

# Getting Started with Collaborate

Blackboard Collaborate is a real-time video conferencing tool that lets you add files, share applications, and use a virtual whiteboard to interact. Collaborate Ultra opens right in your browser, so you don't have to install any software to join a session. Check out this [short video](#) created by Blackboard for a brief overview of Blackboard Collaborate Ultra.

To start using Collaborate, you need to add the Blackboard Ultra Collaborate [Tool Link](#) to your Course Menu. Follow the instructions [linked here](#), making sure to select **Class Collaborate Ultra** as the link type. Here is a [video](#) that also explains how to add Blackboard Collaborate Ultra to your Course Menu.

When you first access Blackboard Collaborate Ultra from your course, you will encounter an intuitive design for scheduling sessions and viewing recordings. The menu has two areas: **sessions** and **recordings** (Figure 1).

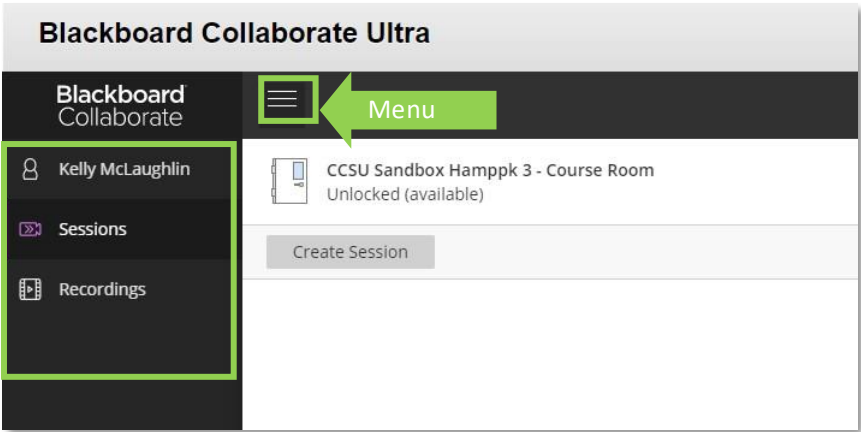


FIGURE 2

When you click on **Sessions**, you have the option to create as many sessions (class meetings) as you would like. You also have a **Course Room**. The Course Room is best for Office Hours or drop-in meetings. By default, the Course Room is unlocked and available for students to join at any time (Figure 3).

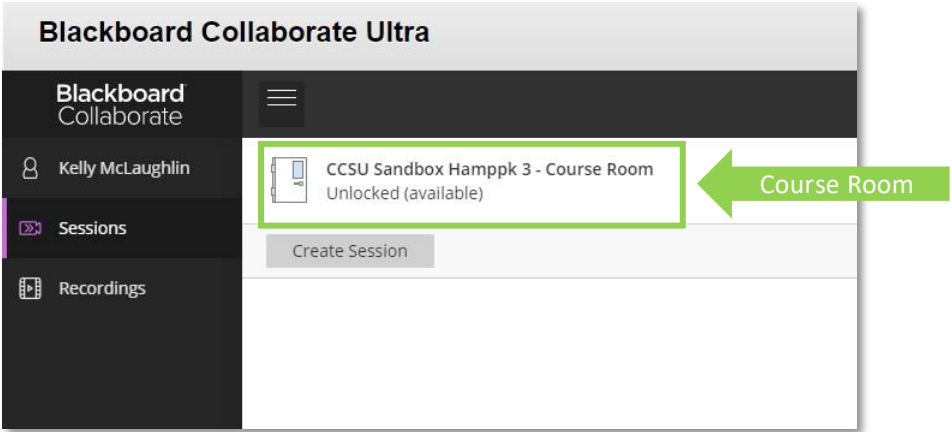


FIGURE 3



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If you don't want students to view or join the open course room session, you can turn it off. In the Blackboard Collaborate Ultra tool, open the **More menu** for the Course Room by clicking the **Course Room**. Under Event Details click **Lock course room** (Figure 4). Follow these same steps to unlock the course room in the future.

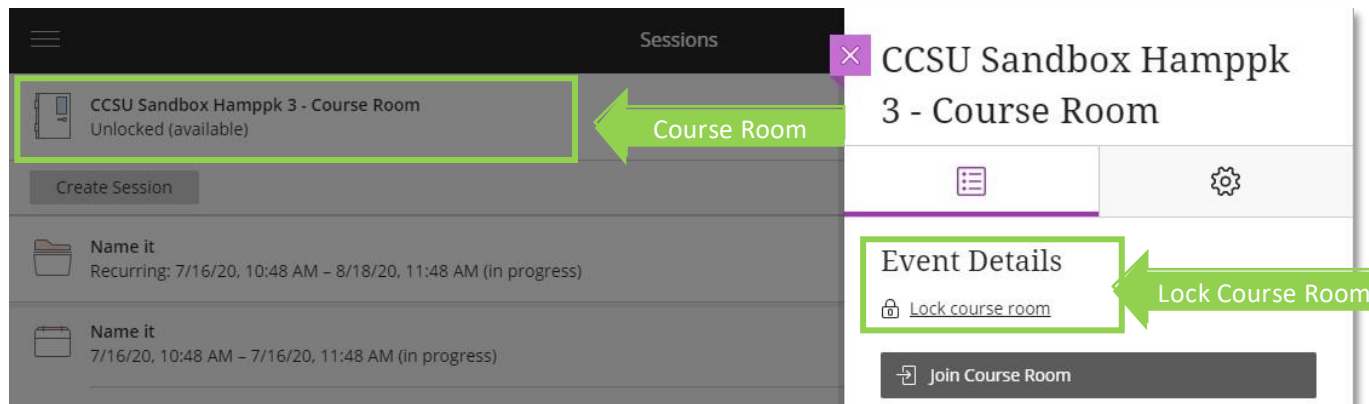


FIGURE 4

Instead of using your Course Room, it is suggested that you create a reoccurring session which occurs during your course's scheduled meeting time. Students will only be able to join the session room when it is time for class. To learn how to create a session, [click here](#).

For more information about using Blackboard Collaborate Ultra, please consult the page on the Knowledgebase by [clicking here](#). The CTI is also available to support users. We offer one-on-one help, as well as group training sessions. [Click here](#) for more information about group training workshops.

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