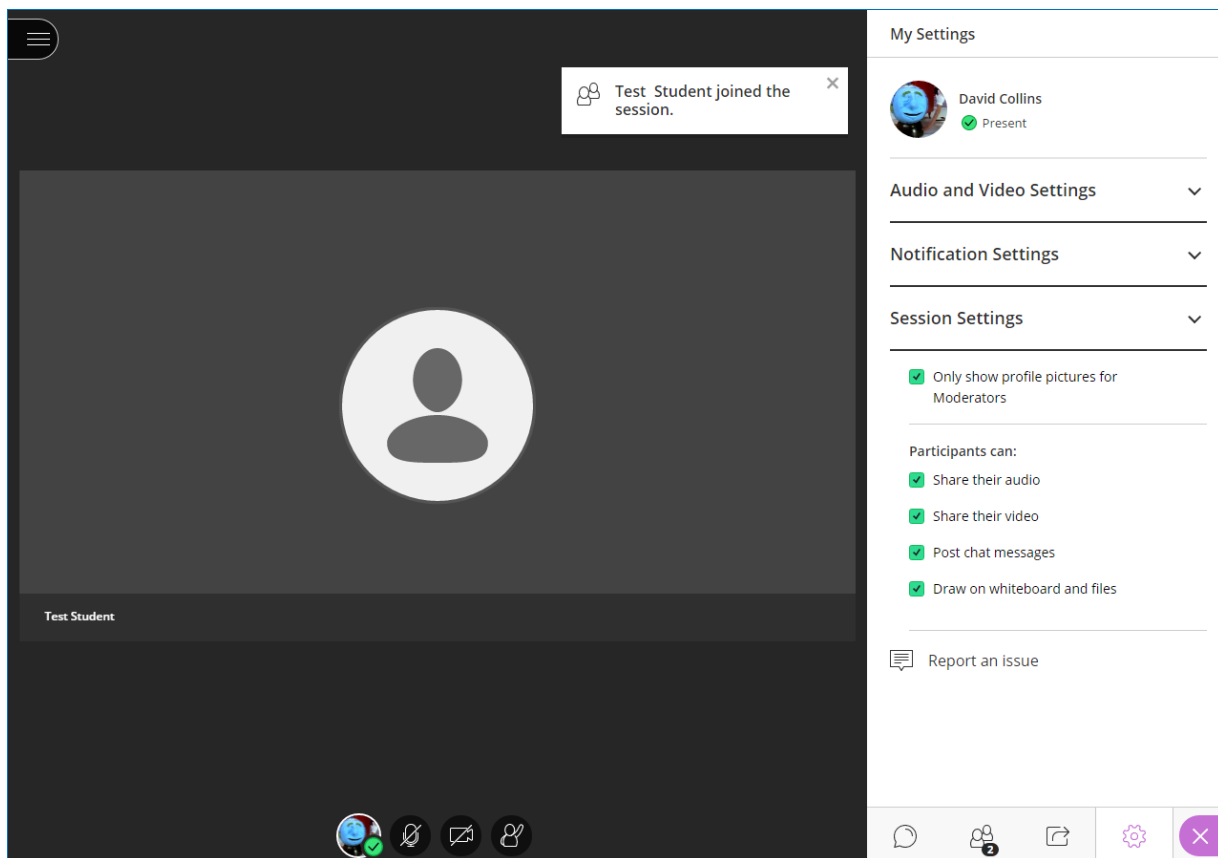




Collaborate Ultra: The Session Interface

The visual interface of the virtual room consists of two main areas: The Participants area, which takes up most of the screen space; and the Interaction Bar at the bottom.



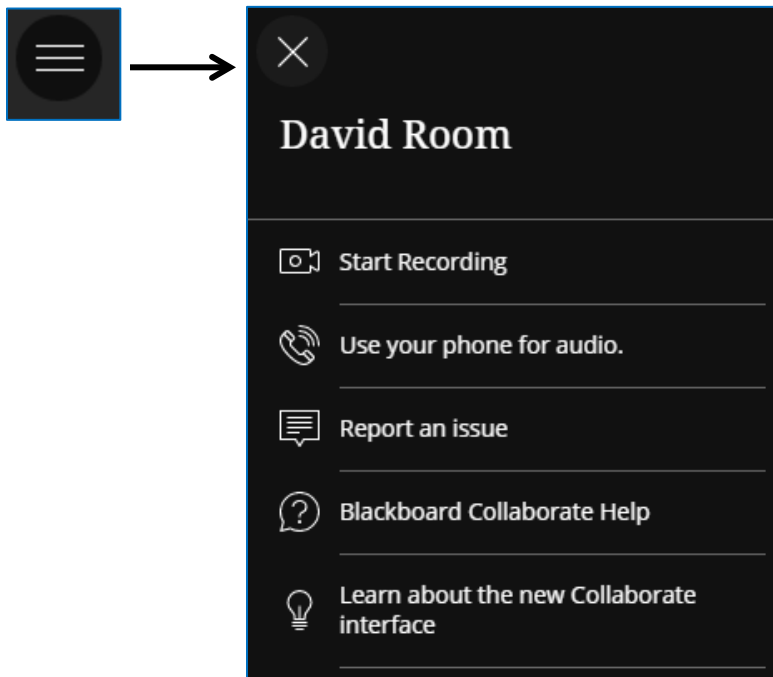
A Moderator or Presenter may determine what appears in the display field. It may be boxes displaying the video images or profile pictures of other participants, an interactive Whiteboard, a file (e.g., a PowerPoint presentation), or a shared application window.

Depending on the browser used, you may be able to change the size of these user interface elements on your screen—and only yours, not those of other Participants.

- Double-clicking in the shared space can toggle it between the 4x3 and 16x9 aspects ratios.
- Holding down a Ctrl key (Windows) or Option key (Macintosh) while manipulating the scroll wheel of a standard mouse zooms the interface in and out, but as they are enlarged, the shared space is diminished.

Session Menu

In the top-left corner of the Collaborate screen, you will find the Session Menu icon. Click it to expand the Session Menu pane. The pane displays the name of the room or session at the top, above a list of five command icons. There is also a **Leave Session** icon at the very bottom of the pane, which we will discuss later in this document.



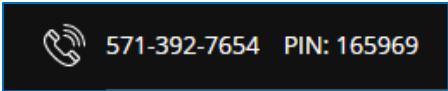
Start Recording

This icon begins the recording of the current session. It toggles between **Start Recording** and **Stop Recording**. When the recording is stopped, it is processed on the Collaborate server and added to the Recordings list for the room. Processing may take anywhere from one hour to a full day, depending on the length of the recording.

Stopping a recording means that a separate recording is created when it is restarted. Recording also ends when the last moderator leaves the room.

Use your phone for audio

Click this icon to display the 10-digit number to call into the session, as well as the PIN to enter when prompted. The number is not toll-free. Use this option when using a USB microphone is inconvenient or impossible. Each user receives a unique PIN, and no two users may use the same PIN simultaneously.



Report an Issue

This icon opens the Report an Issue pane on the right side of the screen. Fill check or type any useful information about a technical problem with Collaborate, and click the **Submit** button at the bottom. Collaborate sends the report, with information about the session, to UST’s Blackboard Administrator (bbadmin@stthom.edu). The Report an Issue pane can also be opened via the keyboard shortcut Alt+Shift+P in Windows, Option+Shift+P in Macintosh.

Blackboard Collaborate Help

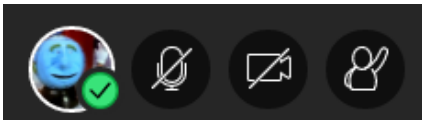
Click this icon to navigate to Blackboard’s Collaborate Help website in a new tab. Depending on your role for the session, you may see the main page for a Moderator, Participant, Presenter, or Captioner.

Learn about the new Collaborate interface

Take a tour of the new design features and functionalities in Collaborate Ultra. The interface received a thorough makeover in July 2016 and several updates since then.

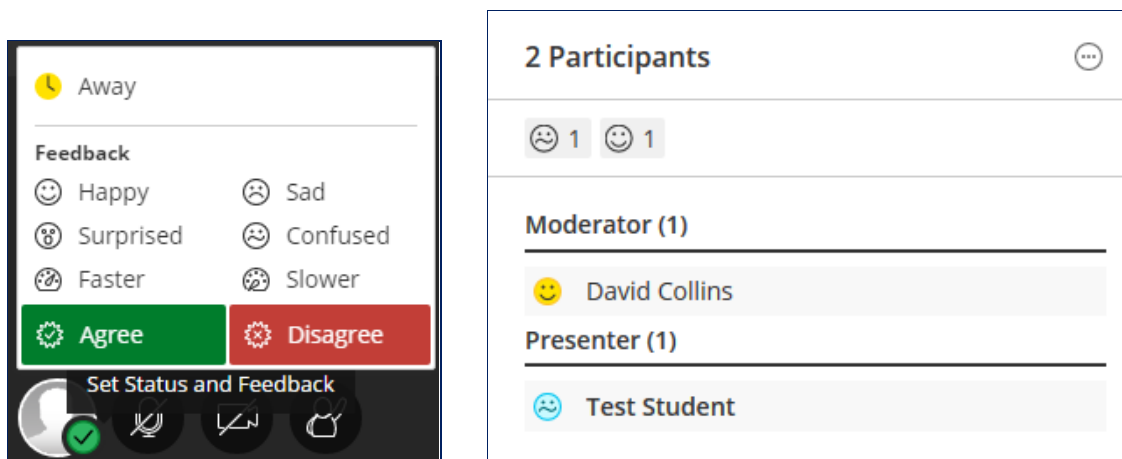
Interaction Bar Buttons

The **Interaction Bar** consists of icons for **Settings**, **Share Audio**, **Share Video**, and **Raise Hand**.



Settings

The Settings icon opens the Collaborate Ultra panel to display the Settings pane. (The details of this pane will appear in the Collaborate Panel subsection later in this document.) There is also a checkmark sub-icon that allows you to switch your attendance status between Present and Away, or to provide instant feedback next to your name on the Participants pane for other users to see. The Feedback icon selected will disappear automatically after 30 seconds.



You can also set your status or feedback icon via the My Settings pane itself. See the subsection on the My Settings Pane for more information.

Share Audio



➤ *Keyboard Shortcut: Alt+M (Windows) or Option+M (Macintosh)*

Users can control whether their microphones are live for conversations. This button toggles between **Share Audio** and **Mute Audio**. It is enabled only if a user has a microphone device plugged into the computer and configured for use. Moderators may wish to ask users to keep their microphones silent until they need them to speak, and to click the **Raise Hand** icon to be recognized before speaking.

When audio is enabled, the icon also shows the relative volume level of the audio. If speaking into the microphone fills the icon consistently, a user may wish to turn his or her microphone volume down via Audio and Video Settings

To minimize audio traffic in a presentation, Collaborate allows only five Participants to have their audio active simultaneously.

If users have trouble communicating via microphone, they may be able to troubleshoot the problem:

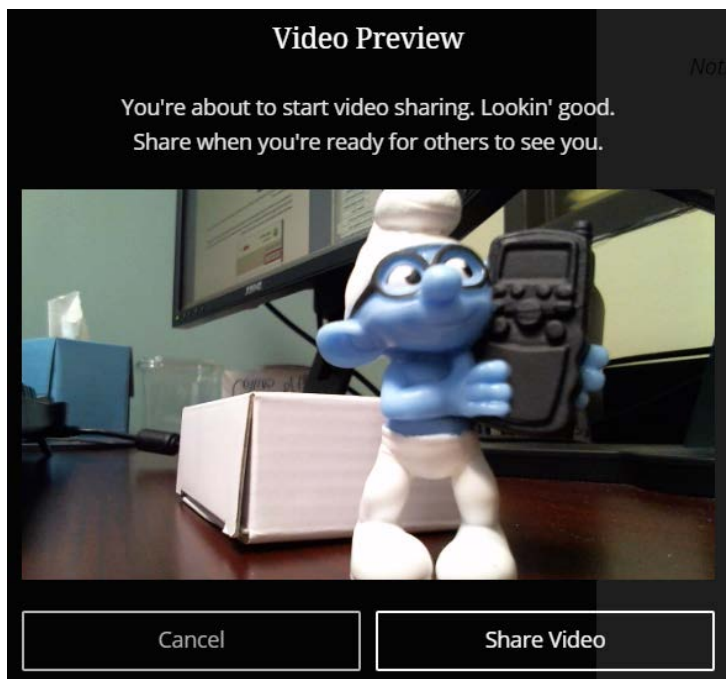
- Is the headset plugged in?
- Is there a mute switch engaged on the headset?
- Is the computer's audio muted or turned low?
- Is the user using the audio input device that Collaborate is configured to recognize?
- Is there an echo in the headphones? This may result from two or more users in close proximity in the same physical room; the user's voice may be coming through two or more microphones.

Share Video



➤ *Keyboard Shortcut: Alt+C (Windows) or Option+C (Macintosh)*

This button toggles between **Share Video** and **Mute Video**. By default, video sharing is turned off. When a user clicks **Share Video**, Collaborate provides a preview screen to verify that the camera is working.



Multiple users may have video and audio turned on. Collaborate is set up to display the video image of the current active speaker; there is usually a short delay before the image switches. The Moderator may also set the session to view all speakers at once in thumbnail subwindows.

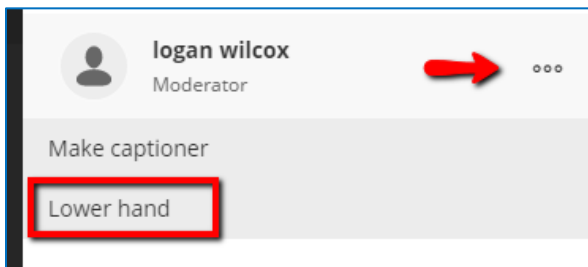
Raise Hand



➤ *Keyboard Shortcut: Alt+H (Windows) or Option+H (Macintosh)*

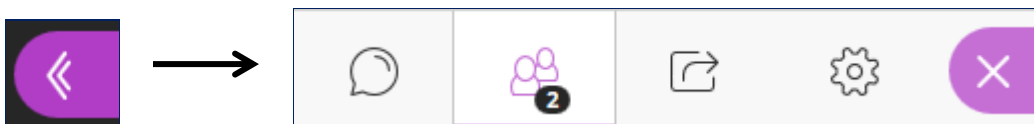
Users may raise a virtual hand via this icon to indicate a question or concern, and then lower it with the same icon.

A Moderator may also lower the hand using the Options menu on the Participants pane or the small dialog box that appears in the top-right area. The user's video stream or avatar may also appear, with yet another button a Moderator can use to lower the hand.

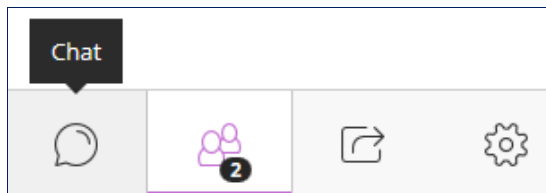


Collaborate Panel

In the bottom-right corner of the screen, you will find an icon to open the Collaborate Panel. This panel offers access to the Chat, Participants, Share Content, and Settings panes.

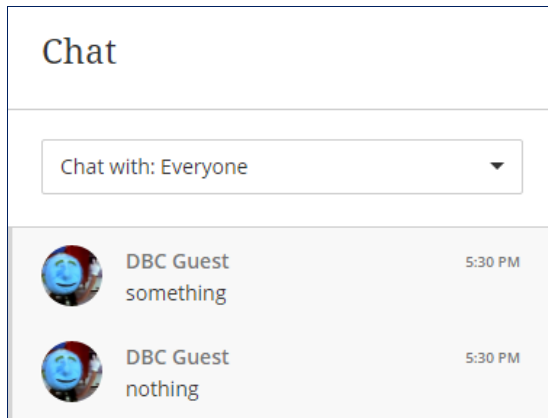


Chat



When a user first clicks the **Collaborate Panel** icon, the Chat pane opens by default, allowing a user to chat with all other users. After switching to a different pane and then closing the panel, the last pane used will appear when the panel is reopened.

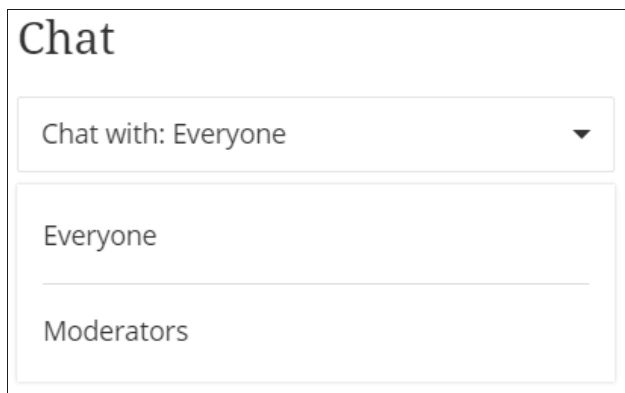
As users add text or images to the Chat pane, the contributions accumulate there. However, when a user leaves the session (voluntarily or not) and returns, the Chat pane will appear empty when he or she returns.



Users can type text into the box at the bottom of the pane, and click the menu button display a limited library of emoticons. As with a typical chat application, pressing Enter or Return submits the text. For a wider array of images and emoji, users can keep the Twitter Symbols page open on a separate browser tab and copy the relevant keystrokes from there: <http://www.piliapp.com/twitter-symbols>.

When users add text in the Chat pane, the other users may receive visual and auditory notification if they do not have their Chat panes open. The small notification window disappears after a few seconds.

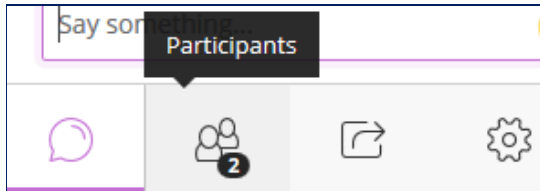
A drop-down list on the Chat pane allows users to choose whether their Chat involves all Participants or just the other Moderators.



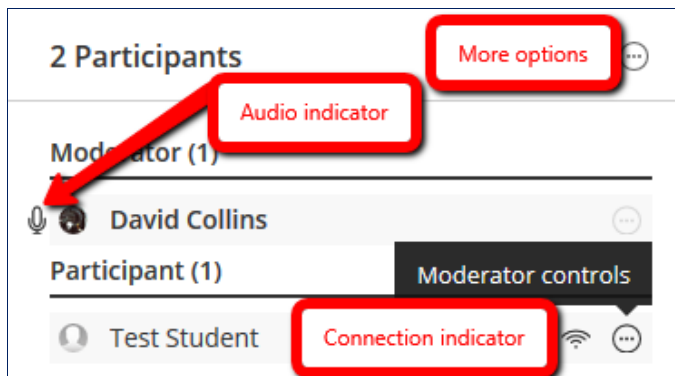
Beginning in early 2017, the Chat pane's contents are included in recordings. A scrollable frame displays on the right side of the MP4 Viewer. Otherwise, in order to save a file of the Chat contents from any conference, right-click in the Collaborate Ultra window, and select **Save As**. (For the contents of the Chat

pane for the entire conference, wait until the end.) You can save the window as a .txt or .html file. In Google Chrome, the .html file allows you to scroll through the chat.

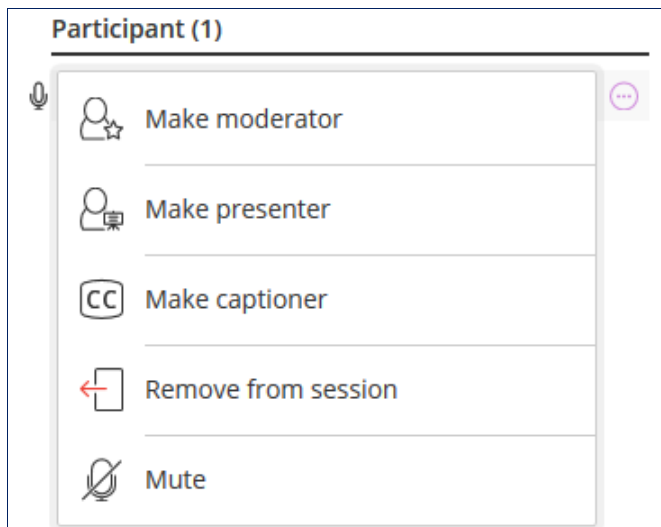
Participants



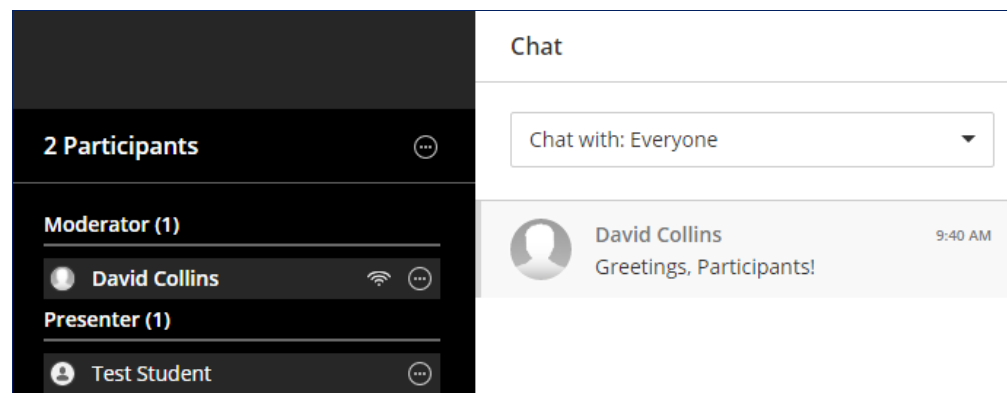
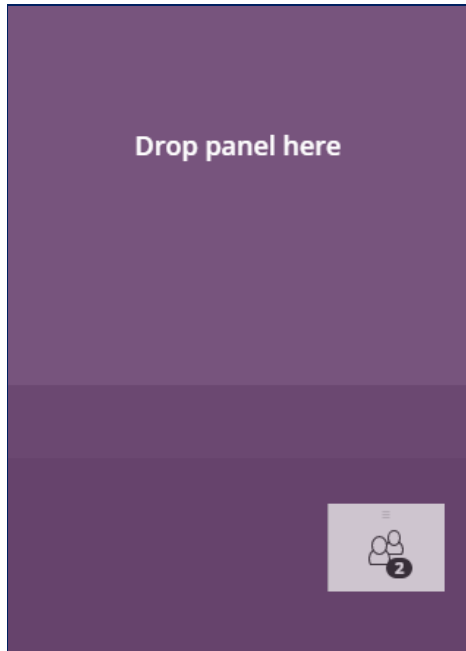
This icon displays the Participants pane on the right side. Moderators may use this pane to change users' roles or remove them from the session. Roles include Moderator, Presenter, Captioner, and Participant; each role has its own set of privileges and responsibilities. To change a role, point to the participant's section of the pane, and click the Moderator Controls icon (...) that appears; then select the appropriate role.



A Moderator may also use the Moderator Controls to lower a virtual raised hand or mute a user's audio.

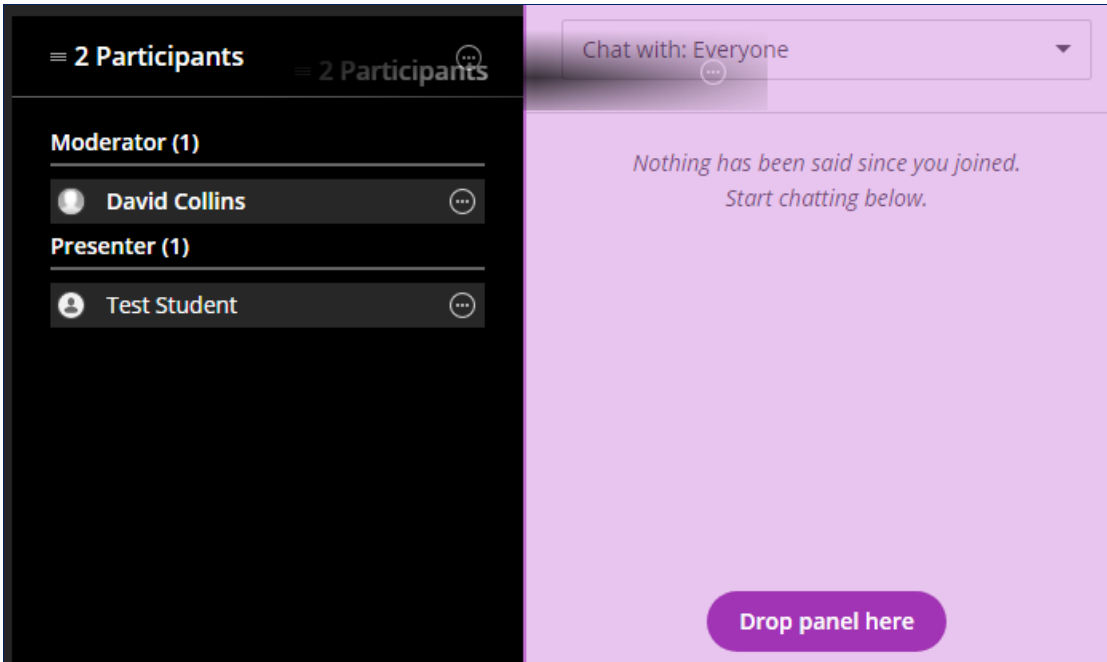
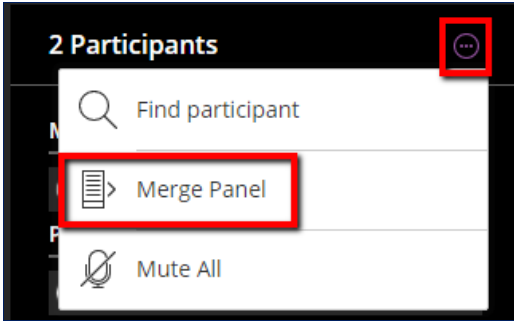


Beginning with the March 2017 release, the Participants pane is detachable, allowing any user to view it alongside another pane of the Collaborate Panel, such as the Chat pane. Simply click and hold on the Participants icon, and begin dragging. A **Drop panel here** box appears to the left of the Collaborate Panel, and you can drop it there.



There are two ways to return the pane to its original position and restore horizontal space to the Participants area:

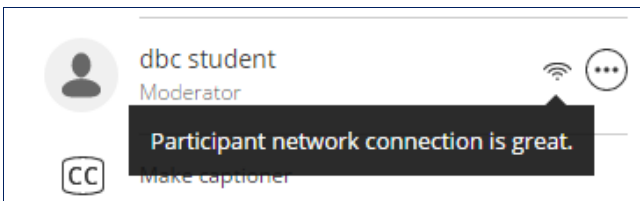
- Click the **More Options** icon at the top-right, and select **Merge Panel**; or
- Drag the pane by its title bar back to the Collaborate Panel.



If you leave the conference while the Participants pane is detached from the Collaborate Panel, then it will still be detached when you rejoin the conference.

The Participants pane tracks which Participants have their audio input devices turned on via microphone icons. A darkened microphone icon indicates the current primary speaker, as selected by Collaborate's audio algorithm (since multiple Participants may be speaking at once); an outlined microphone icon indicates others with audio turned on.

The Connection Indicator reveals a user's network status when you point the mouse at it. Moderators can use this to check the network quality of all users.

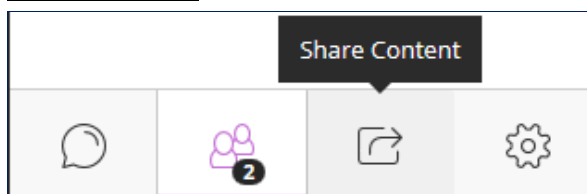


Other icons and notifications in the Participants pane show the status of Participants, including whether they have stepped away from the session, are just joining, or are having trouble joining due to network problems.

Moderators have a **More Options** icon in the top-right corner of the Participants pane. The menu has two options:

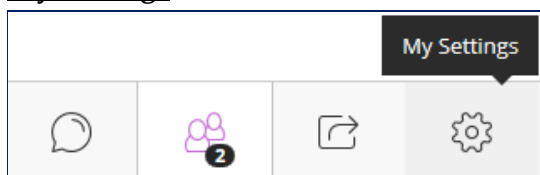
- **Find participant** opens a search box, with which a Moderator can type any portion of a name to filter the list to participants whose screen names bear that text pattern. In a large group, this makes it easier to assign a new role to any user or remove a Participant from the session.
- **Mute All** allows a Moderator to disable audio sharing temporarily for all Participants. As of this writing, there is no command to unmute all users; a Participant can turn on audio sharing again.

Share Content



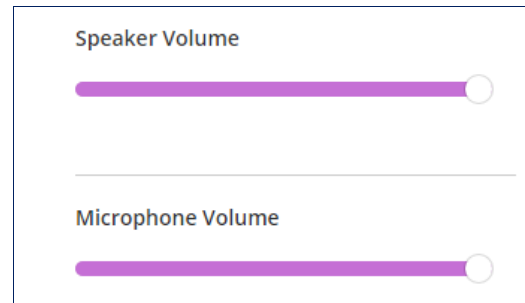
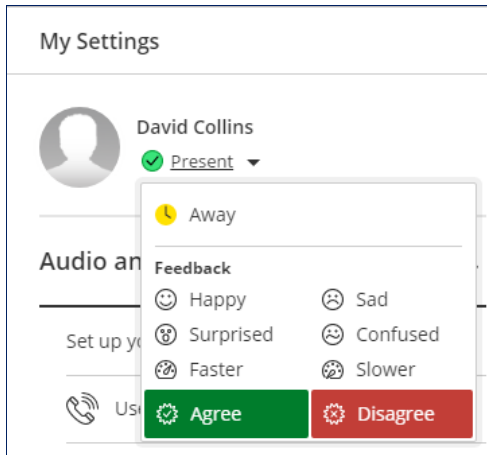
The Share Content pane will have its own subsection further along in this document.

My Settings



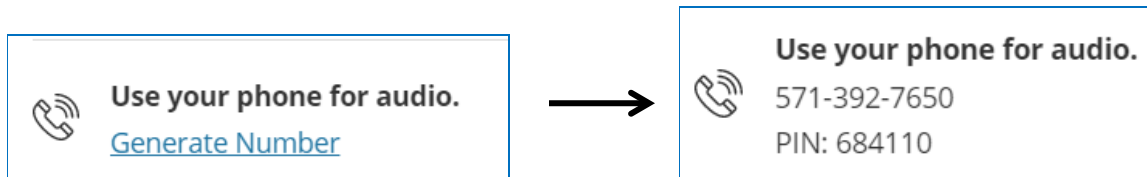
This button opens the My Settings pane on the right side. In this pane, a user may

- add or modify an avatar image in PNG or JPEG/JPG format *only* (start by clicking the current image or the placeholder);
- switch status between **Present** and **Away**;
- provide instant feedback;
- configure audio and video devices;
- adjust speaker and microphone volume;
- modify various Notification Settings to receive visual notifications (and in some cases audio) when a user enters the room, leaves the room, posts a chat message, enables closed captioning, or clicks the **Raise Hand** button; or
- modify various Session Settings and report technical issues.



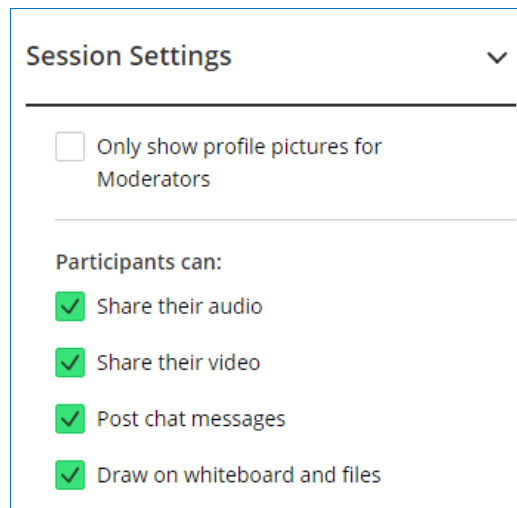
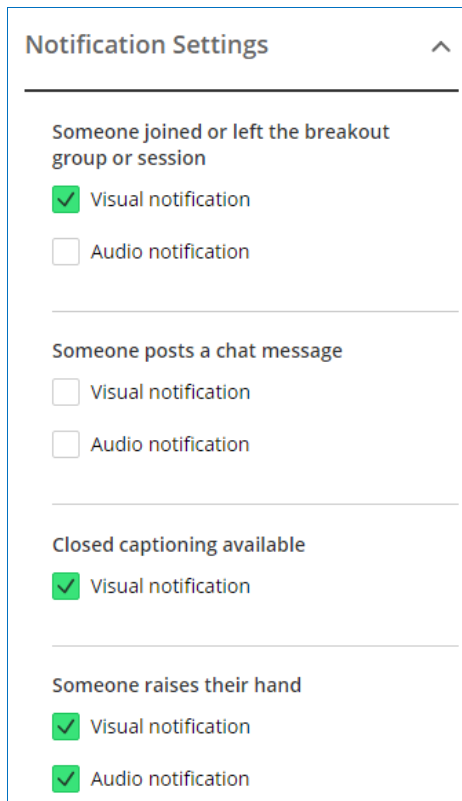
The Audio and Video Settings section contains links to set up the camera and microphone, control speaker (or headset) and microphone volume, and display the phone number and PIN for users to join the conference by telephone.

When invitees cannot join the room visually via a computer or tablet, Collaborate provides a telephone alternative. A Moderator may click the **Generate Number** link to display the phone number for the teleconference, and generate a six-digit PIN. A Participant may view the phone number and PIN through the same link. Each user receives a unique PIN; if a user enters the same PIN as any current user that other user will be ejected from the conference.

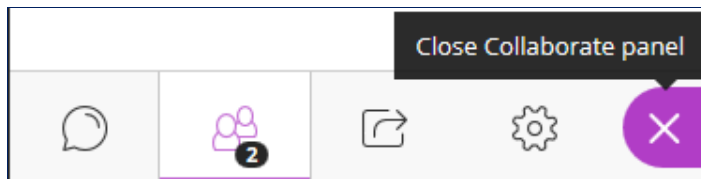


The checkboxes in the Notification Settings section provide control over visual and auditory notifications, an excess of which can be distracting for users.

The checkboxes in the Session Settings portion allow a Moderator to determine whether Participants may share audio or video, type in the Chat pane, draw on shared content, or display their avatars when not sharing video.

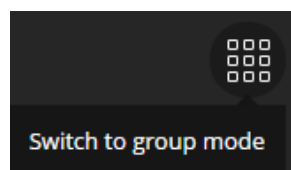
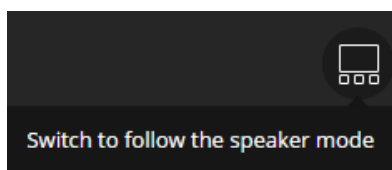


Close Collaborate Panel



The rightmost icon at the bottom of the Collaborate Panel closes the panel entirely. Collaborate will remember the last pane visible on the panel for the next time it is opened.

Follow the Speaker Mode and Group Mode



As Participants join a session, images of all Participants and Moderators appear tiled in the Collaborate window, either as live video or an avatar. The tiled display is referred to as **Group Mode**, and it is the default way of viewing the session.

When a session has at least three participants (including the Moderator), an icon appears in the top-right area that allows users to switch to **Follow the Speaker Mode**. This places the current speaker's image at

the top in a larger display, and the others below in smaller displays. If more than one person is speaking, Collaborate decides which image to place at the top. In Follow the Speaker Mode, the icon toggles to **Group Mode**. When a session has more than five participants, Collaborate Ultra switches automatically to Follow the Speaker Mode.

In either mode, Participants using video may see their own image on screen, with an eye icon indicating that others can see them as well.

