

Collaboration Tools

Overview

The Collaboration Tools allow the Instructor and Students to participate in real-time lessons and discussions. Examples of these sessions include real-time, online classroom discussions, TA sessions, and office hour type question/answer forums. Archives of previous sessions are also available for review. Guest speakers and subject-matter experts can also lead sessions using the Collaboration Tools. The Collaboration Session page is used to organize and access sessions. From this page users can search for and join Collaboration Sessions and view session archives.

Collaboration Tools

The following Collaboration Tools are available.

Tool	Description
Virtual Classroom	Allows users to enter a real-time discussion with Instructors, Students, and colleagues, access the Web, and engage in question and answer sessions. Users may also access the Whiteboard to display text and images.
Lightweight Chat	The Lightweight Chat is part of the Virtual Classroom, but can also be accessed separately. It allows users to open just the chat function of the Virtual Classroom.

Java Plug-in

The Java 2 Run Time Environment 1.3.1_04 is required to use the Collaboration Tools. This plug-in may be downloaded from the page that appears when a user joins a Collaboration Session, or may be found at <http://java.sun.com/j2se/1.3/download.html>.

Find this page

Follow the steps below to open the Collaboration Sessions page.

- Step 1** Click **Communication** on the course menu in a course Web site.
Step 2 Select **Collaboration**.

Functions

The following table describes the functions available from this page.

To . . .	click . . .
filter the sessions listed on the page	the arrow next to the drop-down list and select the type of session to display. Click Filter . The filters include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show All – The default filter that displays all of the Collaboration Sessions. • Open Rooms – Displays all of the sessions that are currently being used. • Rooms with Archives – Displays completed sessions that have an archive. • Rooms Available in the Future – Displays sessions that are scheduled to take place in the future.
search for a session	the Session Name , Start Date or End Date option and then enter a value in the field. Click Search .
enter a session	Join next to the session. The Virtual Classroom or Lightweight chat for that session will open.
access the archives for a session	Archives next to the session. The Session Archives page will appear.

User Roles

There are two roles available for users in Collaboration Sessions: Passive and Active. Instructors control user access and functionality during a Collaboration session by assigning roles. These roles determine how much functionality a user has during a Collaboration Session. For example, Instructors determine which users can chat, send private messages, or ask questions during a session by assigning specific Access Rights to the different roles. The Student icon will appear in the Role column next to those Students who are Active.

Student roles can change throughout the Collaboration Session. Users who are Passive, but would like Active rights, can “raise their hand” by clicking the hand icon, which is visible to Passive Students. The Instructor then clicks the hand icon next to a user name or clicks the Student icon to make the user Active.

Macintosh and Accessible Collaboration Tool

An Accessible version of the Collaboration Tool is available in the *Blackboard Learning System*. Users running Macintosh Operating System 8 or 9 should also use this version.

On the launch page, which opens when **Join** is selected on the Collaboration Sessions page, a link to this version appears. This link will open the Accessible version / Macintosh OS 8 and 9 version of the Collaboration Tool, which resembles the Lightweight Chat. Links to items that appear in the Virtual Classroom, such as items

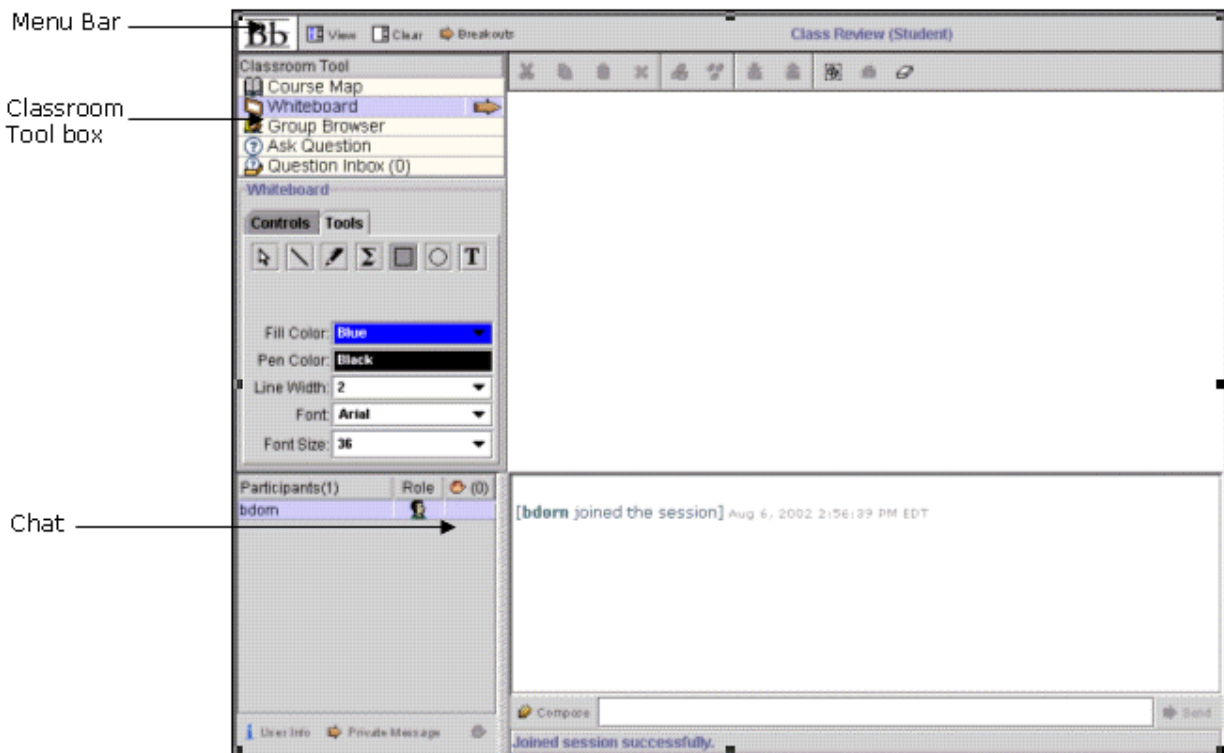
in the Course Map and Group Browser, will appear in this version. Documents created on the Whiteboard may be viewed if the Instructor takes a snapshot of them, using the Snapshot button on the Whiteboard action bar. A link will be created to the snapshot for users to view it.

When a user, using the Accessible Collaboration Tool, enters or exits the room the sound of a door opening or closing will be audible to all participants in the Collaboration Session.

Virtual Classroom

Overview

The Virtual Classroom allows the Instructor and Students to participate in real time lessons and discussions. The main page of the Virtual Classroom includes all of the functions available to users. From this area users can access all of the tools associated with the Virtual Classroom, such as asking questions, drawing on the whiteboard, and participating in breakout sessions. The Instructor establishes which tools in the Virtual Classroom users can access.



Find this page

Follow the steps below to open the Virtual Classroom.

- Step 1** Click **Communication** on the course menu of a course Web site.
- Step 2** Select **Collaboration Tools**.
- Step 3** Click **Join next** to a Virtual Classroom session. The Virtual Classroom will open.

Virtual Classroom areas

The table below details the areas of the Virtual Classroom.

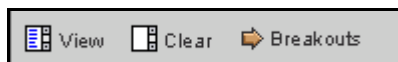
Part	Function
Menu Bar	Allows the Instructor to administer the Virtual Classroom. This includes managing participation, monitoring breakout sessions, and ending the session.
Classroom Tool box	Includes all of the tools used during the Virtual Classroom session. This includes searching for Web sites, asking and answering questions, utilizing the Whiteboard, and accessing the Course Map.
Lightweight Chat	The main section where interaction between the users takes place. Allows users to compose messages, raise their hands to ask questions, and activate private messages.

Menu Bar

Overview

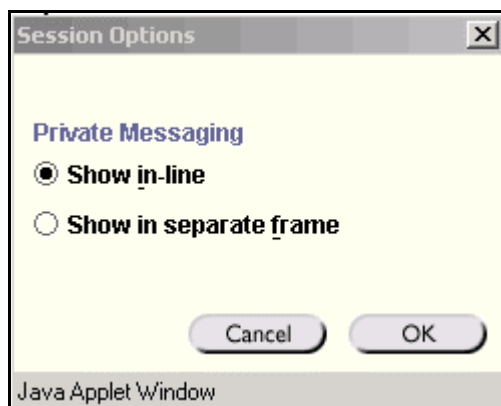
The Menu Bar allows the user to manage their Virtual Classroom session. Only users with Active privileges will have access to the options on the Menu Bar. The functions available in the Menu Bar include:

- **View** - Choose an option for viewing Personal Messages in the Virtual Classroom
- **Clear** - Clear the session display
- **Breakouts** - Create a breakout room for a group of users



View

View allows the Instructor and users to select options for how they would like to view private messages.



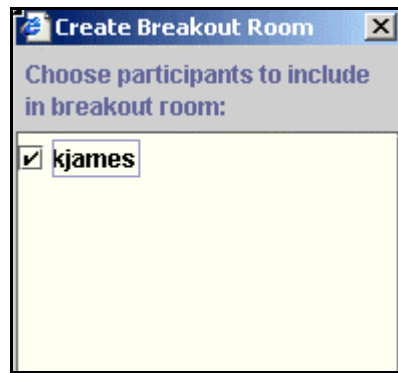
Select **Show in-line** to view private messages within the chat area. Select **Show in separate frame** to view private messages in a separate window.

Clear

Clear erases the users chat display. To clear the chat display click **Clear** on the Menu Bar.

Breakouts

This tool allows select users to participate in a separate session, while also participating in the main session. Users who enter a Breakout session are still active in the main Virtual Classroom Session. If a Breakout session is closed users are still active in the main session. Breakout sessions default to the same settings as the main session.



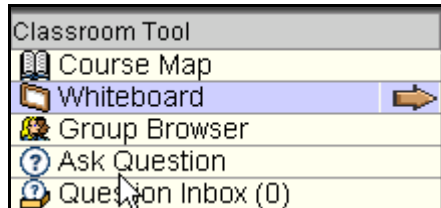
Select the checkboxes for the users who will participate in the Breakout session. Users may only join a Breakout session if they are selected by the creator of the Breakout session.

Classroom Tool box

Overview

The Classroom Tool box enables the Instructor and users to use the different tools available within the Virtual Classroom. If granted access to these tools by the Instructor, users can use the Whiteboard, access Web sites, and view the course map.

The Classroom Tool box appears on the left side of the Virtual Classroom. To begin using items in the Tool box click the name of the tool.



Tools

The following tools are available in the Classroom Tool box.

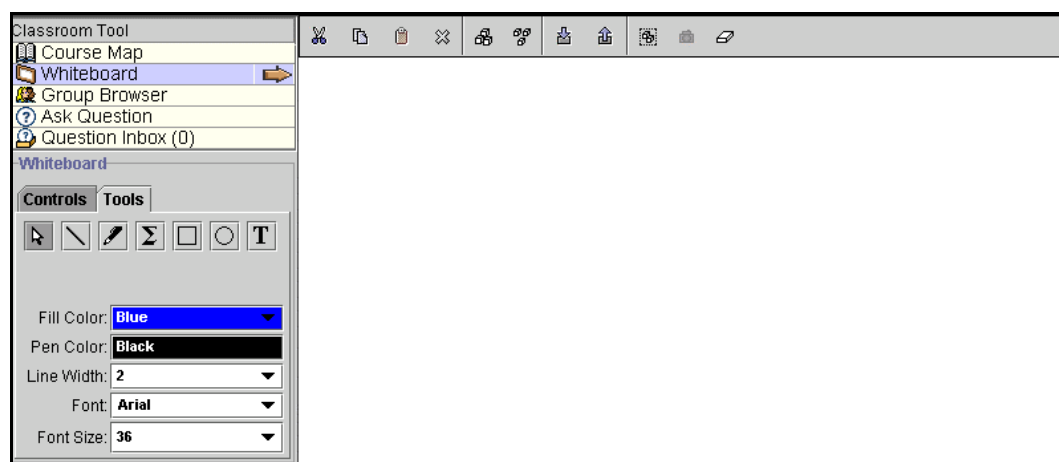
Tool	Description
Whiteboard	Enables users to present different types of information as they would on a blackboard in a classroom.
Group Browser	Enables users to collaboratively browse the Web.
Course Map	Enables users to browse the Course Contents while they are in a Virtual Classroom.
Ask Question	Enables users to ask questions during the session.
Question Inbox	Enables users to answer questions submitted by other users during a session.

Whiteboard

Overview

The Virtual Classroom allows the Instructor and Students to participate in real time lessons and discussions. The Whiteboard enables users in a Virtual Classroom to present different types of information as they would on a blackboard in a classroom. Using the tools in the Whiteboard Tools palette, users can draw images, type text, and present equations. The Instructor will determine whether or not this function is made available to users.

Note: Only users who have privileges (assigned by the Instructor) can access the Whiteboard. See the [User Roles](#) topic for more information on Collaboration Session roles.



Find this tool

Follow the steps below to locate the Whiteboard.

- Step 1** Open a Virtual Classroom session.
- Step 2** The Whiteboard frame appears as a black white space on the left side of the Virtual Classroom. Click **Whiteboard** in the Classroom Tool to view the tools available for the Whiteboard. Click the name of the tool to begin using it.

Functions

The table below details the tools available for use on the Whiteboard.

To . . .	click . . .
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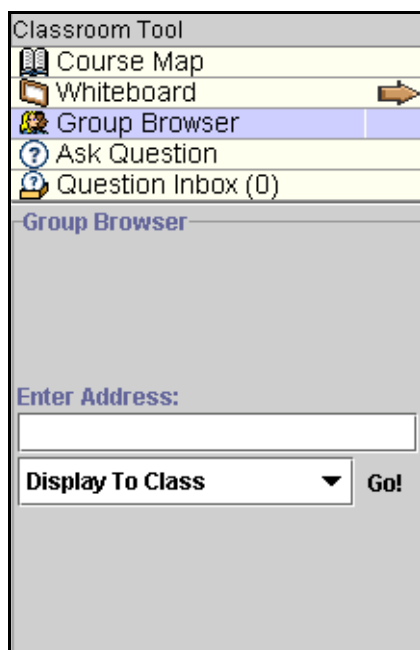
select an item	<p>the Arrow tool. Then click on an item for selection. The following may be performed on selected items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enlarge: Click one of the small black boxes that surround the item and drag it to the desired size. • Move: Click the item and move it to the desired location • Cut: Click the Whiteboard Tools palette item, then click the Cut icon. • Copy: Click the Whiteboard Tools palette item, then click the Copy icon. • Paste: Click the Whiteboard Tools palette item, then click the Paste icon. • Delete: Click the Whiteboard Tools palette item; click on the selected object; then click the Delete icon. • Group items: Click the Whiteboard Tools palette items, then click the Group icon. • Ungroup: Click a Whiteboard Tools palette item in a group, then click the Ungroup icon. • Bring front: Click the Whiteboard Tools palette item; click on selected object; then click the Bring to front icon. • Bring back: Click the Whiteboard Tools palette item; click on selected object; then click the Send to back icon. • Select all figures on the Whiteboard: Click the Selects all Figures icon.
draw free hand	the Pen drawing tool. Choose the color of the pen in the Fill Color drop-down list.
enter text using the keyboard	the text tool (T) then the Whiteboard area. A Whiteboard Text Input box appears. Type the text in the box and click Insert . Use the options in the Tools palette to select color, font, and size.
draw a straight line	the Slanted Line tool.
highlight something with an arrow	the Pointer .
draw a square	the Square drawing tool. Choose the color of the square from the Fill Color drop-down list.
draw a circle	the Oval drawing tool. Choose the color of the circle from the Fill Color drop-down list.
input an equation	The Math and Science Equation Editor icon (Σ). The Equation Editor will appear. Input the equation and click Insert Equation .

Group Browser

Overview

The Virtual Classroom allows Instructors and Students to participate in real time lessons and discussions. The Group Browser enables users to collaboratively browse the Web. The Instructor and users use this tool to open a URL that is viewable by all users. URLs used in the session will be recorded in the archive if one is created. The Instructor will determine whether or not this function is made available to users.

Note: Only users who have an Active role can access the Group Browser. See the [User Roles](#) topic for more information on roles.



Find this tool

Follow the steps below to locate the Group Browser.

- Step 1** Open a Virtual Classroom session.
Step 2 Select the **Group Browser** in the Classroom Tool to begin using this tool.

Functions

The table below details the available functions in the Group Browser.

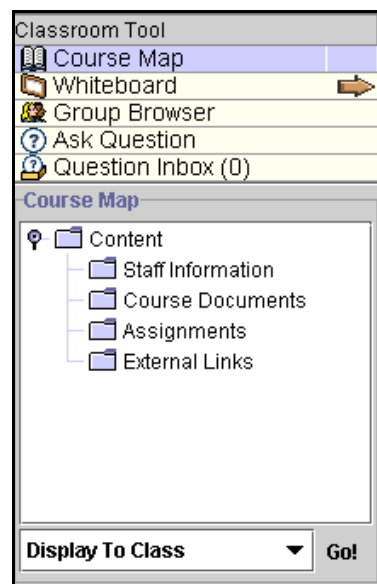
To . . .	click . . .
open a Web site	type the URL in the Enter Address field.
choose where to display the Web site	Display To Class to display the window in the Whiteboard area of the Virtual Classroom or click Preview in New Window to open the Web site in a new browser window. This window will only be displayed to the Instructor.

Course Map

Overview

The Course Map enables users to browse the Course Contents while they are in a Virtual Classroom. By default, the Instructor has access to operate the Course Map. Users must have Active privileges to use the Course Map in a Virtual Classroom.

Note: The Course Map in the Virtual Classroom appears similar to the Course Map for linking items within a course but they are functionally different.



Find this tool

Follow the steps below to locate the Course Map.

- Step 1** Open a Virtual Classroom session.
Step 2 Select the **Course Map** in the Classroom Tool to begin using this tool.

Functions

The table below details the available functions in the Course Map.

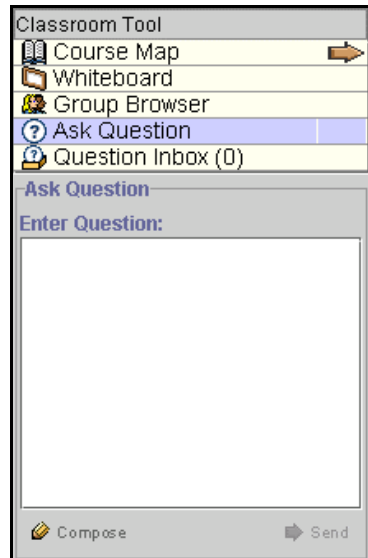
To . . .	click . . .
display an element on the map to all users	the content area in the Course Map and select Display To Class in the drop-down list.
display an element on the map in a separate window	the content area in the Course Map and select Preview in New Window in the drop-down list. The new window is only visible to the User accessing it.
refresh the Course Map during a Collaboration Session	Refresh Tree in the drop-down list. This will update the Course Map to match the latest Course menu on the course Web site.

Ask Question

Overview

Users are able to ask questions during the session by using the Ask Question tool. As users submit questions during the session the Instructor can view and respond to them.

Note: Only users who have an Active role can ask questions. See the [User Roles](#) topic for more information on roles.



Find this tool

Follow the steps below to access the Ask Question tool.

- Step 1** Open a Virtual Classroom session.
- Step 2** Select **Ask Question** in the Classroom Tool to begin using this tool.

Ask a Question

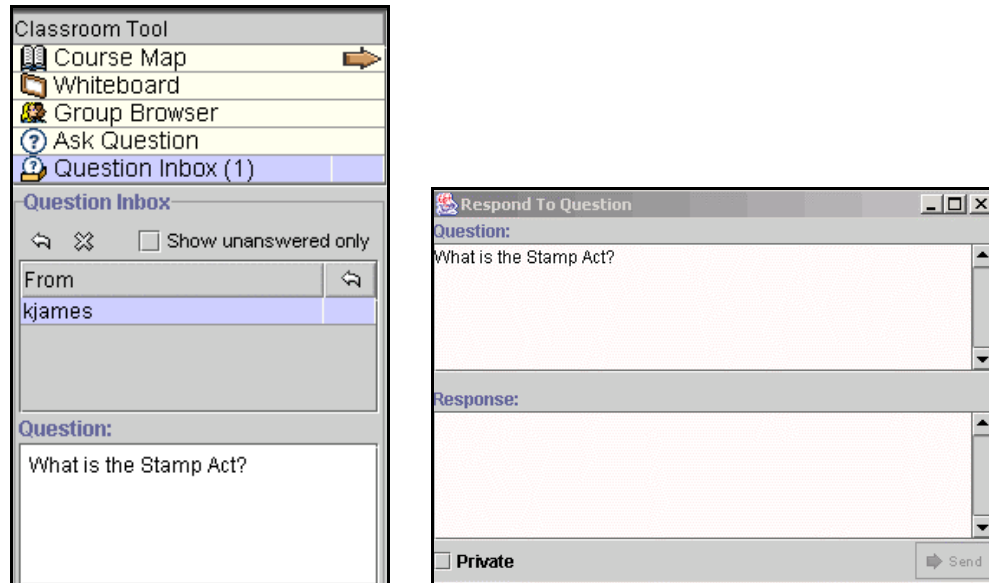
To ask a question, select **Compose** in the Ask Question area, enter the question in the text box and click **Send**.

Question Inbox

Overview

Questions from users are sent to the Question Inbox during the Virtual Classroom session. The Question Inbox is used to manage and respond to questions during a Collaboration Session.

Note: Only users who have an Active role can access the Question Inbox. See the [User Roles](#) topic for more information on roles.



Find Respond to Question

Follow the steps below to access the Respond to Question tool:

- Step 1** Open a Virtual Classroom session.
- Step 2** Select **Question Inbox** in the Collaboration Tool.

Function

The table below details the functions available in the Question Inbox Tool.

To . . .	click . . .
respond to a question	the user name in the From list and click the Respond to Question icon. The Respond to Question pop-up window will appear.
delete a question	the user name in the From list and click the Delete icon.
view only questions that have not been answered	the checkbox next to Show unanswered only .

Respond to Question fields

The table below details the fields on the Respond to Question pop-up window.

Field	Description
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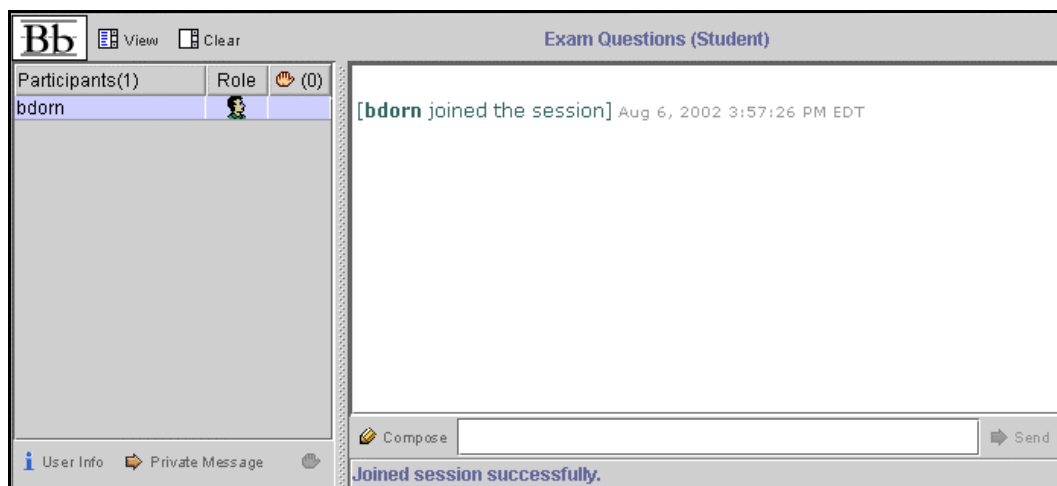
Question	Question that was submitted.
Response	Enter the response to the question.
Private	Select this check box to make the response to the question private. If marked private, the response will only be sent to the person who submitted the message.

Lightweight Chat

Overview

The Lightweight Chat allows the users to interact with each other and the Instructor via a text-based chat region. This region is part of the Virtual Classroom, but can also be accessed separately without the rest of the tools that make up the Virtual Classroom. When accessed separately, it is called the Lightweight Chat.

Note: Some of the functionality in the chat is limited to those users with an Active role. See the [User Roles](#) topic for more information on roles.



Find this page

Follow the steps below to open a Lightweight Chat:

- Step 1** Click **Communication** on the Course menu of a course Web site.
- Step 2** Select **Collaboration Tools**.
- Step 3** Click **Join** to next to a Lightweight Chat session.

Functions

The table below details the functions available in the Lightweight Chat.

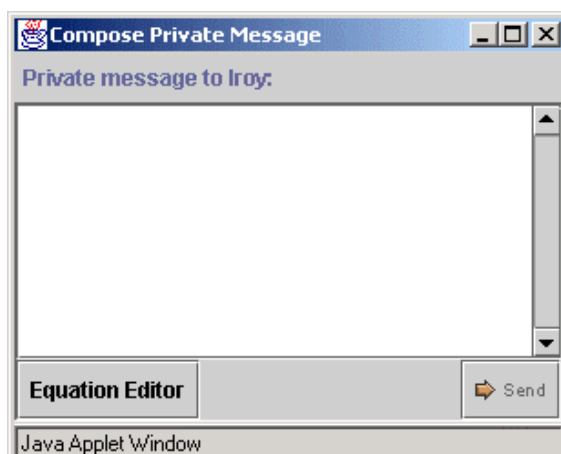
To . . .	then . . .
enter a message for the class to read	type the message in the Compose field. Click Send . The message will appear in the chat area.
become an Active user	click the hand symbol. A hand appears next to the user name. The Instructor clicks on the hand to make the user Active. This means that the User may now post a message in the Chat.
view user information	Select a user's name in the Participant list and then click User Info .
send a private message to a user	Select a user's name in the Participant list and then click Private Message . The Compose Private Message window will appear.

Private Messages

Overview

The Instructor of a Collaboration Session can send and receive private messages from the users during the Collaboration Session. Users can send private messages to each other if the Instructor enables this tool in the Session Controls. Private messages are not recorded or archived.

Note: Only users who have an Active role can send Private Messages. See the [User Roles](#) topic for more information on roles.



Find this pop-up window

Follow the steps below to access the Private Message pop-up window.

- Step 1** Open a Virtual Classroom or Chat session.
- Step 2** Select a user's name and click **Private Message**.

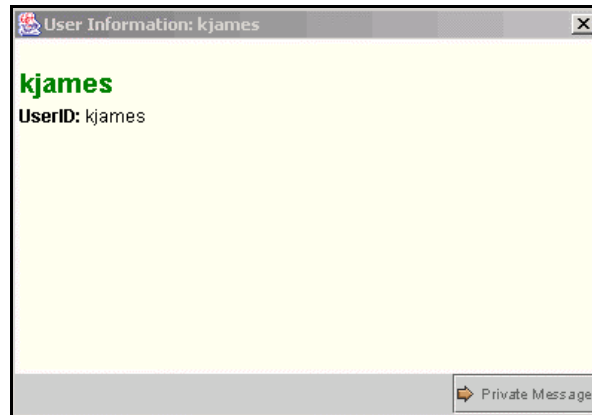
Functions

To send a Private Message, enter the message in the text box and click **Send**.

User Information

Overview

The User Information pop-up window displays personal information about the user such as name, email address, and any other information the user has chosen to add to their profile.



Find this pop-up window

Follow the steps below to access the User Information pop-up window.

- Step 1** Open a Virtual Classroom session.
- Step 2** Click **User Info** in the Chat area and the User Information pop-up window will appear.

Send a Private Message

Click **Private Message** to send a message to the user. The [Compose Private Message](#) pop-up window will appear.

Session Archives

Overview

The Session Archives allows Instructors and Students to review the discussions and questions raised during a previous Collaboration Session. The archive must be made available by the Instructor for users to view it.

COURSES > AMERICAN HISTORY UNTIL 1865 > COMMUNICATIONS > COLLABORATION > VIEW ARCHIVES

Session Archives

[Back to Collaboration Sessions](#)

Search by: Archive Name Creation Date (MM-DD-YY)

Displaying archives 1-2 of 2

Archive Name	Date Created	Archive Duration (day:hr:min:sec:ms)
Review	Jul 30, 2002 at 9:56 AM EDT	0:00:00:42:000
Review 2	Jul 30, 2002 at 9:59 AM EDT	0:00:1:56:000

2 Archives
Displaying archives 1-2

Find this page

Follow the steps below to access the Session Archives page.

- Step 1** Click **Communication** on the Course Menu of a course Web site.
- Step 2** Select **Collaboration Tools**.
- Step 3** Click **Archives** next to a Virtual Classroom session.

Functions


The table below details the available functions on this page.

To . . .	click . . .
access an archived classroom	the session name in the Archive Name column. The Archive page for that session will appear.
search for an archive	the Archive Name or Creation Date option in the Search by: field. Enter the name of the archive or the date it was created in the field below and click Search .
return to the Collaboration Session page	Back to Collaboration Sessions.

Example

The following is an example of an Archive.

[COURSES](#) > [AMERICAN HISTORY UNTIL 1865](#) > [COMMUNICATIONS](#) > [COLLABORATION](#) > [NEW ARCHIVE](#)

 **View Archive: Review 2**

Question from smackey: what time is the exam? Tue Jul 30 09:57:06 EDT 2002

Response from smackey: The exam is at 1:00 pm. Please bring a calculator with you. Tue Jul 30 10:00:02 EDT 2002

[smackey displayed the following content: http://twserver:80/bin/common/content.pl?action=LIST&render_type=DEFAULT&content_id=18_1] Jul 30, 2002 10:00:20 AM EDT

bdorn: Can we use our review materials during the exam? Jul 30, 2002 10:00:55 AM EDT

smackey: No, there will be no use of notes or books during the exam. Jul 30, 2002 10:01:13 AM EDT