Blackboard Collaborate - Ultra
Using Collaborate for Group Activities

To facilitate small group collaboration, you can create breakout groups that are separate from the main Collaborate room and assign participants to them. There are two scenarios in which you will likely want to use Collaborate for group session:

A. **Collaborate Sessions (i.e. rooms) for on-going group meetings**. This option is best for small groups of students to hold several online meetings for work on a course project and do not require instructor presence. At least one students will have the moderator role.

B. **Breakout group session.** This option is for one-time small group discussion, such as during a presentation for short, discussions related to the speaker's topic. The moderator controls session enrollment and duration.

This tip sheet will walk you through the set up for both types of groups.

Note: Blackboard Collaborate requires use of web browsers Google Chrome version 52 or Firefox® version 49 and higher. We recommend using Goggle Chrome as the most reliable browser for these sessions.

A. Collaborate sessions for on-going group meetings

If you want to provide Collaborate rooms for student group meetings that allow more than one session, <u>without the presence of the instructor</u>, follow these instructions.

Preparation

- Each group session must have at least one moderator. The course instructor is the default Moderator of Collaborate sessions, but the moderator role can be assigned to anyone in attendance. The moderator can set the roles of participants, create break-out groups, create recordings of sessions, and other session management activities. There can be more than one moderator in attendance.

- Sessions can be set as open-ended or to meet on specific days with repeating sessions.

- Provide students with a walk-through or tip sheet on use of the group session, if they will be meeting on their own time without the instructor (tip sheets are available through the CELT or OCDE).

Set-up Tips

- Student groups can meet with or without the instructor. But the instructor must set up a session room for each group and set the default access as "moderator."

- The instructor must send students the "guest link" to their group session for them to access the session with moderator rights without the instructor being present. All students entering via the guest link will have moderator status.

- Any student that instead, enters the group room from the "Collaborate" link from the course Tools menu will only have "participant" rights.

- Each group meeting room has their own private audio, video, whiteboard, application sharing, and chat. Any session that takes place in a group meeting room is independent of the course main Collaborate room or other group rooms.

- Sessions can be recorded but only a moderator can access the record feature. So at least one student must enter the room from the guest link provided by the instructor to have the moderator role.

Note: *What is said, viewed, or entered on a chat list in any Collaborate session is NOT captured in recordings. Copy/paste comment board if you want to retain the information.*

Instructions for Group sessions set up for ongoing access

1. Open Collaborate from the menu link to "Blackboard Collaborate Ultra."

2. Use the **+** sign in the upper right corner to access the "Create Session" option. You will need to create a new session for each group.

3. Name the session so the members will recognize their group ("Group 1," "Case of Jane Group", etc.), set dates, or keep open-ended. For groups to be able to meet whenever they choose keep the "No End (Open Session)" option selected.

4. Repeat sessions setting is not recommend for online courses and is only needed if you want the groups to always meet at a specific day/time.

5. Be sure to set the "Guest role" to moderator and copy the guest link.

6. Send the guest link to group members.

See Fig. 1.

Fig. 1 Collaborate Session Set-up.

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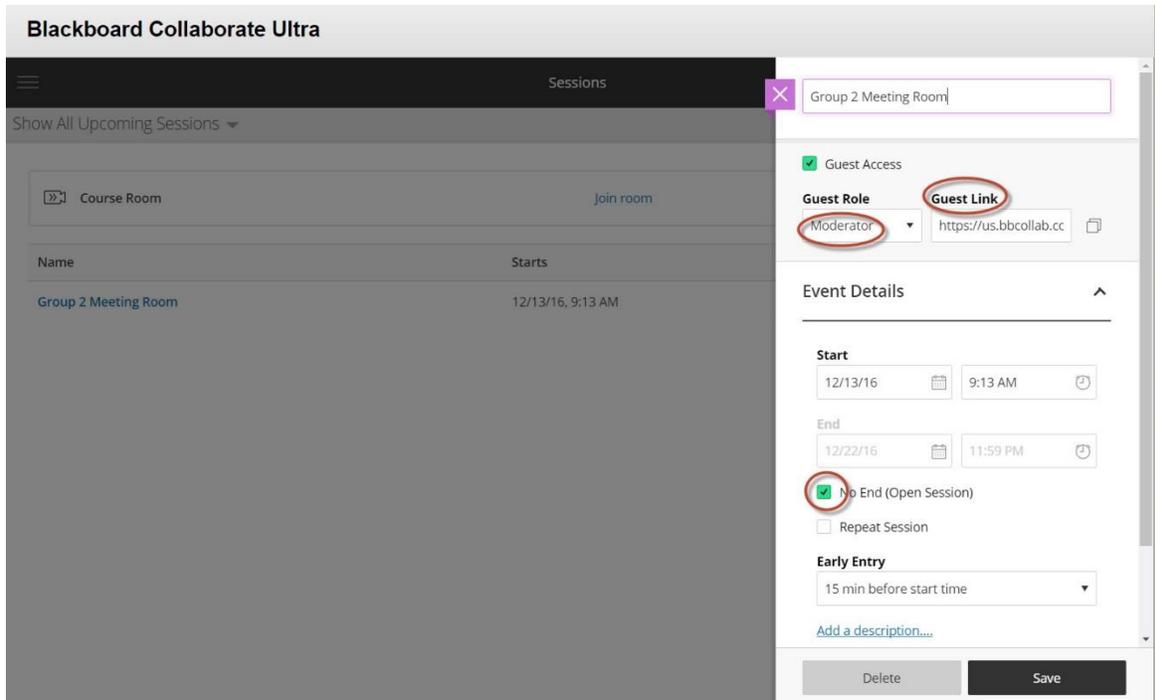
B. In-session Breakout Groups

Preparation

- Breakout Groups are an option for having small group discussion during a live presentation in Collaborate.
- Watch a video about breakout groups available at:
  https://www.youtube.com/embed/OnmSuL3pkFU?re1=0
- Plan for when Break-out sessions will be needed during the presentation and inform students of the process before the break-out time.

In-Session Tips

- Students can use all of the share options during the breakout session
- The instructor/presenter can visit any of the breakout sessions
- Remind participants to run a Tech Check in order to test their microphone and speakers before the presentation begins.

Note: *Breakout sessions cannot be captured in recording of the Collaborate session.*

For more detail on how to set up Breakout Groups during a live presentation, see "*Bb Collaborate Breakout Groups*" tip sheet.