

Blackboard Help

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Collaborate Update - March 2017

Here's everything you need to know about the **March 2017 (v17.3)** release of Blackboard Collaborate with the Ultra experience.

Available March 4, 2017

Collaborate with the Ultra experience v17.3 is deployed to all data centers on Saturday, March 4.

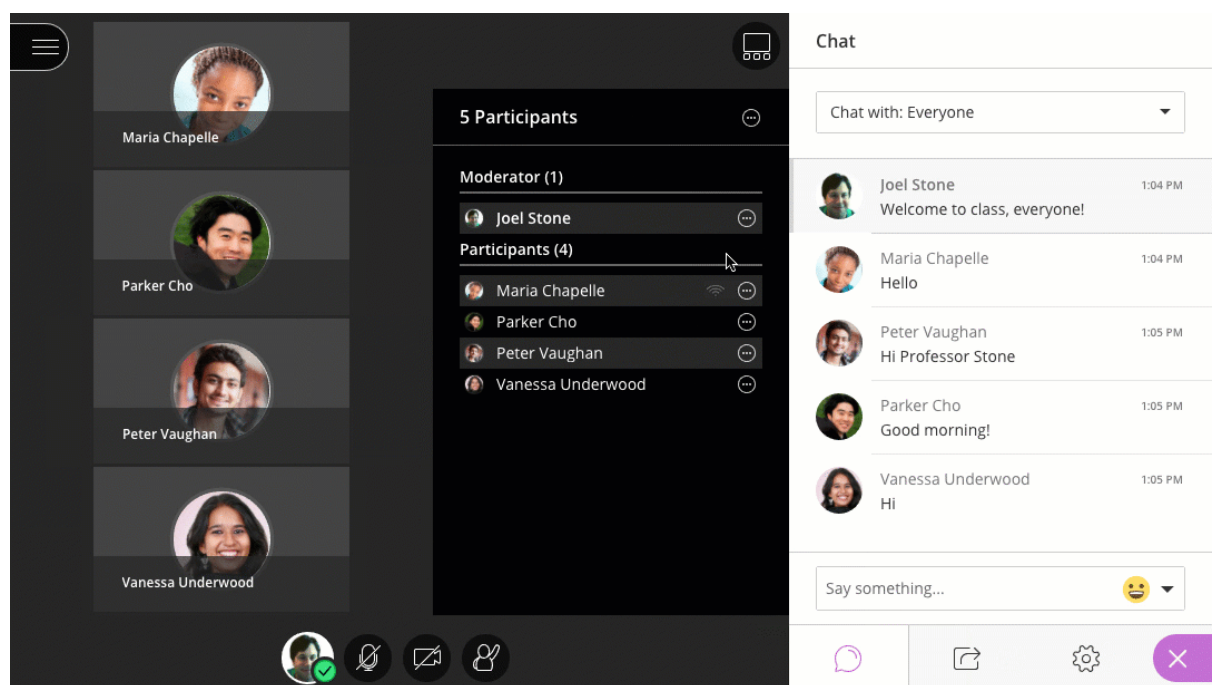
➔ To learn more, see the [Collaborate Support Bulletin](#) (available in English only).

What's new and improved

We're continually evolving to improve the teaching and learning experience. In this release, we are excited to introduce you to the detachable *Participants* panel.

Keep the Participants panel open at all times

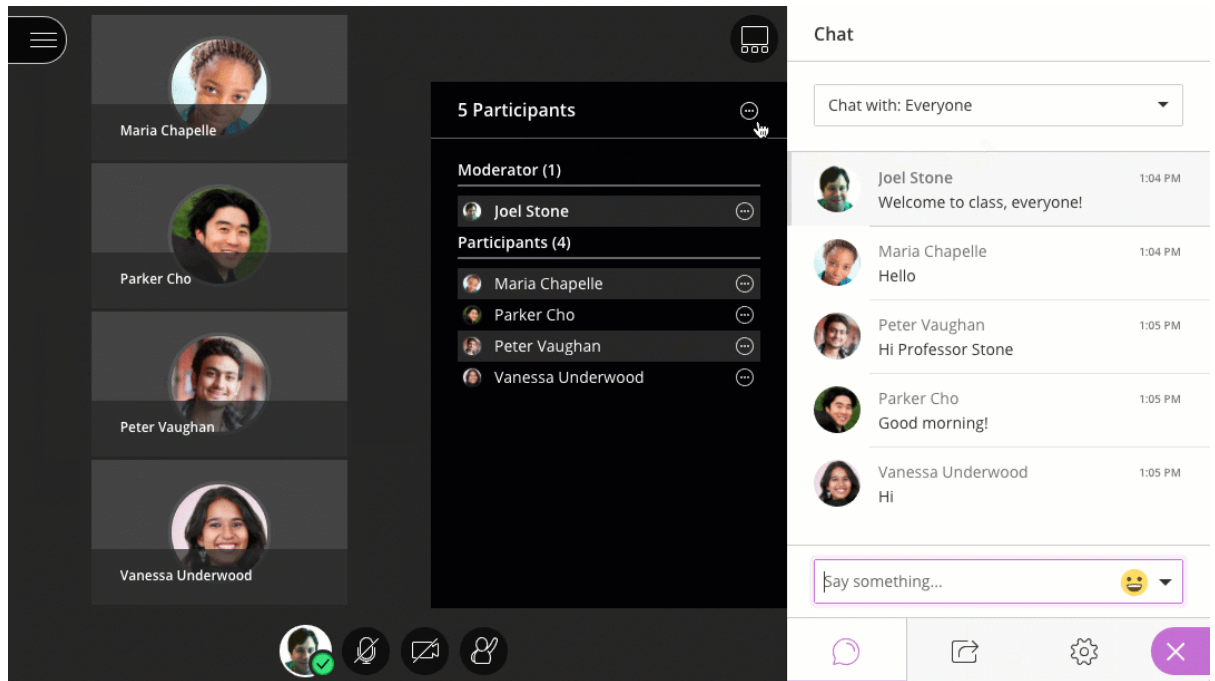
Now you can leave the *Participants* panel open all the time. Chat with others and see everyone in the session at the same time. You can tell who is away, has their microphone on or is having network connection trouble. All while chatting



and participating in the session.

You need to detach the *Participants* panel to keep it open. There are two ways to do this:

1. Open the



Collaborate panel. Drag-and-drop the *Participants* icon to the main stage.

2. Open the Collaborate panel and select *Participants*. Select *More options* at the top of the panel. Select *Detach Panel*.

The main stage adjusts so you can still see everything on it. Any video, content, whiteboard and application shared are moved to the left to make room for the panel.

Close the panel any time. Select *More options* at the top of the panel. Select *Merge Panel*.

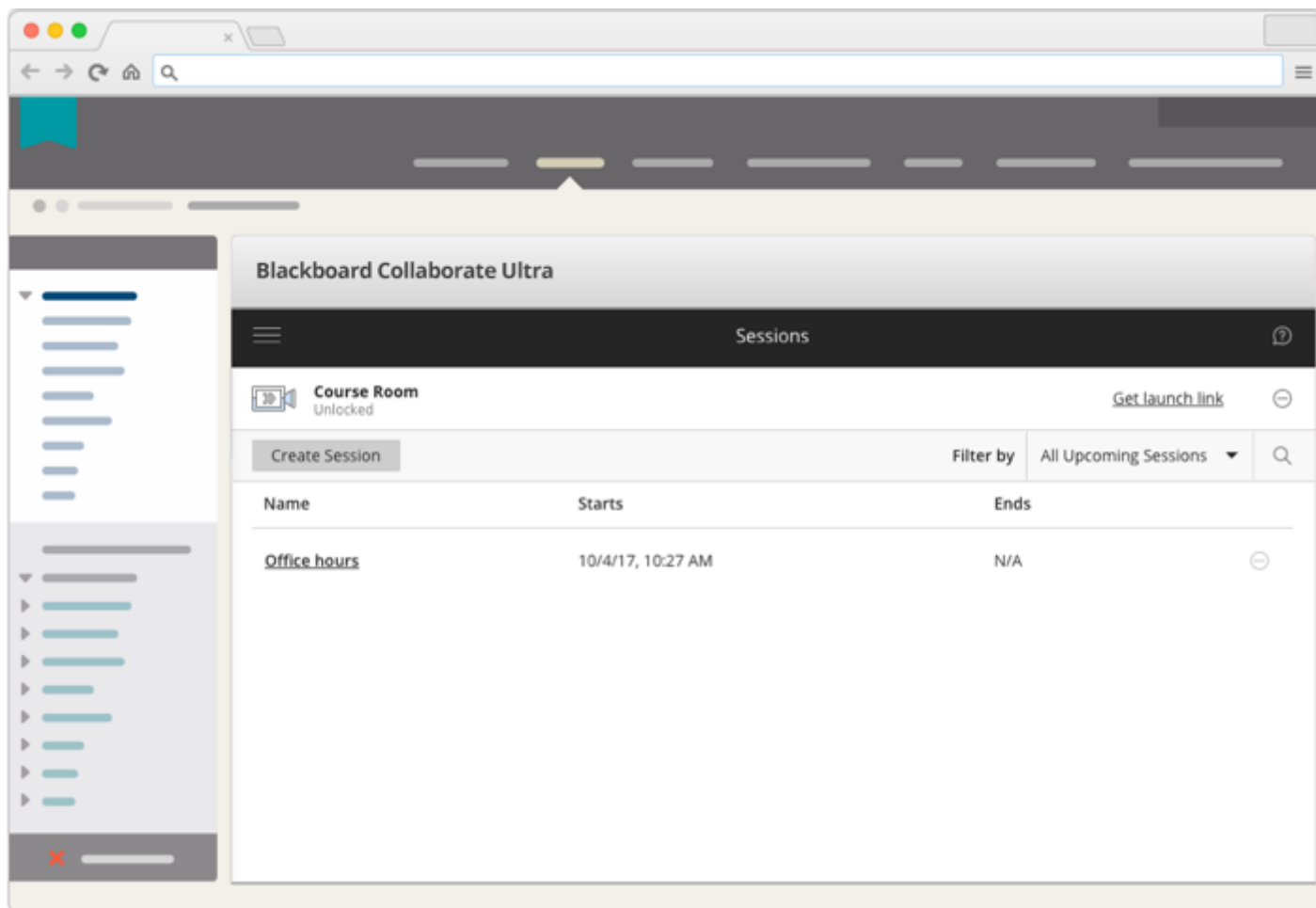
Experience updates

Based on your feedback, we've made a few enhancements.

- Instructors and students in Learning Tools Interoperability® (LTI) compliant Learning Management Systems (LMS) have an improved experience when they open Collaborate in their course.
 - The *Join room* is easier to find.
 - Instructors see a new *Create Session* button in the center of the screen. This is available until the first scheduled session is created. Additional sessions after the first scheduled session is created, use the *Create Session* button above the *Course Room*.
 - Instructors can copy guest links from a session's *More options* button. They no longer have to edit or join a session to get the guest link.
- Screen reader users can access text from PowerPoint and PDF files shared in the session. This provides an easy way to follow along as slides change.



Moderators and presenters must select Share Files and upload the files to Collaborate for screen readers to access the text.



- A transcript of session chat is available from the recording player. This is only available for recorded sessions.

What's fixed

➞ [More on resolved issues](#)

Known issues

Rome wasn't built in a day. The page below identifies known defects and workarounds in Collaborate with the Ultra experience.

➞ [List of known issues on Behind the Blackboard](#) (available in English only)

Communication and adoption toolkit

We know that getting your faculty and students caught up on the latest technologies can be a big undertaking. We've created an adoption toolkit designed to assist you in educating your users about Blackboard Collaborate with the Ultra experience.

[➔ More on the adoption toolkit](#)



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