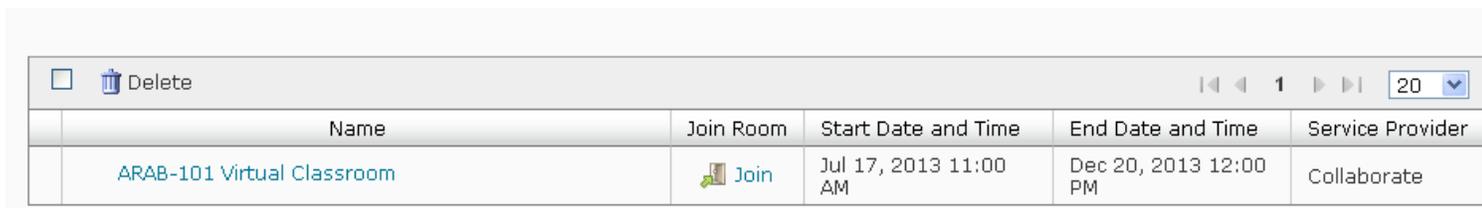# Tips for Using the Blackboard Collaborate Virtual Classroom

Your professor will be using a virtual classroom product known as Blackboard Collaborate. Blackboard collaborate is like a real-time online chatroom, but with the added capacity for voice and video chat.
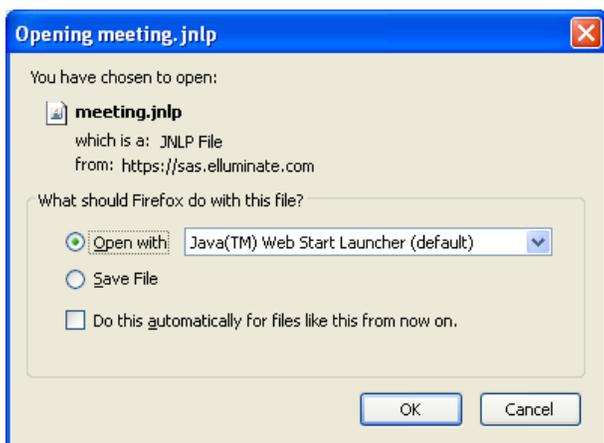
Launching Blackboard Collaborate

1) Log in to your course home page on Desire2Learn
2) Click on the "Online Rooms" button in the top toolbar of the course (Note: in some courses, this can be found under the "More" menu)
3) Click on the "Join" button in the bottom-center of the screen

☐ 🗑 Delete				◁◁ 1 ▷ ▷▷ 20 ☑
Name	Join Room	Start Date and Time	End Date and Time	Service Provider
ARAB-101 Virtual Classroom	🚪 Join	Jul 17, 2013 11:00 AM	Dec 20, 2013 12:00 PM	Collaborate

4) After a moment you will see a window that looks like this:

Opening meeting.jnlp

You have chosen to open:

🔲 **meeting.jnlp**
    which is a: JNLP File
    from: https://sas.elluminate.com

What should Firefox do with this file?

◉ Open with | Java(TM) Web Start Launcher (default)   ☑ |
◯ Save File

☐ Do this automatically for files like this from now on.

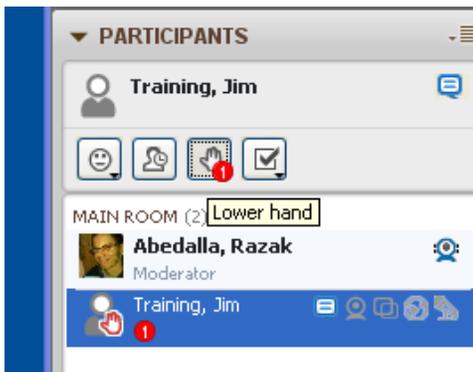 | OK | | Cancel |

Make sure it reads "**Open With**," then click OK

Note: If you receive any type of security warning, or prompts, while launching the virtual classroom, be sure to click "OK," "Run" or "Allow"

5) At the following prompt, click Accept

Blackboard» collaborate™

Version 12.5.2.7154-g4f72f02

By joining this session, I agree to the Collaborate Participant Agreement which includes my consent to the use of cookies to store personal information in connection with providing the service. More information on the use of cookies is available at the Blackboard Privacy Center.

| Quit | Accept |

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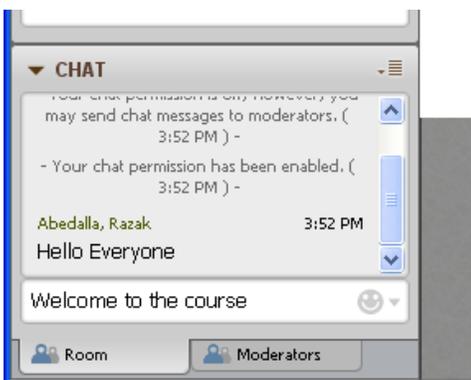
6) In the next screen, use the drop-down box to choose your connection speed (Wireless, LAN, or Cable/DSL). In general, users in SRU residence halls should choose LAN, while users at home using a cable Internet modem should choose Cable/DSL. If you're not entirely sure, don't worry.

7) After a moment, the virtual classroom will appear.
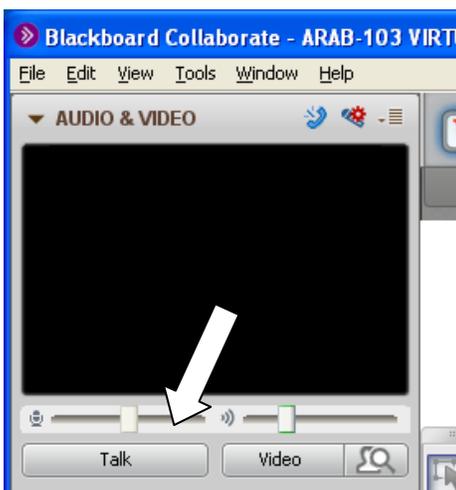
Tools in the Virtual Classroom

Raising Your Hand

In the left-side panel of the virtual classroom, you will see a list of all of your classmates participating in the session. Above the list is a row of useful buttons. During the session, your instructor will spend much time lecturing and presenting. If you have a question, click on the small "hand raise" button to request permission to speak. If you change your mind, click it again to "lower your hand."
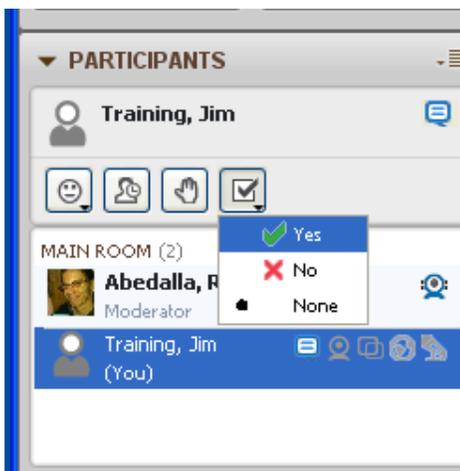
The Chat Box

In the lower-left corner of the virtual classroom is the chat box. Use this to send plain-text messages to be read by the entire virtual classroom. Just type in the white space, then hit Enter.

The Talk Function

If your instructor has granted you permission to speak to the room, click on the Talk button above the participants list, in the upper-left area of the screen. **Click on the talk button once to begin talking, and again to stop. Don't hold it down.**

Poll Questions – Responding Yes or Now

Another useful button in the toolbar above the participant list is the yes/no poll button. At times your instructor may ask questions of the group, such as "Check yes if you can hear me" or "Check yes if you agree." To respond, click on the "checkbox" button and choose Yes, No, or None from the menu that appears.

Troubleshooting & Tips for Success

If you have any difficulty launching the virtual classroom, please follow these steps:

1) Go to www.java.com/download and download the latest version of the Java software. This is the technology that allows the virtual classroom to operate, and updating it on your computer can resolve many issues. After downloading the install file, run it, follow the prompts, then restart your computer.
2) If you are using Microsoft Internet Explorer to access D2L, we recommend switching to the Mozilla Firefox browser. Go to www.mozilla.com and click on the download button.
3) If you are using a computer with wireless Internet, see if you can get closer to your wireless router, or, better yet, see if you can plug-in to your router in order to increase your connection speed.

If you are still having difficulty, there is 24/7 technical support available at 1 (877) 382-2293. Full support information is available at http://www.blackboard.com/Platforms/Collaborate/Support/Support-for-Blackboard-Collaborate.aspx
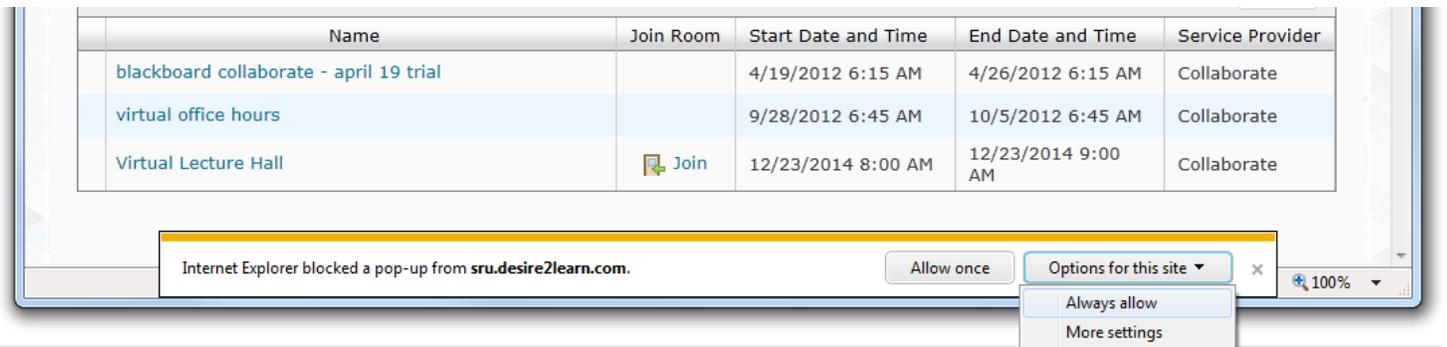
IMPORTANT – IF YOU CLICK THE JOIN BUTTON, BUT NOTHING HAPPENS

The most common issue that students have with Blackboard Collaborate is that their browser's pop-up blocking feature prevents the chat from loading.

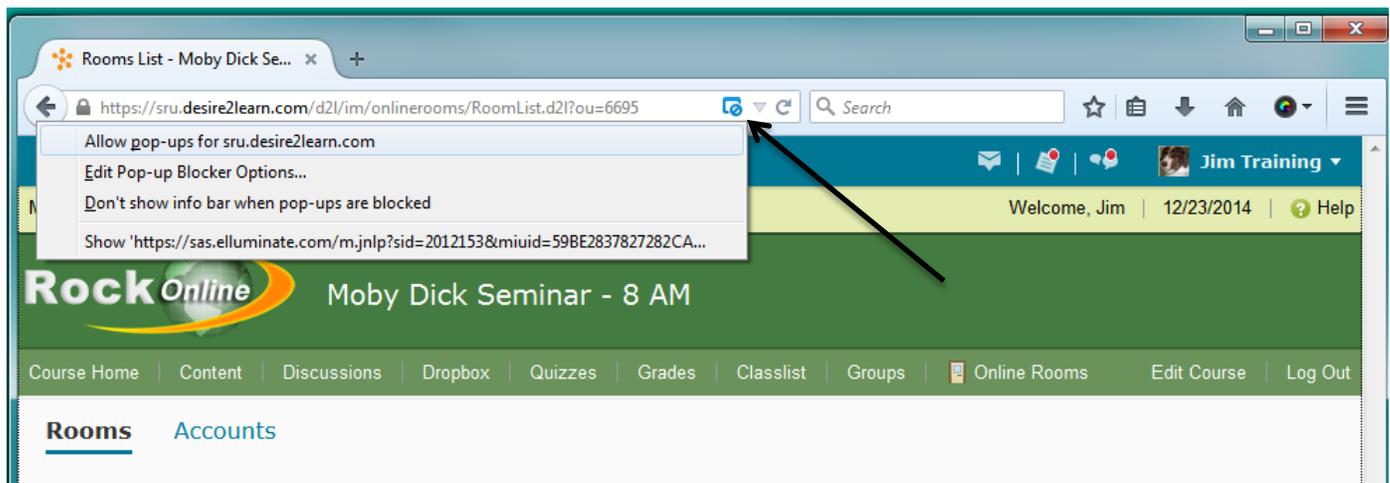You can usually tell when this happens if you click on the Join button, but nothing happens.

Often, the pop-up blocker is subtle and easy to miss.

Internet Explorer

The pop-up notice will appear at the bottom of the screen. Click "Options for this site," then **Always Allow**
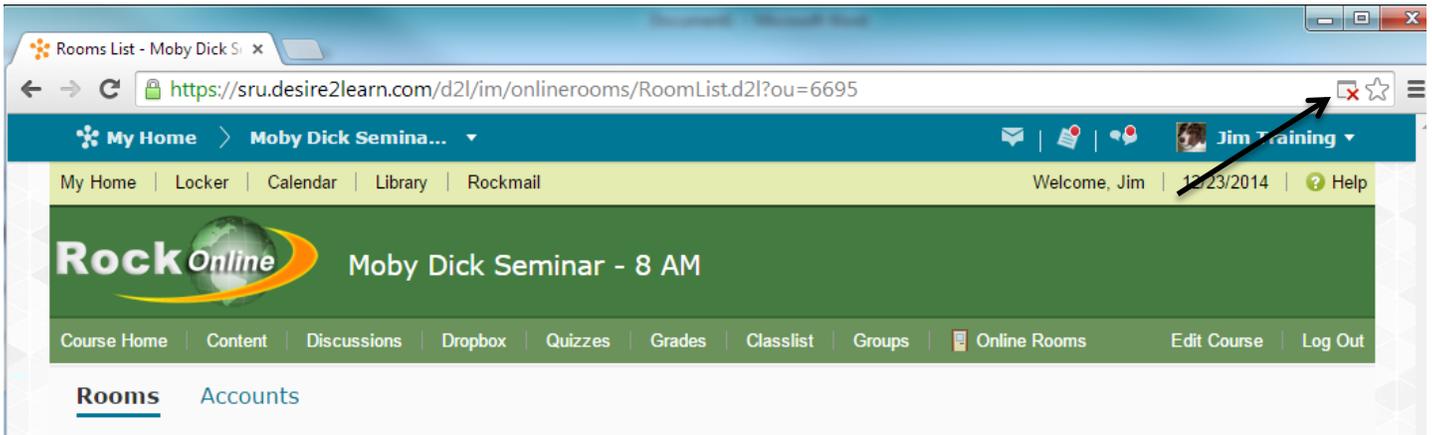
FireFox

Click on the small blue icon to the right of your browser's address bar.
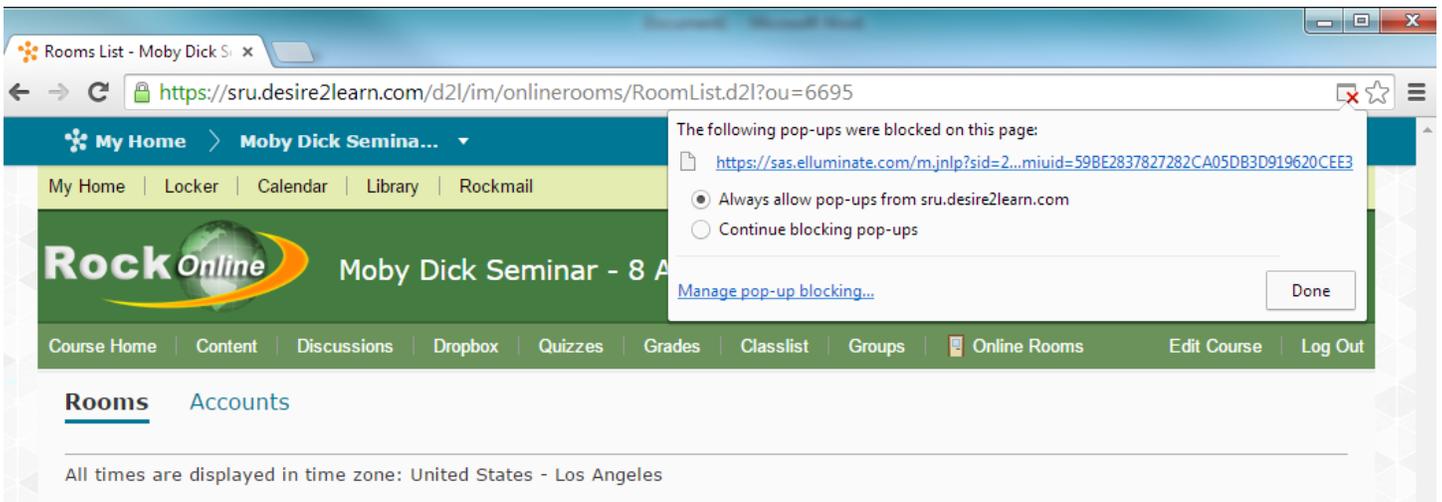
In the menu that appears, click "Allow pop-ups for sru.desire2learn.com"

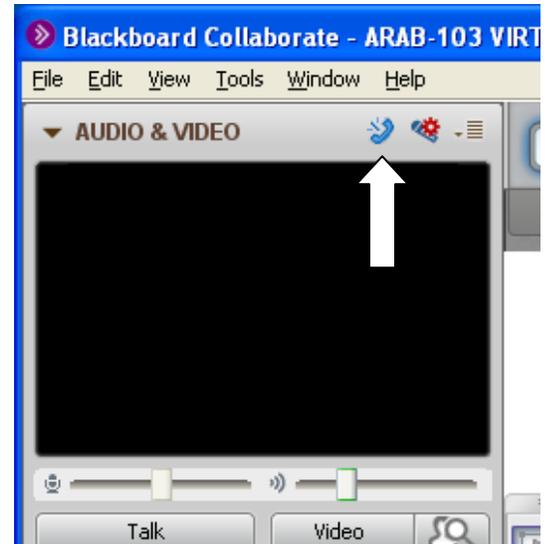You may need to click **Join** again.

Chrome

If you are using Google Chrome and try to join the chat, but nothing happens, look for the small icon to the right of your browser's address bar. It will be a small blue box with a red X.

Click it, then choose "Always allow pop-ups from sru.desire2learn.com"

Dialing-In

If you are able to access the virtual classroom, but continue to experience difficulty in using the audio/video chat function, you can also use the dial-in phone conference function to participate in the session. To view the number and PIN code to join the session by telephone, click on the blue telephone icon in the upper-left corner of the screen.

Final Notes

If you have not yet tested out the virtual classroom, DO IT NOW. You can enter the room and try it out at any time. **Don't want until 5 minutes before the first class meeting…if you have technical difficulties, you may not have adequate time to resolve them!**