click User Info at the bottom of the chat window. This area should provide you with the students' name, email address and any other information they have added to their profile. Students can use this feature.

**Access Rights:**

To give access rights to students, click on the Controls icon at the top of the chat window. This gives you the option to make a student an active or passive user for chat and private messaging.

An active user allows the student to participate freely in the chat session. The student icon will appear next to the users names that are active.

A passive user allows the instructor to view the message before it is posted to the chat session.

Student roles can change during the chat session. Passive users can signal the instructor by raising their virtual hand, if they would like active rights.

**Clear Display:**

To clear the chat window, click on the Clear icon at the top of the chat window. This gives the options:

**To clear local display only** - clears the display on your personal chat window. Students have access to this display feature only.

**To clear all users' display** - clears the display for all participants

**End Session:**

To end the chat session, click on the End icon at the top of the chat window. This allows you to end the entire chat session and expel all users. It also stops recording a session if the instructor has selected the session to be recorded.

**Raising Hand:**

A student can click on the hand symbol next to their name so the instructor will see that the student needs attention. Only active users can ask questions.

**POTENTIAL PROBLEMS FOR STUDENTS**

Java's J2SE Runtime Environment (JRE) 1.5.x or higher is required to use Blackboard's Collaboration Tools. The Java component may be downloaded from the page that appears when a user joins a Blackboard collaboration session or it may be downloaded here: [www.java.com/en/download/](http://www.java.com/en/download/)

It is recommended prior to installing a new version of Java that any existing Java components be uninstalled first (Control Panel > Add or Remove Programs).

Students must also enable JavaScript in their browser to use Blackboard. Go to <https://www.google.com/adsense/support/bin/answer.py?answer=12654> for directions on how to do this.

Macintosh users running OS X should run either Safari or Firefox. Collaboration tools are not supported for Macintosh users running OS 8 or 9.