

Lightweight Chat

The **Lightweight Chat** tool allows you to communicate in real-time with your class.

Entering a Collaboration Session

From the **Student View**:

- 1) Click into the content area where Collaboration sessions are kept (this varies from course to course, but is usually the **Communication** area).
- 2) Click the **Collaboration** link.
- 3) You will see a list of all collaboration sessions in alphabetical order by session name.
- 4) Find the collaboration session you wish to join.
- 5) Click the **Join** button to the right of the collaboration session name.
- 6) You will see a page that says "Chat Loading." Depending on your connection speed, it may take a few minutes for everything necessary for the chat to run to download.
- 7) A new window will appear. This is the **Lightweight Chat Tool**.
- 8) The Lightweight Chat window has two major panes. On the left, you are shown a list of all users currently in the chat room. On the right, you see all messages sent to the group.

Changing Your Viewing Options for Private Messages

You can set your chat window to display private messages either *inline* (with the other messages you send and receive) or in a *separate frame* (which creates a new pane in the Lightweight Chat window which contains only private messages).

From the **Lightweight Chat Tool**:

- 1) Click the **View** button.
- 2) A new window, labeled **Session Options** will appear.
- 3) Select the radio button next to **Show in-line** or **Show in separate frame**.
- 4) Click the **Ok** button.

Sending and Receiving Messages

In the Lightweight Chat, the right pane of the window is dedicated to group information. The large pane toward the upper right is used to display messages and login information (and depending on how you have configured your options (see the "Changing Your Viewing Options for Private Messages" directions for more information) may include private messages as well. To send a message:

From the **Lightweight Chat Tool**:

- 1) The right pane of the Lightweight Chat window has all messages sent to the group. If you have just joined, you should see a message saying that you have joined the session (and a timestamp).
- 2) To send a message, click in the field just to the right of the **Compose** button.
- 3) Type your message and click the **Send** button (or press return).
- 4) In the window above the text field, you should see your name (or your username, depending on your privacy settings), followed by your message text, followed by a date and timestamp.
- 5) The message you have just sent will appear in the same box for everyone currently in the chat session. In addition, if you are recording an archive, the message will appear there (for more information on this, see the directions on **recording archives**).
- 6) Messages that other users send will appear in the same pane yours did.

Sending Longer Messages

You may occasionally wish to send a longer message than will fit in the compose field. If you'd like to send a longer message, you can do it by using the **Compose** button.

From the **Lightweight Chat Tool**:

- 1) Click the **Compose** button.
- 2) A window labeled **Compose Message** will appear. You can type your message here. While typing, pressing **Enter** or **Return** will insert line breaks; however, these line breaks will not appear when the final message is sent.
- 3) When your message is complete, click the **Send** button.
- 4) The smaller window will close and your message will be sent to the class.

Sending a Private Message

From the **Lightweight Chat Tool**:

- 1) Click on the name (or User ID) of the participant you wish to send a private message to in the **Left** pane. The user's name, role, and status should highlight in purple.
- 2) Click the **Private Message** button.
- 3) A new window, labeled **Compose Private Message**, will appear.

- 4) Type your message into the text field of the **Compose Private Message** window.
- 5) Press the **Send** button.
- 6) Your message will appear in your chat window (depending on how you've set the options, it may appear inline or in a frame on the right) and in the window of the user you've sent it to, but will not appear in any other user's chat window.

Note: *Private messages will not show up in the archives for the chat. Note that this is a change from earlier versions of Blackboard.*

Clearing Your Display

You can clear out your record of previous chat messages.

From the **Lightweight Chat Tool**:

- 1) Click on the **Clear** button.
- 2) Your chat window should clear.

Viewing Participants

From the **Lightweight Chat Tool**:

- 1) The left pane will show you a list of all current participants in the chat.
- 2) The number of current participants appears at the top of the list (in parentheses, after the word "Participants").
- 3) Users who have set their name to publicly available in their **Privacy Settings** will have their first and last names appear here. Users who have not set their name to publicly available will have their user ID displayed.
- 4) Next to each participant's name, an icon displaying the user's **role** will be displayed:
 - a. Users who are **Moderators** of the chat have a **Globe** icon.
 - b. Users who are **Active Users** have a face in profile icon.
 - c. Users who are **Passive Users** have the same face icon, but it is grayed out.
- 5) To the right of the user role, there is a column for the **Raised Hand** icon. If you have set users to **Passive Users** roles, they can raise their hands to ask questions—for more information on this, see the directions to **Call on Users with Raised Hands**.

Sorting the Participant List

You can sort participants by **name**, **role**, or **order in which they raised their hands** (if you are using active and passive users).

From the **Lightweight Chat Tool**:

- 1) In the left pane, click on the criteria you wish to sort by.
- 2) If you click on the **Participants** tab, you will sort participants in alphabetical order by user name or last name, depending on each user's privacy settings (you only see first and last names of users who have made that information available).
- 3) Clicking on **Role** will sort users by role (moderators, active users, and passive users).
- 4) Clicking on the **Hand** icon will sort users by whether they have their hand raised, and if they do, by the order in which they raised their hands.
- 5) Clicking on a sort button again will reverse the order of the sort.

Viewing User Info

From the **Lightweight Chat Tool**:

- 1) Click on the name (or User ID) of the participant whose info you wish to view. The user's name, role, and status should highlight in purple.
- 2) Press the **User Info** button.
- 3) A new window will appear with all information from the user's profile that is publicly available (this depends on the user's privacy settings, but may include name, email, address, job title, and phone numbers).

Active v. Passive Users

Depending on how your instructor has set up the Lightweight Chat Tool, you may not have access to all the features mentioned above. Sometimes, instructors will set users to **Passive** mode, which will not give you access to all the tools. If you have been set as a **Passive** user, and you'd like access to more options, you can **Raise your Hand** and wait to be called on by your instructor.

Raising Your Hand

If you have been set as a **Passive User**, you have the option to raise your hand. The Lightweight Chat Tool keeps track of the order in which people raised their hands. To raise your hand

From the **Lightweight Chat Tool**:

- 1) Click the **Hand** icon. The hand icon is located in the bottom right of the left pane—to the right of the **Private Message** button.

- 2) A hand with a number will appear in the user information pane, to the right of your name. This indicates to your teacher that you have requested **Active User** status.
- 3) When your teacher calls on you, the hand will disappear and you will have **Active User** status. Usually, this means you will have access to the chat pane and can send messages.

More Information

Q. I want to send a message/send a private message, but those tools are grayed out! What's up?

A. Your teacher may have turned off access to these tools for all users, or set you as a **Passive User**. Contact your instructor to see how they want you to use the Lightweight Chat tool.

Q. What are the system requirements for using the **Lightweight Chat** tool?

A. You must have a java-enabled browser with a recent version of Java. If you have problems loading the chat, you can follow the link on the page that appears in Blackboard when you click the **Join** button to download the **Java Plug-In**.