MSLC Online Student Support Sessions
Spring 2020

UIC **MATH & SCIENCE LEARNING CENTER**

Thank you for your interest in hosting online academic support sessions through the MSLC! This document provides some information, tips, and instructions for hosting sessions through Blackboard Collaborate. Please reach out if you have any additional questions at any time (MSLC Director: dlubi@uic.edu).

Overview and Getting Started in Blackboard Collaborate Ultra

You are welcome to host online sessions utilizing *Blackboard Collaborate Ultra* through our MSLC Online Tutoring Blackboard site.

If you are **interested in hosting online sessions**, please start by:
- *email the MSLC Director* (dlubi@uic.edu) to be added to the MSLC Online Tutoring Blackboard site
- You will have access to this site as a Teaching Assistant/Instructor, which enables you to establish and host online sessions as a Moderator. Please note: this site is independent of any academic course site and no students will be enrolled here (no grading will take place, no student information shared, etc.).

Once you gain access to the Blackboard site, you may **set up the platform for your online session:**
- Identify a *date* and *time* for your session
- *Create a session* in **Blackboard Collaborate Ultra** (see instructions below)
    1. From the MSLC Online Tutoring Blackboard site, select "**Blackboard Collaborate Ultra**" from the "Course Tools" menu on the left of your screen

Click "**Blackboard Collaborate Ultra**"
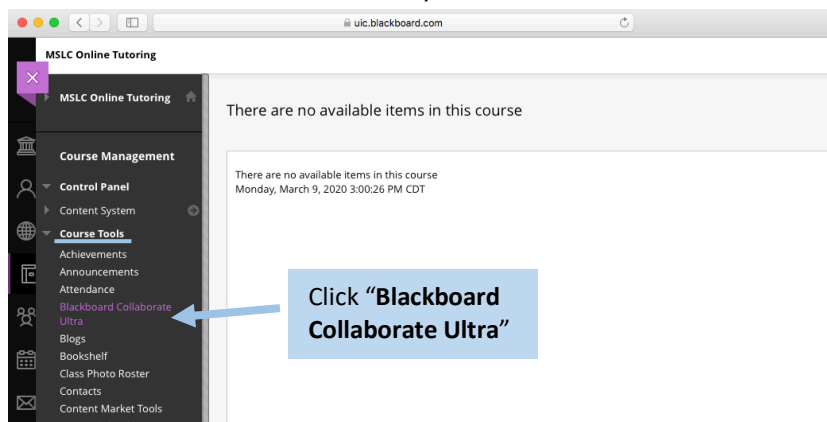
    2. After clicking **Blackboard Collaborate Ultra**, the **Course Room** screen opens where you may click on "**Create Session**" to enter the details for your upcoming online session

Click "**Create Session**"
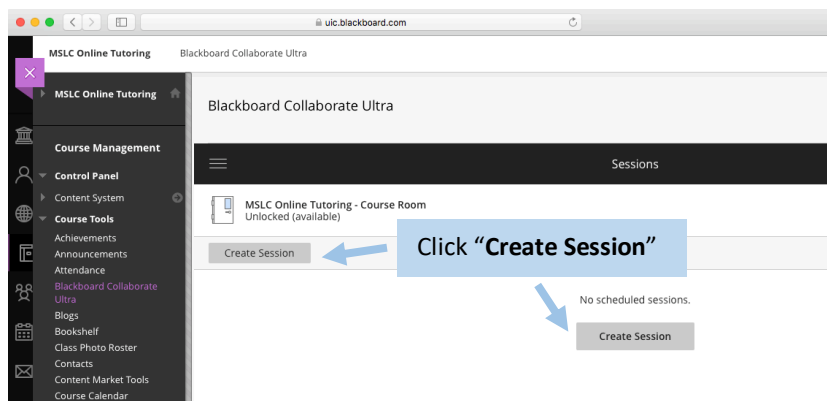
3. From the open **Session Info Menu** to the right of your screen, you can establish the settings for your upcoming online session. Please be sure sure to:
   ▪ enter a session **name**, as well as a **date** & **time** (under "**Event Details**")
   ▪ utilize all default "**Session Settings**" and ensure that "*allow recording downloads*" and "*anonymize chat messages*" are turned off (not selected)
   ▪ click "**Save**" (bottom of menu) when you have established all event info and settings
   ▪ copy the "**guest link**" when ready to share session information with participants

   Session Info Menu Overview:

Add session name

Copy link to online session (when ready to share with student participants)

Enter event details, check session settings

   Event details:

Enter event details including: date, time, early access

Session Settings:

Check session settings (maintain default settings shown here)

Session name appears in Course Room list after saving

Keep recording settings off (not checked)

Click **Save** when you are done!

4. Your session will now appear in the **Course Room** session list when you open Blackboard Collaborate in the future. When you are ready to begin your online session, you may access it from this page.
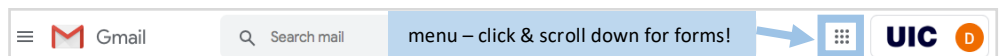
Preparing for Your Online Session

As you establish your session details, please also **prepare to host your online session.** The Blackboard Collaborate platform allows you to utilize an online whiteboard, uploaded documents, or any windows open on your desktop (so you may use other programs, etc.) during your session, so you will want to plan ahead to take advantage of these features during your session!

Here are a few steps to help you prepare:

- **Develop a plan** for the structure of your session (What will you do during the session? Ex: question and answer, review session, problem solving, activities, etc.)
- **Prepare any materials** you may want to use during your session (work together with other academic support staff and faculty, type outlines/questions, save materials as PDF files)
- **Identify the equipment** you will be using (laptop, tablet, document camera, phone camera, etc.) and test everything prior to the start of your session
- **Identify any programs** you would like to use during your session in addition to what is provided within Blackboard Collaborate (ex: utilizing QuickTime if drawing on a tablet) (test your browser as well!)
- **Establish a sign-up method** for your online session (one easy method is to utilize a Google form to collect email addresses – see example below)
- **Share the sign-up method** with students in the course (email link, post on MLSC website)
- **Review all sign-up information** and **email** the link for your session to all registered students

Sample Google Form sign-up page: (*to produce this, sign in to your UIC Gmail account, select forms from the menu, follow a template or create own, and capture sign-up information on a Google sheet. Please share sign-up sheets with MSLC Director.*)

Sample Google Forms used for session sign-ups:

Sign up page by CHEM Peer Leader, Ian L.

Sign up page by CHEM Peer Leader, Shakiba V.

In preparation to hosting / prior to offering these sessions, you should **test your equipment** and **materials**, as well as practice using Blackboard Collaborate Ultra **platform**. You may review the **ACCC PDF** on *Getting Started as a Moderator,* watch the new instructional videos provided (link provided at end of document), and use the information described in the hosting your session section below. You can always work with other Peer Leaders / Learning Assistants / Instructors / MSLC staff to test the system as well.

Hosting Your Online Session

To host your session:

- Log in to the **MSLC Online Tutoring Blackboard** site, click on **Blackboard Collaborate Ultra** under **Course Tools**, and join the session you have established by selecting it from the list.
- Have all your **materials ready** to share (upload all required documents, have windows open on your computer ready to share, additional devices set up and charged, etc.)
- At the start of your session, be sure to:
  - Click record (menu in upper left-hand side of main screen)
  - Introduce yourself and welcome participants to the session
  - Provide the same guidelines that were included in your sign-up sheet (see above) possibly as an intro slide/PDF that you can have visible while students log in.
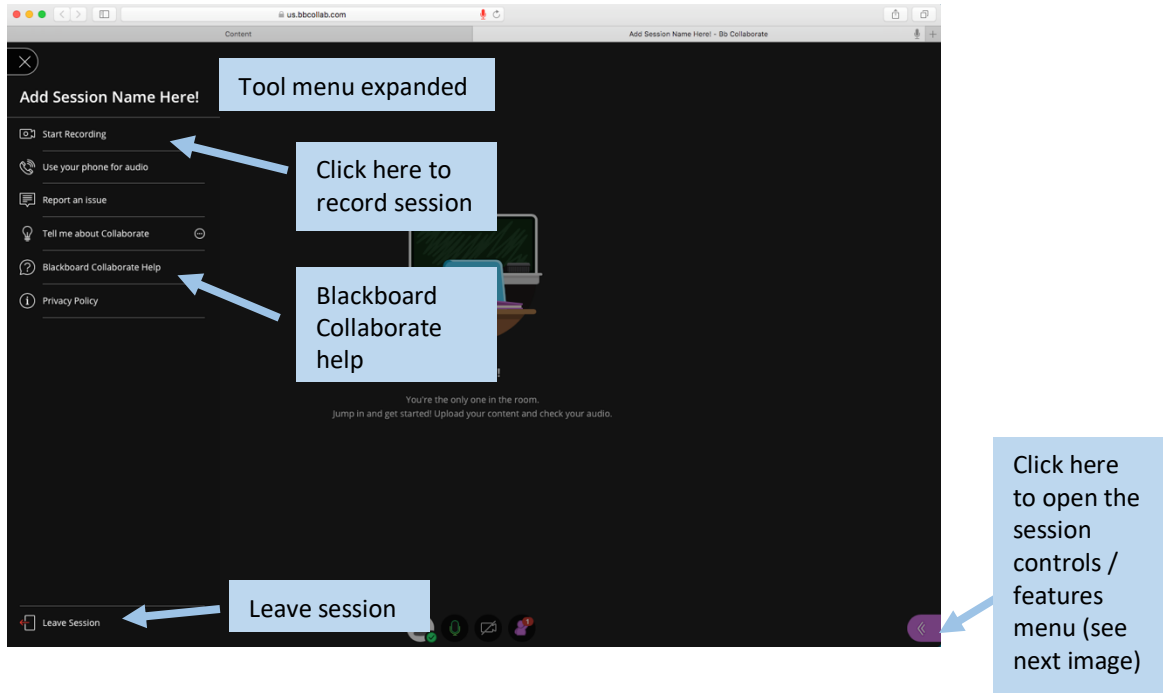   - Guidelines should include: *Joining this session, all participants agree to sign in with their first name (rather than anonymous / screen name), use respectful language, and maintain a welcoming learning environment at all times. The moderator will record the session for training purposes, however, no portion of this session shall be recorded or shared by participants. Please follow any additional session instructions provided by your moderator, and please ask any questions you may have at any time during the session. Thank you for joining this interactive learning experience!*
  - Give a quick intro to the features students may use while joining the session (microphone, raising hand, chat feature, etc.)

    View from the start of your session:
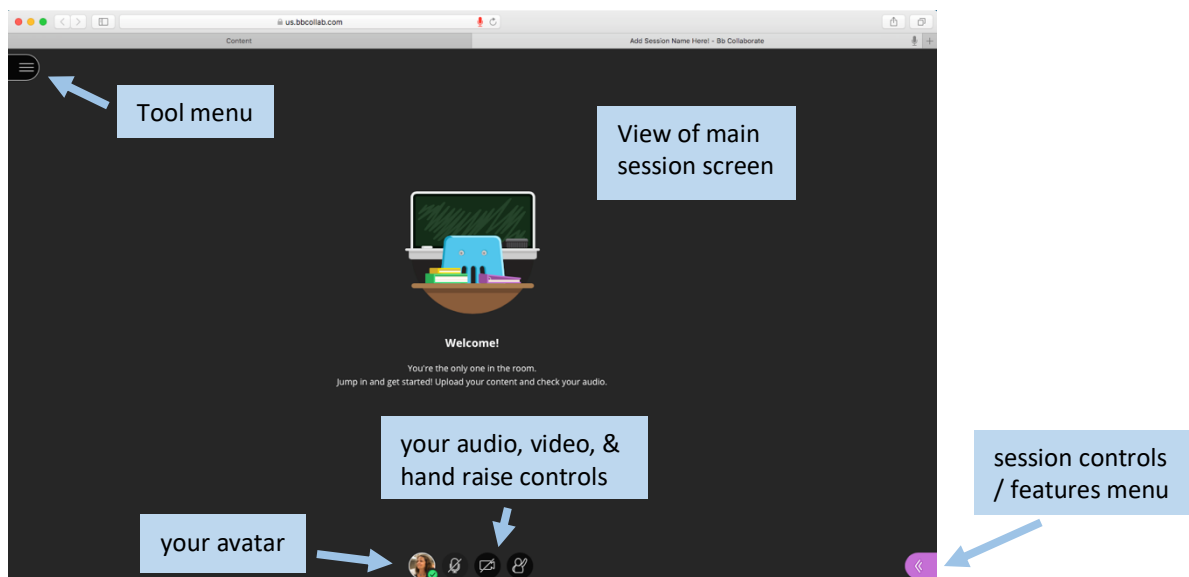
View of tool menu on left of screen:

Tool menu expanded

Click here to record session

Blackboard Collaborate help

Click here to open the session controls / features menu (see next image)

Leave session

Views of right control panel: (session controls / features menu)

1) Settings

Moderator Settings (click circle to update personal settings)

Audio / video controls

Notifications during session session (see next image)

* Click here to open settings
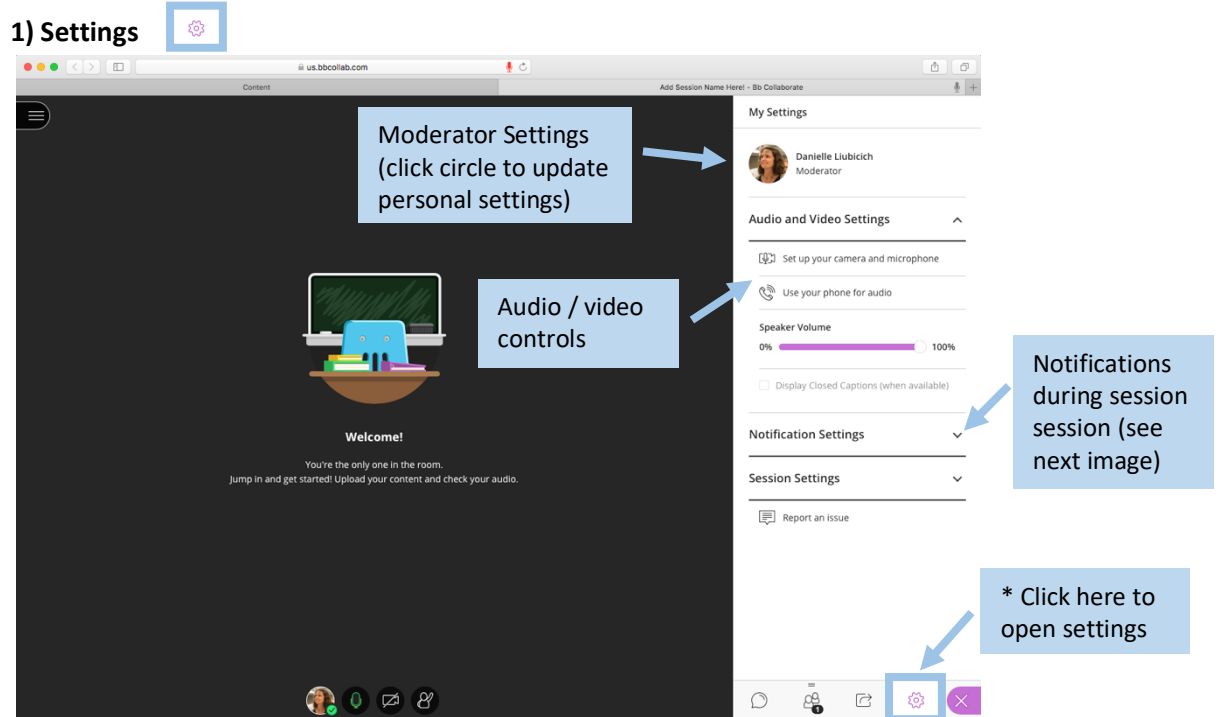
Notification settings:

Notification Settings: Set alerts for notifications during the session

Breakout group alerts

Chat alerts

Raised hand alerts

These features (& notifications) may be helpful when engaging with students. You may encourage students to ask questions or leave comments through the chat feature (answer questions yourself or have a teammate help you answer those during the session), or by raising their hand.

2) Chat feature

session chat will display here (text entered will be visible to all participants)

type here to chat with all participants

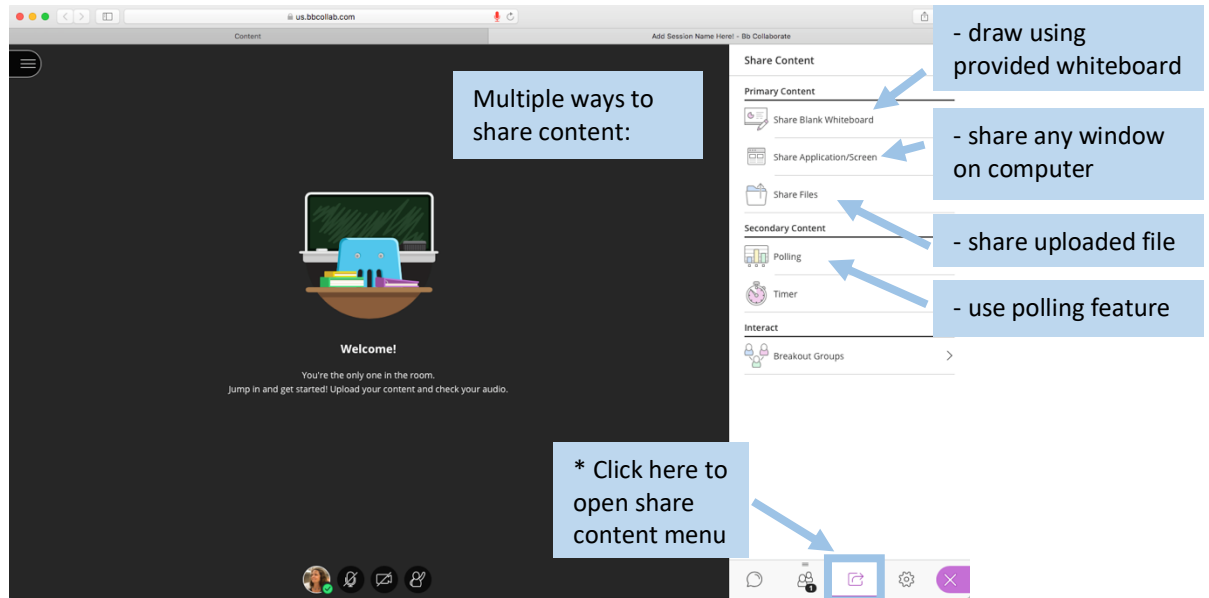* Click here to open chat

Tips for chat feature: Encourage students to use their first name as they sign-in here and also be sure everyone engages in respectful dialogue to maintain the welcoming learning environment. It may also be helpful to have another course support staff member assist with the chat feature while another member of the support team leads the other aspects of the session.
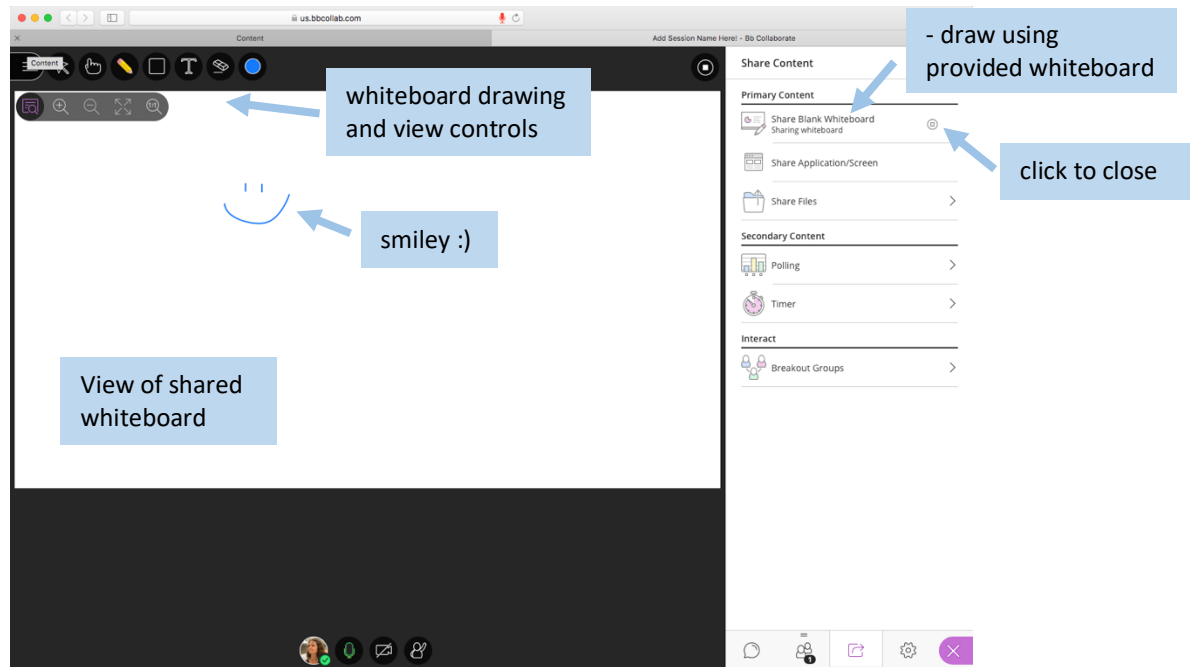
3) Share Content ⬀

There are several ways to share content during online sessions in Blackboard Collaborate Ultra. Some will be highlighted here for easy reference and to provide some ideas to get started.

Share Content: menu view

Multiple ways to share content:

- draw using provided whiteboard

- share any window on computer

- share uploaded file

- use polling feature

* Click here to open share content menu

Share Content: whiteboard view

whiteboard drawing and view controls

smiley :)

View of shared whiteboard

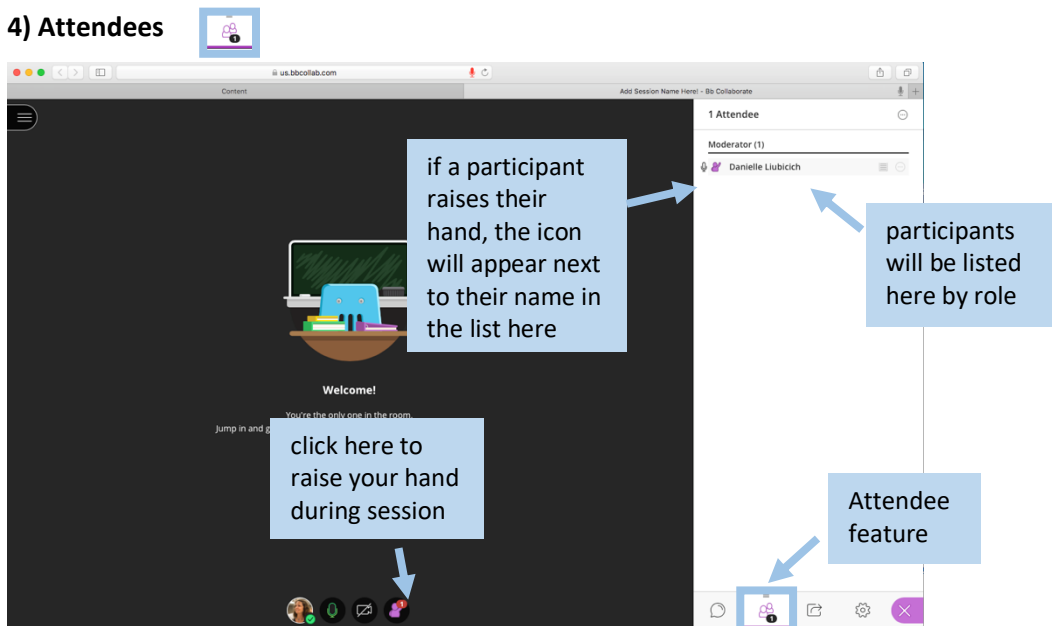- draw using provided whiteboard

click to close

Share Content: share file view
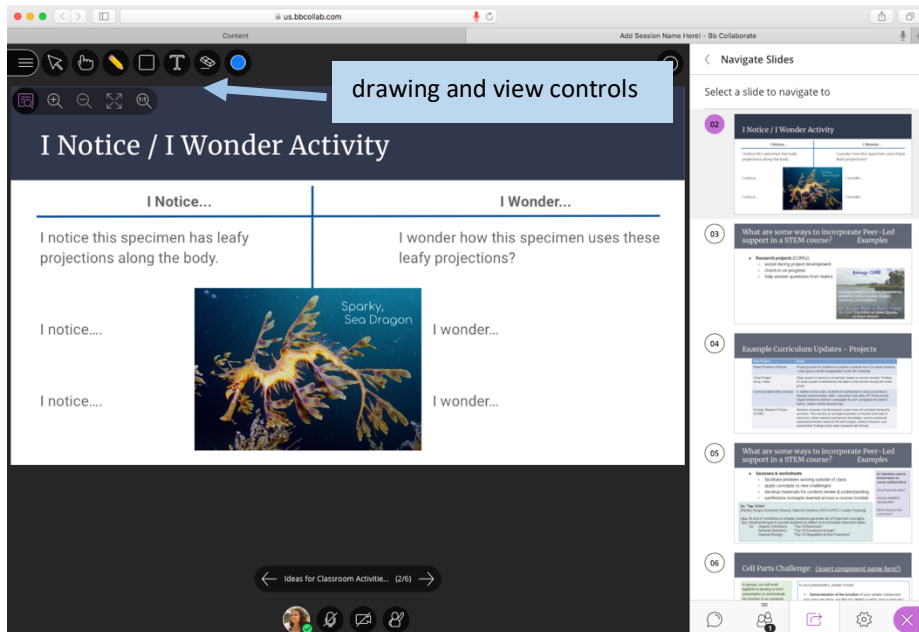
This is a view of a slide that was uploaded as a PDF. You can annotate uploaded documents within the program to work through problems, answer questions, highlight ideas, show a photo taken of a sheet where you wrote out a problem / steps to solving, etc.
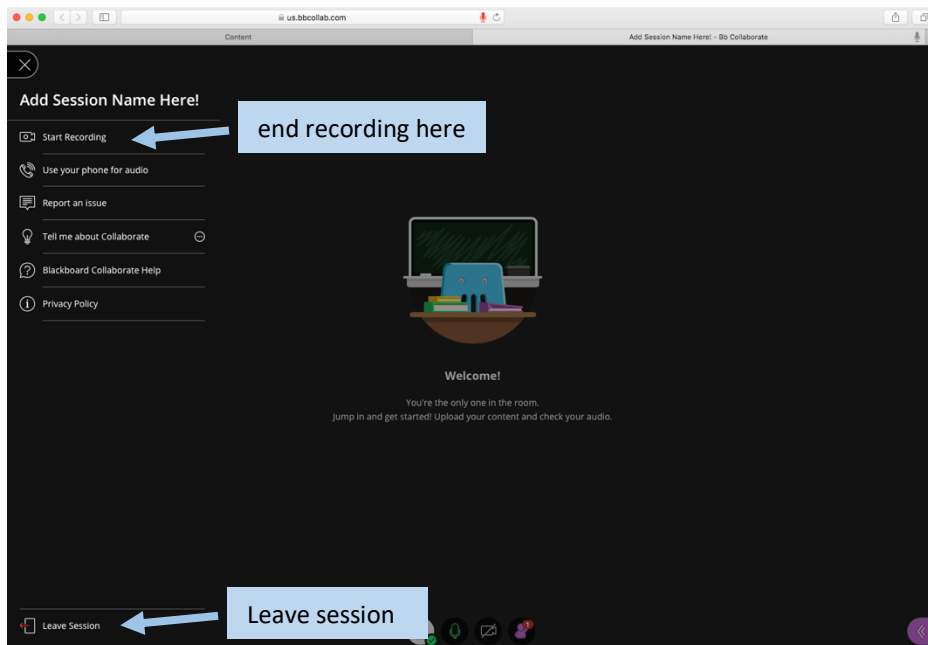
4) Attendees

You can view a list of everyone participating in your session and their role here.
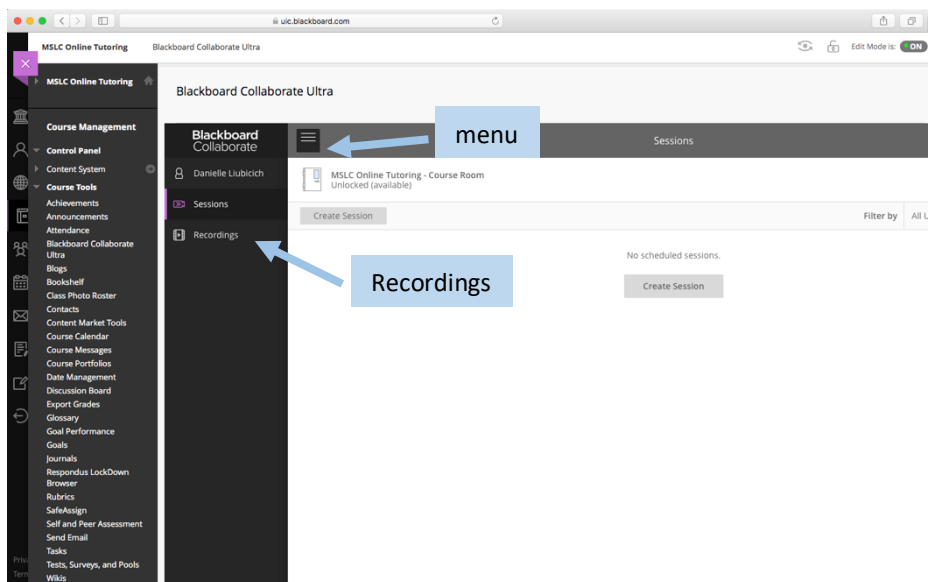
To end your session:

- Please thank everyone for attending, stop recording, and leave the session.

To view previous recordings:

From the **Course Room** screen, click the menu button at the upper left corner of the Course Room window and click **Recordings.**

Additional Tips

- During your session
  - Be mindful of your language as you would if you were in class or in the MSLC
  - Stay positive and don't worry if you make any mistakes – do your best to correct them, but also remind everyone that we are all always learning!
  - Pause as needed to allow students time to solve any problems you present or to allow them time to process the information and ask questions

- Following the session, you may consider
  - providing any documents / problem sets you reviewed (questions not answers)
  - following up with students by a short survey to collect feedback
  - request feedback from other Peer Leaders / Learning Assistants / Faculty who may have been present during the session
- Please reach out to the MSLC staff with any questions or concerns at any time as well!

UIC resources

From ACCC Answers page – Best Practices for Blackboard Collaborate
https://answers.uillinois.edu/uic/87467

ACCC Blackboard Collaborate Page
https://accc.uic.edu/services/communication-collaboration/conferencing/bb-collaborate/

New Panopto video on using Blackboard Collaborate:
https://uic.hosted.panopto.com/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=40710d62-5bb3-48de-8c80-ab79011da9ab

Academic Continuity Resources for students, faculty, staff (lots of instructions and info shared)
https://accc.uic.edu/support/academic-continuity/

Blackboard built-in help features: From your home page in Blackboard – scroll down to **Tool Guides** > select
Blackboard Collaborate