

# Blackboard Tips:

## Using Blackboard Collaborate

## Ultra Tools to Improve Interaction

Blackboard Collaborate Ultra (<http://blackboard.uscupstate.edu>) provides tools to engage students during synchronous sessions. These tools include the use of raising hands, session feedback, chat features, and emojis which are available within all Collaborate Ultra sessions.

### Purpose and Applications

You can use Blackboard Collaborate Ultra session status, emojis, raised hands, and chats to

- Provide interactive responses by providing non-verbal feedback with emojis and session status feedback.
- Assess content comprehension using a poll with raised hands or using session status answers.
- Boost student participation by asking for raised hands to speak during a synchronous session.
- Encourage students to ask questions or provide feedback in the chat area.

### How to Raise and Lower Hands

- At the bottom of the Collaborate Ultra screen, four icons are visible to the user to show their presence in the course, mute/unmute the microphone, turn the camera on/off, and raise and lower hands.

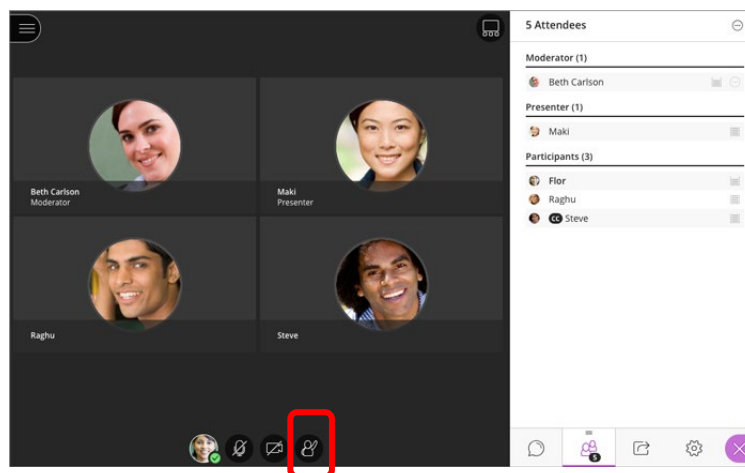


Figure 1. Blackboard Collaborate Ultra Content Presentation Area with raise hand icon

- When clicked, the raise hand icon turns a magenta color.
- Click again to lower hand.

For help implementing any Blackboard best practices in your classes, contact [academicinnovation@uscupstate.edu](mailto:academicinnovation@uscupstate.edu).

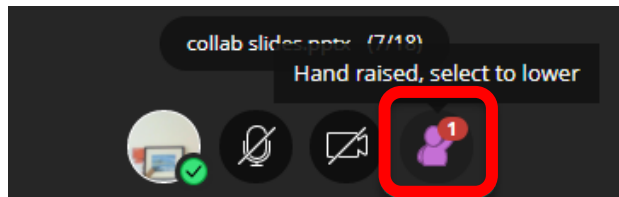


Figure 2. Raised hand turns magenta to indicate a change in status

- **How can Raise Hands be used in a class?**

- Perform a quick poll by asking your students a question and request that they respond by raising their hands.
- Ask students to raise their hands to ask a question or make a comment, similar to the practice used in face-to-face courses. This option works particularly well in large classes or if all users are muted to prevent distracting outside noises.
- As an attendance feature if you are returning to the session from a break.

### Use My Status and Settings to Poll Your Students

- Students may express their status with the session content by changing the status on their account. Click your profile icon on the bottom of the session screen to reveal the status options. Happy, Sad, Surprised, Confused, Faster, and Slower icons may be selected, which will show on the student's status.

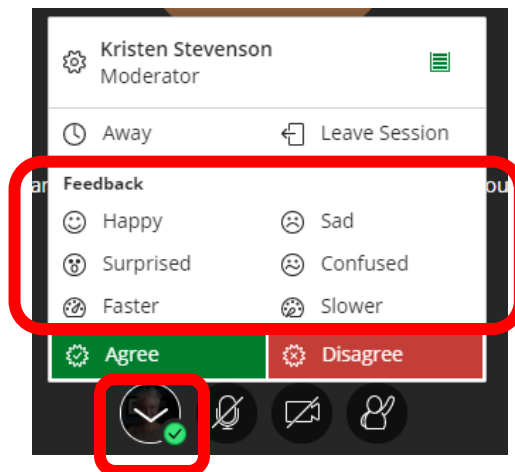


Figure 3. Status and Poll Options Found in Blackboard Collaborate Ultra Session

- By selecting the Happy icon, a smiley emoji is shown next to the students' name to reflect their state of mind.

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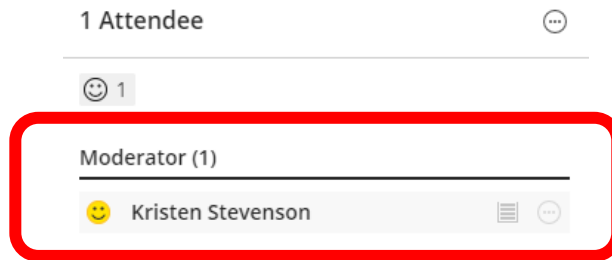


Figure 4. Changed emotional status for user within Collaborate Ultra session

- As a different way to perform a poll, students may respond to a question by selecting the green Agree button or red Disagree button.

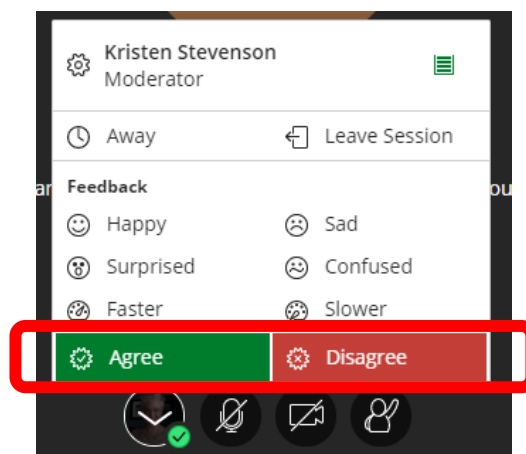


Figure 5. Changed emotional status for user within Collaborate Ultra session

- After clicking the answer, the results are shown in the Participant list, next to the chat option in the Collaborate Panel.



Figure 6. Poll response for user within Collaborate Ultra session

### Using Chat to Improve Interaction

- Students are comfortable with text-based communication. Chats in your Collaborate Ultra session are recorded with the rest of the session so that students may refer to the content.
- Students may choose to send a chat to Everyone, Moderators, or a particular individual. To select one of these groups, click anywhere within the box surrounding the name.

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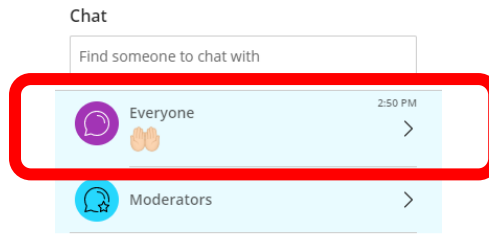


Figure 7. Selecting the Everyone group within the Chat feature

- A running record of the chats entered into the Chat feature will be shown. To respond to another participant, type in the *Say something* text box.

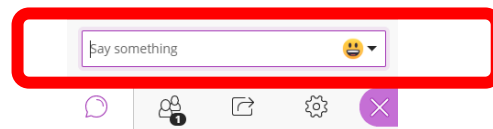
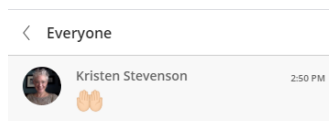


Figure 8. Responding to a chat

- How do you make a chat an interactive tool within a Collaborate Ultra session?
  - Apply applause 🙌 after a presentation
  - Ask questions to the instructor or classmates
  - Use emojis to show emotional state regarding content

### How to Add and Modify Emojis

- One of the biggest complaints about both teaching and taking an online class is the perceived lack of human interaction. Emojis provide a way to demonstrate non-verbal feedback in the Collaborate Ultra Chat feature.
- To select an emoji for use in the Chat feature, click on one of the icons from a variety of topics.

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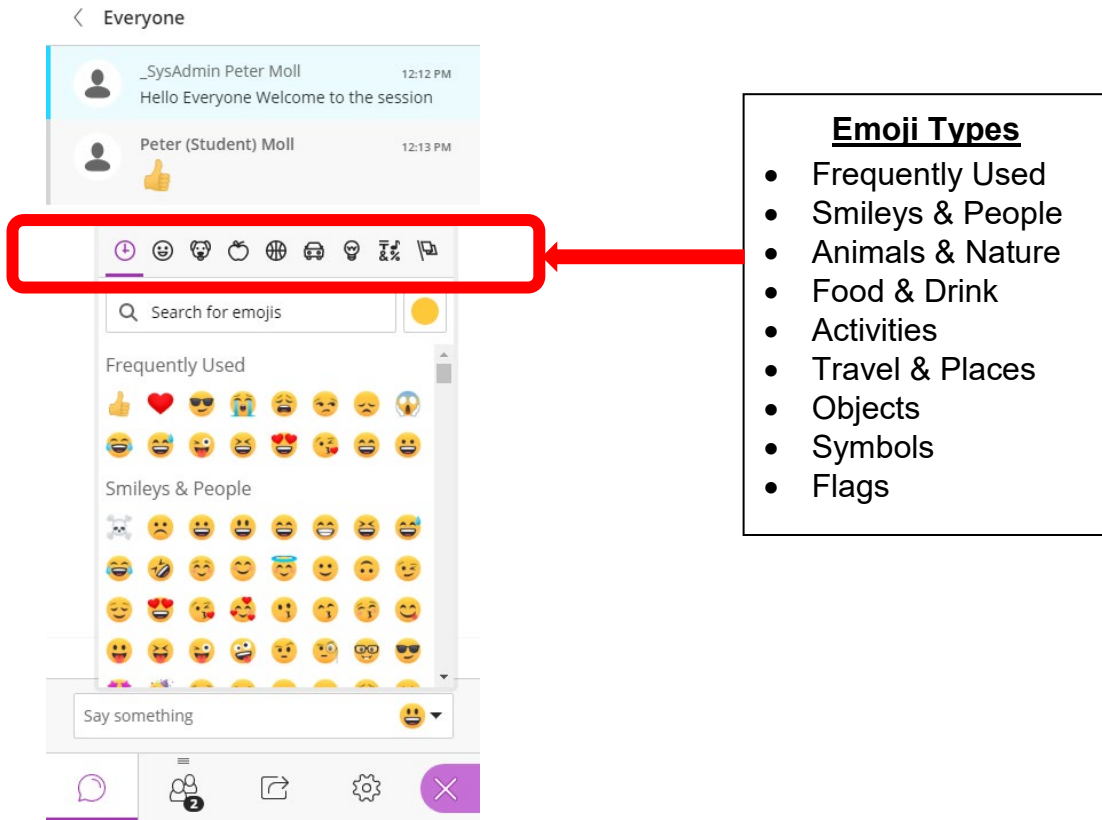


Figure 9. Search for emojis and various examples in the Chat feature

- Select an emoji that is appropriate for the communication.
- To change skin tone, click the yellow dot. Five skin tone options are available for selection to promote inclusivity within the class. Changing skin tone here will change all emojis within the profile.

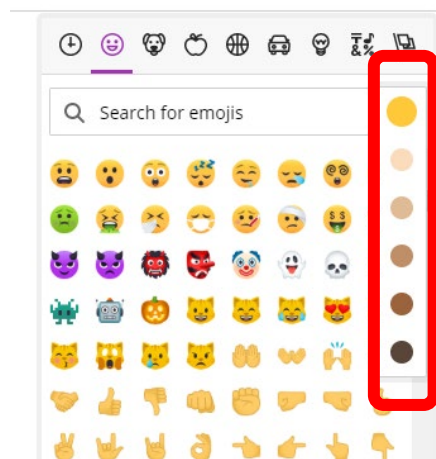


Figure 10. Skin tone selections available within Chat

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## Quick Tips for Use

- Consider tools within Blackboard Collaborate Ultra session that mimic face-to-face interactions. Using emojis reduces stress and students are responsive to expressing their thoughts. (See Illieva's 2018 article [Use of emojis and infographics in e-learning](#)).
- How do you interact with your students in your face-to-face class? Do you use the Socratic Method? Use polls and raise hands to participate in the conversation.
- Do your students present papers and projects in class? Allow them to present and encourage students to interact in a respectful way.

## Additional Resources

- [Getting Started in Blackboard Collaborate Ultra as a Participant](#)
- [Create a Session in Blackboard Collaborate Ultra](#)
- [Moderating a Session in Blackboard Collaborate Ultra](#)
- [Recording a Session in Blackboard Collaborate Ultra](#)
- [Using Break-out Groups in Blackboard Collaborate Ultra](#)
- [Manage Participants in a Blackboard Collaborate Ultra Session](#) (let students share files, lead a mini-discussion, etc.)
- [Sharing Content in Blackboard Collaborate Ultra](#)
- [Sharing a Whiteboard in Blackboard Collaborate Ultra](#)
- [Polling in Blackboard Collaborate Ultra](#) (instant polling)
- [Polling with Poll Everywhere](#) (prepare one or more poll questions in advance)
- [Take Attendance in Blackboard Collaborate Ultra](#)
- Video: [Blackboard Collaborate Ultra Absolute Essentials](#)
- Student Tip: [Join a Blackboard Collaborate Ultra Session for Class](#)
- Student Tip: [Access a Recording of a Blackboard Collaborate Ultra Course Session](#)
- Troubleshoot: [Access Audio and Video](#)

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