

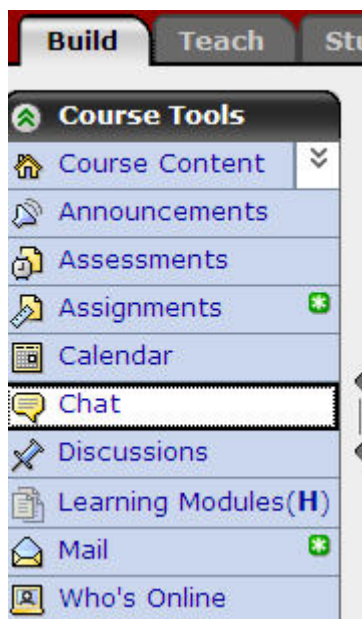
Creating Chat and Whiteboard Rooms

The Chat and Whiteboard tools allow you to communicate synchronously (in real-time) with other users in a eLearning course. Use Chat to engage in synchronous conversations, provide office hours, present online guest speakers, offer exam reviews, and set up study groups. Use Whiteboard to display images, draw freehand objects, enter text, and create slideshows that can be synchronously viewed by other users.

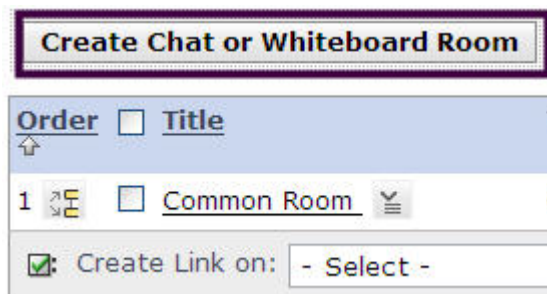
Creating a Chat and/or Whiteboard Room

A Chat and Whiteboard room, called the Common Room, is created by default. You have the option to create other Chat rooms, Whiteboard rooms, or combined Chat and Whiteboard rooms.

To access the Chat and Whiteboard tool, select the **Chat** link under Course Tools.



To create a new Chat or Whiteboard, click **Create Chat or Whiteboard Room**.



When you create a Chat or Whiteboard room, there are several areas you must choose. The first setting you must include is the name, which should be descriptive of what the room will include.

TIP
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It is important to make the interface as intuitive for students as you possibly can. One way to do this is to include the type of component in the name. For example, if you plan to set up a chat on Humanism, name the chat "Chat on Humanism." This type of naming will prepare students for the activity.

You also need to include a description of the room. This is also extremely important so that students know the topic they are supposed to learn. Decide if you want the room to be chat only, whiteboard only, or both. A combined room is generally the best since students can choose not to display the portion of the screen not being used, yet it will be available if the need arises.

Maximum number of users is another setting. This setting depends on what the room will include and how much discussion is happening between participants. Here are some examples of the numbers that are used for various reasons:

- **Online Office Hours:** Generally, this should be set for two (2) users — for yourself and someone else. When set this way, another student will not be allowed to barge in to the room when you are chatting with a student.
- **Review Sessions:** Include everyone in your class who wants to participate, but be sure to establish ground rules. For example, students must submit a question to you before the chat begins and each question will be discussed during the review session.
- **Group Work:** Include only the members of the group and yourself.
- **Class Discussions:** Break the class down into Learning Circles with approximately three to five people in each group so students are not completely overwhelmed by a huge volume of messages.

Create Chat or Whiteboard Room

*Title:

Description:

Use HTML

Item Visibility: Show Item
 Hide Item

*Maximum users: Maximum users allowed by Server
Administrator is 1,000

Type

- Chat and Whiteboard
 Chat only
 Whiteboard only

⊕ More Options (Expand this area to see more options.)

User Permissions

- Allow users to hide or show Chat or Whiteboard in a combined room
 Allow private Chat messages
 Allow alias

Enable logging

- Maintain Chat room log

Save

Cancel

Save and Create Another

* Required field

There are additional options available under More Options. The first setting allows users to hide or show the Chat or Whiteboard in a combined room. This option is important to select if you are using combined rooms because you do not always need one or the other. Let students know when they need to open up the other area if they have it closed.

Allow private Chat messages is an important option if you want someone to facilitate the chat by having the questions moderated through him or her.

Note: Private chat messages are not recorded in the log.

Allow alias allows the student to enter the room anonymously. It is often difficult to give participation credit to students if they use aliases. You may also want to be careful with allowing aliases. A student that is online is generally more willing to discuss topics than in a face-to-face setting. An alias may bring out the worst in people!

The last option under Enable Logging is **Maintain Chat room log**. This option is important especially if you are not attending all the rooms yet still want a record of all the discussions.

Once you have chosen all the settings for your room, click **Save**.



eLearning will tell you that the room has been created successfully, and it will display the room. You will see all the settings that you have chosen. Students will also see the same thing. Therefore, students will see the name of the room, the description, and how many participants are inside the room. As an instructor, you have the availability to turn the room on or off by hiding the item from the drop-down menu. There are several options, which include linkages, settings, logs, selective release, and delete.

You can make the room available individually on the homepage, in a folder, or in a Learning Module. If you want all the rooms to be shown at the same time, make the Chat and Whiteboard links available to students from the Course Tools area.