



Collaborate Ultra: Blackboard Integration and Shared Conference Space

At the University of St. Thomas, all Collaborate conference spaces will be deployed via Blackboard Learn, through online courses for instructional use or Blackboard Organizations for non-instructional use.

Courses and Organizations

By default, course instructors and organization leaders serve as Moderators for their virtual rooms. Moderators have the power to change other users' roles. The roles available are Moderator, Presenter, Participant, and Captioner.

Students in courses and participants in organizations assume the Participant role by default. Instructors and leaders may also invite external users as guests and assign them the role of Participant, Presenter, or Moderator. These guests do not need to have UST Blackboard accounts: They may be colleagues at other institutions, other guest lecturers, vendors, or other non-UST personnel.

Scheduling

Blackboard Learn provides the Blackboard Collaborate Ultra page as a tool for managing the Course Room or creating Sessions with definite time frames. A link to a Session is active only between its Start and End times. Multiple Sessions may run simultaneously, which is useful for different groups of students working on group projects. The Course Room is available any time, unless an instructor has disabled the **Join room** link.

To notify students and other users that the Course Room is reserved for a specific time-frame, we recommend using the Course Calendar or Organization Calendar tool in Blackboard Learn. Before entering the room, students can check the Calendar to make sure that another group is not currently using it. In the event of scheduling conflicts, additional organizations **will not** be created.

- **NOTE:** Remember that the Blackboard Calendars do not synchronize with Outlook calendars. The only way to add Blackboard Calendar data to your personal calendar, or to share Calendar data with an external user, is via the **Get External Calendar Link** button at the bottom. The .ics file link that it creates can add data to a user's Outlook, Macintosh, or Gmail calendar.

Recordings

Moderators may record all or part of a conference for later use by attendees, as well as for individuals who cannot participate in a conference in real time. A moderator may also stop and restart recording at any time during a conference; however, each time recording is started creates a separate MP4 file.

Recordings require anywhere from a few minutes to an hour, depending on the length of the recording, to be processed and posted on the Blackboard Collaborate Ultra page. Each recording posted gets a default name, which Moderators cannot change.

These recordings result in the creation of extremely large files in the MP4 format. Due to limits on server capacity, recordings should never be permanent. When the recordings approach the allotted storage capacity, the Blackboard Administrators will contact instructors and ask them to delete any recordings no longer needed.

For the same reason, Moderators should consider carefully, in advance, what and when to record. Generally, recording is a good idea when users who need the information cannot attend all or part of the session in real time.

- **NOTE:** *Never assume that a recorded session is private. Other Moderators not only have access to them (unless they are deleted from the Blackboard Collaborate page), but also can share links to them with anyone. Also, anyone with whom you share a link can share it with others.*

Deleting recordings from the Blackboard Collaborate Ultra page also deletes them from the server. If you have concerns about unauthorized users viewing the recording, you can delete it.

For more detailed information on managing recordings, see the *Recordings List* section later in this document.