



TIPSHEET

Real-time Teaching and Learning Online with Webinars

An institutional web conferencing tool is now available to U of T instructors to further the ways in which faculty can engage and interact with students online.

What is it?

[Blackboard Collaborate Ultra](#) is a webinar/ web conferencing platform designed for use in online teaching. Instructors can create virtual classroom and online meeting spaces to share [presentation material](#) and communicate with students via synchronous audio, video and chat tools. Webinar rooms include a collaborative [whiteboard tool](#) that allows students to interact with peers and faculty in real time. Instructors can make use of [polls](#) directly within a session for immediate feedback and to check for understanding. Students can also be divided into [break out rooms](#) to facilitate active and collaborative online group work and assignments. [Share content](#), including MS PowerPoint presentations, or share your desktop screen directly within the web conference room. An archived [recording](#) can be created for each session allowing students the opportunity to review material following the live online lecture. Participation points can also be awarded for joining the session.

Where do I find it?

Webinar sessions can be created and joined directly from courses within the U of T [Quercus](#) academic toolbox. To begin, contact staff providing educational technology support within your department/division or e-mail q.help@utoronto.ca.

Who can use it?

Instructors and course staff have the ability to create and moderate webinar sessions. Participant links for students are displayed directly within the course. Moderator and participant roles can be set ahead of time or directly within a live session. Guest links can also be made available to individuals outside of the U of T community.

When do I use it?

- Live lectures and tutorials for fully online and hybrid courses
- Virtual office hours
- Online student collaboration and group projects
- Graduate seminars and student presentations
- Online training, presentations and information sessions

Recommended Practices

- Visit the [First Time Use](#) page before joining a session to check system requirements and configure audio devices.
- Review [training material](#) and practice using the tool before conducting the first live class.
- Use a wired or stable wireless internet connection.
- Select the correct [connection speed](#) and the [browser](#) you should use when joining a session to set the appropriate audio and video transmission rates. To optimize your experience, run the session using a wired connection and not wifi.
- Set [audio input and output](#) devices. Use a headset microphone for best results.
- The teleconferencing number provided by Blackboard Collaborate Ultra is not toll free. Long distance charges may apply.
- Existing presentation content may need to be modified for use in a webinar session. Prepare and upload presentation material ahead of time to preview content and make any necessary changes. Avoid use of slide animations and transitions.
- To share videos post a link in chat instead of embedding media in presentation slides.
- Provide [online help resources](#) for students.



Examples of Effective Uses of Webinars for Teaching		
Pedagogical Goal	Tool	Rationale
Build Community	Audio & Video Panel Chat Panel	Increase social presence in online learning for both instructor and students
Present Curriculum Content	Whiteboard Application Sharing	Structure & organize course materials/resources to support scaffolding of student progress toward achievement of course learning outcomes
Facilitate Discussion	Audio & Video Panel Chat Panel Participant Panel Whiteboard	Engage & monitor interactivity and enhance student participation
Formative Feedback	Participant Panel (emoticons) Whiteboard Polling	Check for understanding and informally assess student feedback throughout the session
Collaborative Work	Breakout Rooms Main Room (small classes)	Students work in teams to problem-solve, complete tasks, and build knowledge within small groups to encourage active learning

Training & Support

[Blackboard Collaborate Ultra](#) documentation is available online.

Prepare for your session by following suggested [best practices](#).

Additional support resources are available on the Quercus Support Resources course site: <http://uoft.me/qsupport>