

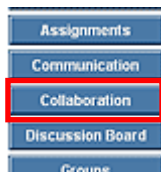
Using the Collaboration Tools:

The Collaboration Tools are the synchronous communication tools in Blackboard. There are two tools for synchronous communication: The Chat – a simple, text-based chat tool and the Virtual Classroom – incorporates the Chat with a group web browser and whiteboard so that websites can be shared with the class and concepts or ideas can be explained or shared visually by using the drawing tools in the whiteboard. Note: The Collaboration Tools require Java(TM) 6 installed on your computer. Please refer to the Tip Sheet “**Java Runtime Environment**” on Michener’s Blackboard Support web page (<http://www.michener.ca/resources/bbsupport.php>). Michener currently recommends Java(TM) 6 updates 5 & 7 be the only Java updates present on your computer for the proper functioning of the Collaboration Tools.

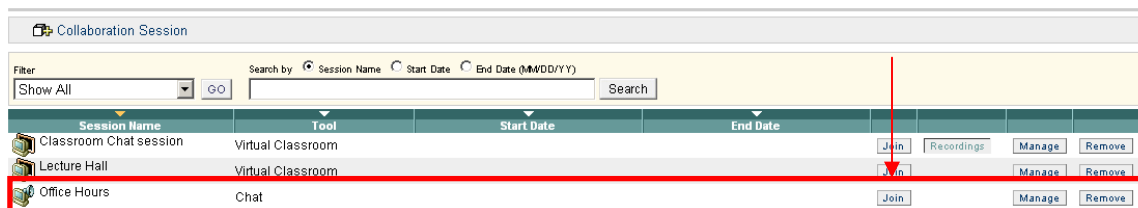
The Chat:

Except for Java(TM) 6, no configuration settings need to be adjusted in order to use the Chat.

1. Click on the “**Collaboration**” button in your course (your instructor may label the button “**Virtual Classroom**”)



2. Click the “**Join**” button for the tool labeled “**Chat**”. The default Session Name for the Chat is “**Office Hours**”. Your instructor may choose a different name for their classroom Chat sessions.



3. Important note: the screen will change to the “**Launching Chat Tool**” screen. Take note of the line in red letters “**Leaving this page will close the Chat window**”.

Launching Chat Tool

Chat Loading.

Leaving this page will close the Chat window.

Java Plug-in is required for Chat to run. Java Plug-in should download and begin installation automatically. Download time will vary by connection speed.

If the Java Plug-in is not installed or there are problems loading Chat, [download the Java Plug-in](#).

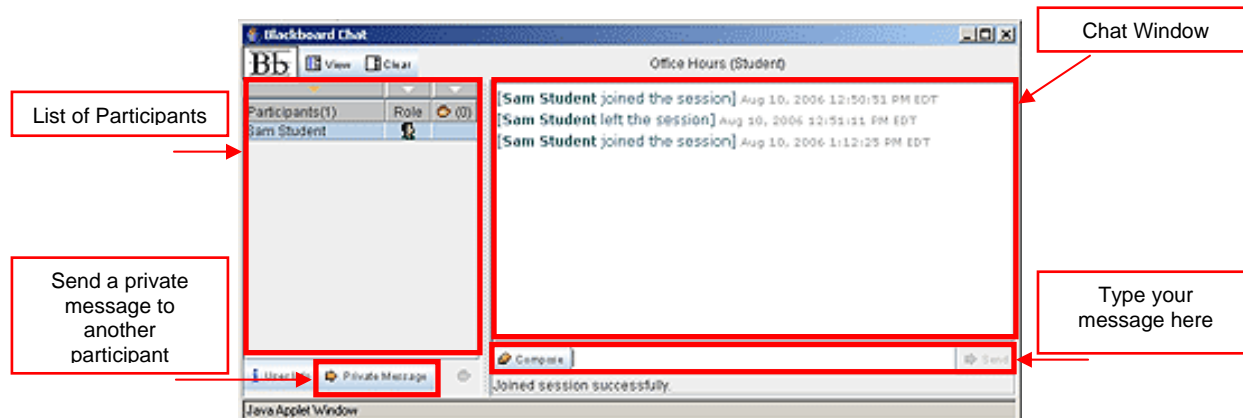
If a screenreader is being used to access the accessible Chat tool, the Java Access Bridge may need to be installed so that the screenreader can interact with the keyboard shortcuts and alt tags in the Chat tool.

Note that JAWS 4.5.1 and later will work with the Java Access Bridge version 1.0.3.

[Click here to view the installation help documentation.](#)

[Click here to download the Java Access Bridge.](#)

4. The Chat tool launch time will vary depending on the Internet connection speed (dial-up vs. high speed) and computer configuration. See image below for the Chat features:



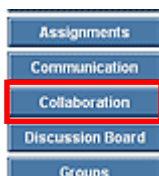
Note: Website URL addresses become clickable links in the chat window and will open in a new browser window/tab. Your browser's pop-up blocker will need to be adjusted to allow these windows/tabs to display any links shared by the instructor or class participants.

The Chat can be resized or made to display full screen as desired.

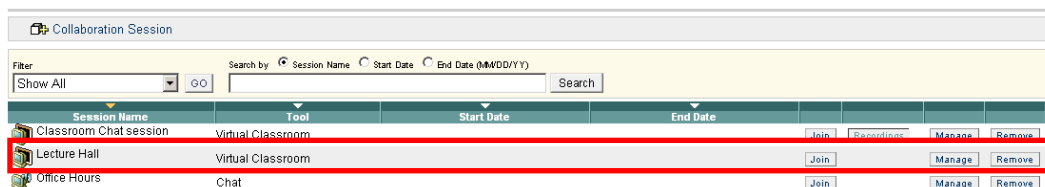
The Virtual Classroom:

The Virtual Classroom incorporates the Chat (described above) with a whiteboard and group web browser. Note: in addition to Java(TM) 6, The Virtual Classroom requires all pop-up blockers be adjusted to allow pop-up windows from de.michener.ca and michener6.blackboard.com. If you are using the Virtual Classroom on a network that is behind a corporate firewall you may need to request a special adjustment to the corporate firewall by the system administrator. Please refer to the Tip Sheets "**Adjusting Your Browser's Pop-up Blocker**" and "**Firewall Information for Users Outside Michener**" on Michener's Blackboard Support web page (<http://www.michener.ca/resources/bbsupport.php>).

1. Click on the "**Collaboration**" button in your course (your instructor may label the button "**Virtual Classroom**")



2. Click the "**Join**" button for the tool labeled "**Virtual Classroom**". The default Session Name for the Chat is "**Lecture Hall**". Your instructor may choose a different name for their classroom Chat sessions.



3. Important note: the screen will change to the “**Launching Virtual Classroom**” screen. You will see a link underneath the heading “**Virtual Classroom Loading**” that says “**Click here for an accessible version**”. **Do not** click this link! This link is provided only for instances where the user cannot bypass or adjust a pop-up blocker or corporate firewall. It launches the Chat tool in place of the full Virtual Classroom (web links displayed by the instructor appear as clickable links in the accessible version of the Virtual Classroom)

A TEST COURSE (ATC100) > COMMUNICATIONS > COLLABORATION > LAUNCH VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

Launching Virtual Classroom

Virtual Classroom Loading.

[Click here for an accessible version](#)

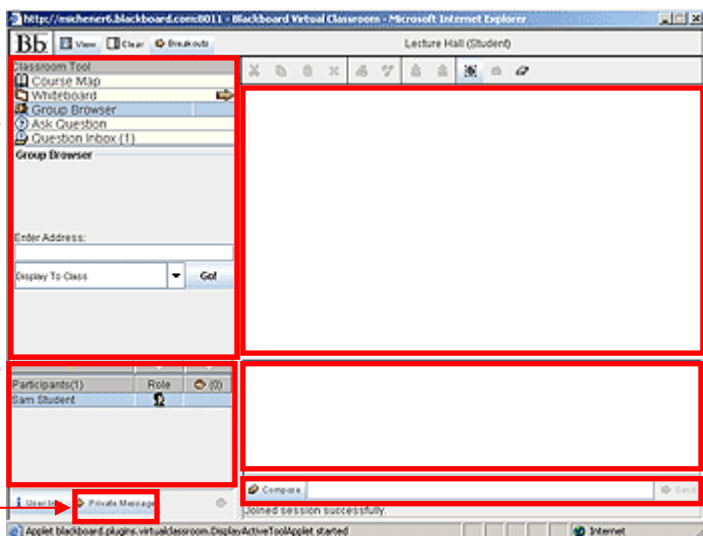
Do not click this!

Java Plug-in is required for the Virtual Classroom to run. Java Plug-in is required for the Virtual Classroom to run.

If the Java Plug-in is not installed or there are problems loading the Virtual Classroom, [download the Java Plug-in](#).

OK

4. The Virtual Classroom launch time will vary depending on the Internet connection speed (dial-up vs. high speed) and computer configuration. See image below for the Chat features:



The screenshot shows the Blackboard Virtual Classroom interface in a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window. The interface includes a top navigation bar with 'Classroom Tools' (Course Map, Whiteboard, Group Browser, Ask Question, Question Inbox) and a 'Group Browser' section with an 'Enter Address:' field and a 'Go!' button. Below this is a 'List of Participants' table with columns for 'Participants' and 'Role', showing one participant named 'Sam Student'. At the bottom, there is a 'Send a private message to another participant' button and a 'Chat Window' area with a 'Type your message here' input field and a 'Send' button. A status bar at the very bottom indicates 'Applet blackboard.plugins.virtualclassroom.DisplayActiveToolApplet started' and 'Joined session successfully'.

Classroom Tools

Whiteboard/Group Browser window

List of Participants

Chat Window

Send a private message to another participant

Type your message here

Unlike the Chat, the window containing the Virtual Classroom is fixed in size and cannot be made larger or be displayed full screen.

Note: The Virtual Classroom as well as the Chat will perform **poorly** on a dial-up Internet connection. High speed Internet is strongly recommended for the efficient use of Blackboard's Collaboration Tools.