Using Live Classroom: Weekly Chats & Archives

Introduction
UNT has licensed a new communications tool called Live Classroom that SLIS 5200 instructors use for weekly chats and also for presenting course materials. Live Classroom is web-based service that includes interactive tools to improve instructor and student interaction. These tools include:

- Multi-way audio
- Public & private text chat
- Flexible content area
- Electronic whiteboard
- Application sharing
- Archiving of live classroom sessions

In addition, we use Live Classroom to pre-record short “lectures” or “tutorials” that students can view through the archive feature.

Live Classroom’s text chat allows you to post questions and comments, just as you have done in other text chat rooms. However, Live Classroom has a two-way audio feature that instructors use for interaction with students. Use of the audio feature requires additional hardware. To hear audio via Live Classroom, you will need speakers or headphone connected to your computer. The SLIS Technology Requirements specified a sound card for your computer, and speakers or headphones will connect to that sound card.

If you want to “speak” your questions and comments, you will also need a microphone attached to your computer. We recommend you use a headset that has earphones and an attached microphone. You may want to consider purchasing a headset, but you are not required to. Inexpensive headsets with earphones and an attached microphone can be purchased for about $10. You are not required to have a microphone. Remember, Live Classroom has a text chat function, and you can participate by typing your questions/comments into the text chat feature. You will need speakers or earphones at a minimum.

Getting Started with Live Classroom
To get started with the Live Classroom tool, you will need to make sure your computer is set up properly. To check that your computer is set up properly, you need to run the Setup Wizard to do that check.

First, go to the Blackboard course site homepage, and there you will see an icon for Live Classroom. Click on that icon and you will see the screen on the following page.
Click on the link for Setup Wizard on the right side of the window. You will then see this screen:

![Live Classroom Setup Wizard](image)

Welcome to the Setup Wizard

The Setup Wizard will guide you through a series of tests to ensure that your computer is ready. Depending on the speed of your computer and your internet connection, the Wizard may take a few minutes to complete.

Your progress through the Setup Wizard will be shown on the left.

Click on the Start button on the screen to start the Setup Wizard. The Setup Wizard will check your system for all the items listed with check boxes on the left. You may need to do some things to resolve any difficulties the Wizard identifies. From our experience so far, most current Windows-based computers have no problems. The one thing you might need to do is to download and install QuickTime, which is free software available from Apple Computers. You will be prompted by the Setup Wizard for downloading and installing QuickTime.
Since Live Classroom is integrated for use with Blackboard, if you are running the correct version of Java that is required by Blackboard, you should not need to do anything special for Live Classroom regarding Java.

If all things check out (and you can skip the Recording if you don’t have a microphone), you should see:

This indicates all items check out, and you are ready to use Live Classroom. Click on Finished! You should be back at:
Using Live Classroom

Now, you can enter Live Classroom. Just click on Enter Room. You will see a screen like the following:

The main part of the window is where content is presented. For example, the instructor can bring in a slide from a PowerPoint presentation as in the following:
Student Observations

- It was very impressive to be able to hear and see the conversation as well as the PowerPoint and InMagic info. What a great tool!
- I really liked the Live Communication tool that we used last night.

The lower right hand corner is the text chat area, where you can see postings by others. At the bottom of that area, you can type in your text message for posting to others. Text chat allows you to post to one or all students.

The box to the right of the text chat area lists all participants in the Live Classroom session. One important tool is the orange hand, which you can click on to indicate you want to speak or post a text chat message. Once you click on the orange hand, a sequential number will be placed next to your name, which allows the instructor to see who is in line for talking or posting. Once you have spoken or posted your text message, simply click on the orange hand again to remove the number associated with your name.

At the end of a Live Classroom session, simply click on Exit at the bottom right of the screen to logout of the session.

The instructors will demonstrate other features of Live Classroom during the onsite meeting and in the first weekly chats.

Live Classroom Session Archive

All Live Classroom sessions can be archived at the instructor’s discretion. Typically, though, each scheduled weekly chat will be archived so students who were not able to attend a specific session can access everything that occurred in the session.
On the screen you see when you first launch Live Classroom, you will see a list of available archives. The following screen shows the Live Classroom from a previous semester and the archives that were created from the Live Classroom sessions.

To access one of the archives, click on the icon for the specific archive in the Enter column.

**Pre-Recorded Live Classroom Sessions for Course Content and Tutorials**

Instructors will also use Live Classroom to pre-record selected presentations that cover course content and tutorials. These will be available outside of the regular Live Classroom inside of Blackboard. Instead, we will provide a link that will take you to the selected pre-recorded content. More details about this will be presented at the onsite meeting.

**Weekly Chat Etiquette**

Online chats with your instructor via Live Classroom are easy, fun, and—as previous students have found out—incredibly informative. To make sure the Live Classroom chat sessions are helpful and manageable, the following are some guidelines to keep in mind:

**Taking turns**

1. Everyone gets a turn. The instructor goes “around the room”—down the list of names—in order of arrival. Hold your questions until it is your turn, unless you have a question on the current topic. If you
do, then click on the Orange Hand (described above) to let the instructor know you have a follow-up question or comment on the current topic.

2. When the instructor gets to your name, ask your first question (or questions if they're related). Any question pertaining to the course is acceptable.

3. You are not required to have a question. If you have no question, just say so.

4. Feel free to ask more questions or make comments about a topic.

5. If you are using Live Classroom text chat:
   - Keep your messages brief, limited to phrases or short sentences.
   - When you are done, end with a period and press Enter.
   - If you are not done, type three periods (....), press Enter, and continue typing. This lets others know you are not done and reminds them not to interrupt.

6. If you are using Live Classroom audio (i.e., speaking):
   - Press the Talk button for a second or two before you start talking
   - State concisely your question or comment.
   - When you are done, continue to hold the Talk button for a second or two more to make sure your final words were recorded

7. After going through the list once, the instructor may
   - Go through the list again.
   - Return to students with more complicated questions.
   - Open the floor to questions in the order asked.

8. The instructor may choose to answer a question later in Blackboard Discussions if it is too complex to answer quickly or in Mail if it is relevant to only one student.

9. If students have no more questions, the instructor may introduce a new topic or end the chat.

Using chat etiquette
To ensure that chats are smooth and comfortable . . .
- If you come in late, do not greet everyone.
- If the system bumps you out of the session (it happens), simply re-enter the room.
- Do not discuss
  - Your personal situation, problems, or grades (mail the instructor instead)
  - Other student's work or grades
  - UNT/SLIS policies or other courses, except in relation to this course
- Do not hold exclusive conversations among yourselves in the public chat. Instead, do this in private chat by clicking on the person's name. Remember to click on the name again to return to public chat. Note that private chat exchanges are not recorded in the chat log.

Leaving chat
- You may leave the Live Classroom session (and return) at anytime; please try to stay until everyone has had a chance to ask a question since other students' questions may prompt new ones for you.
- Lurking (being there without actually chatting) counts as participation, but only if you stay through the initial question period.
- Short in-and-out visits do not count as participation.

Reading the Archives of Live Classroom Sessions
If you miss a Live Classroom weekly chat, make sure you review the archive of that session. See discussion above about accessing the archives sessions.