# BigBlueButton Session Facilitation

BigBlueButton is Avenue's virtual classroom software. It comes pre-loaded in all Avenue courses near the top of the course page. Instructors can use BBB to facilitate a session with an entire class while displaying a slideshow or while writing/marking up a whiteboard. Learners can also be given access to the whiteboard, and they can be placed in breakout rooms for small group activities.
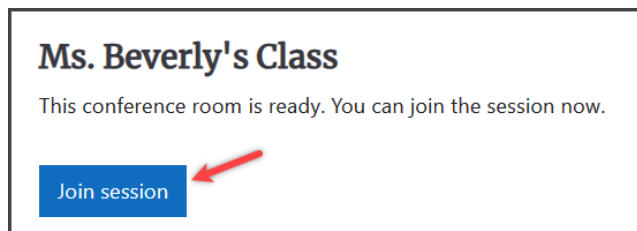
Facilitating a BigBlueButton Session

1. Locate the **BBB activity** link on the course menu and click on it.
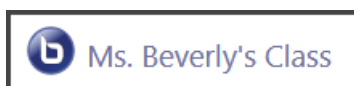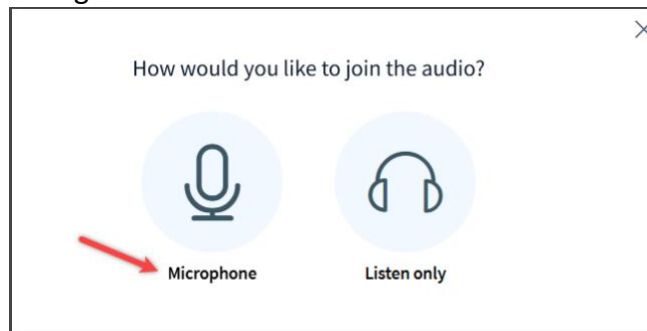

An introductory page appears, note that the session has not yet started so there is a **Join session** button.
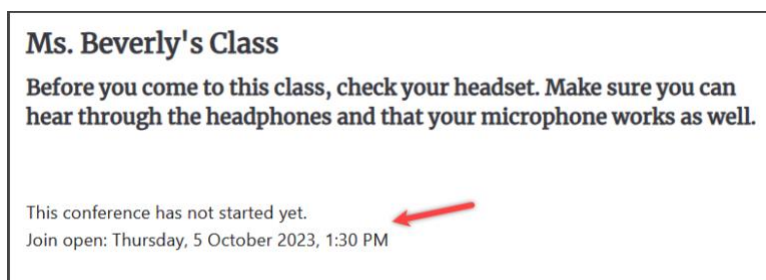
2. Return to editing mode and change the **Scheduled time and date** to open it.

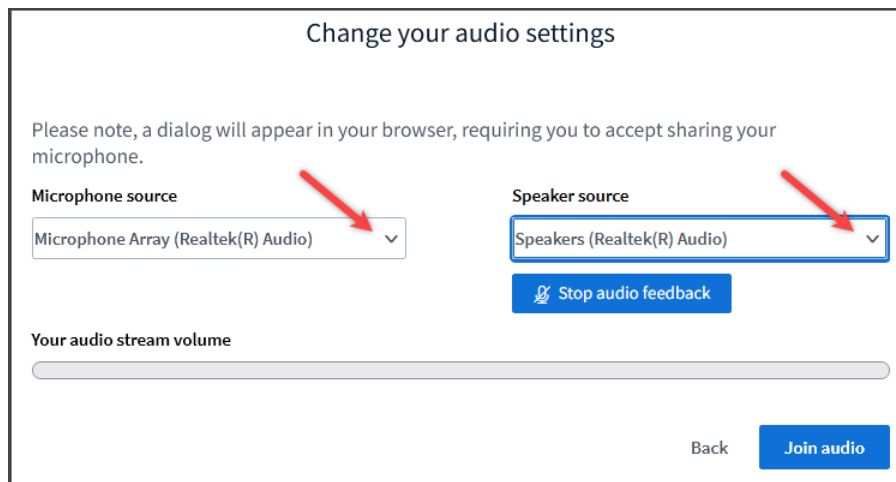3. If the session is open, click on the **Join session** button.

4. The **How would you like to join the audio?** pop-up appears asking if you wish to speak and listen or just listen during the session.
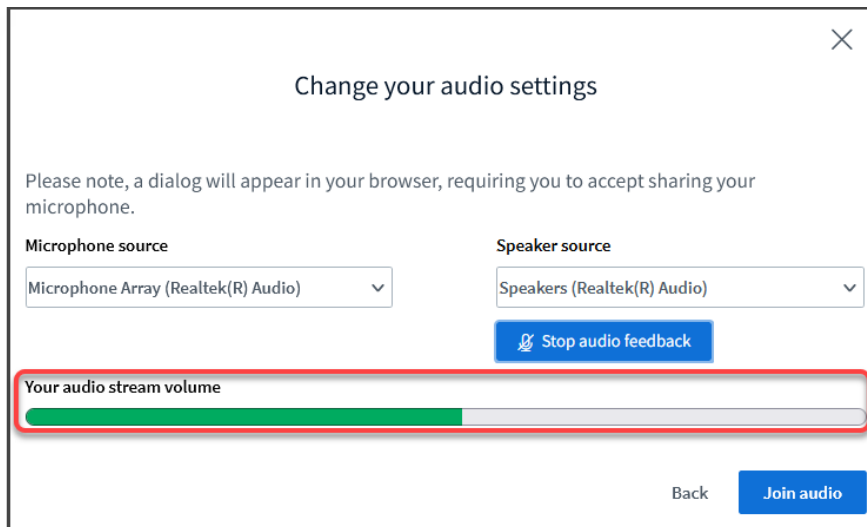

5. Click on the **Microphone** icon (as you are the moderator/teacher).
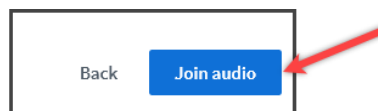
6. Click on the **Allow** button.
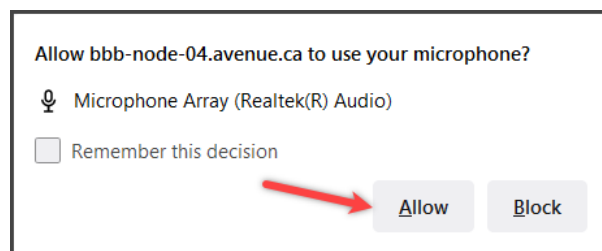
7. In the next pop-up, **Change your audio settings**, choose your Microphone and Speaker sources.

8. Speak a few words to test your speakers. If these are set correctly, you will hear your voice played back and see a green bar moving under **Your audio stream volume**.
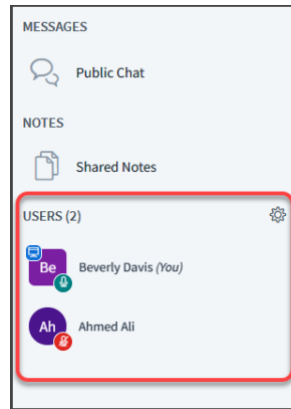
9. Click on the Join audio button.

10. You will then be placed in the **BBB** conference room, and your name should appear in the **Users list** on the left side of the screen
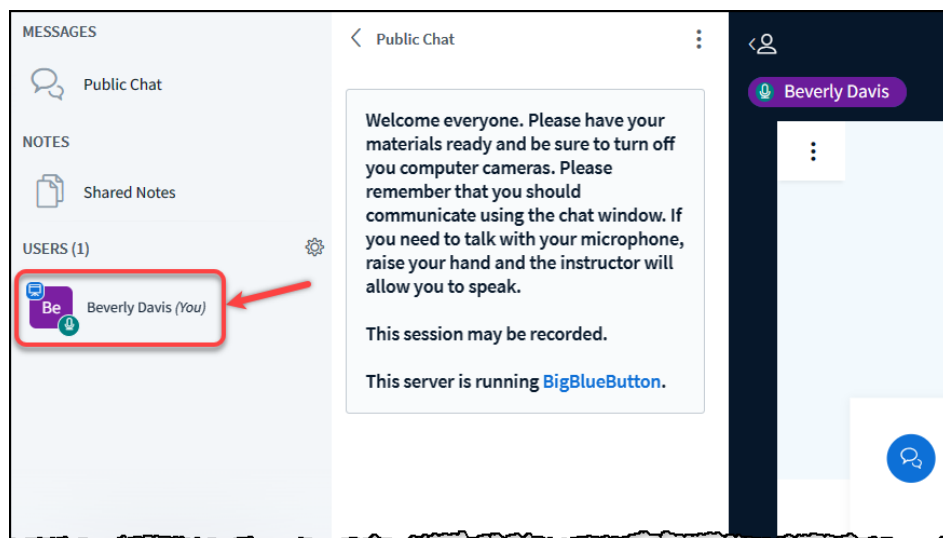
Users' Panel

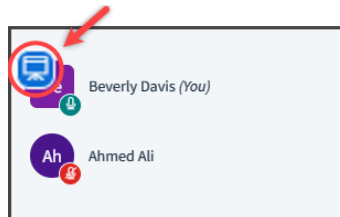On the left side of the screen is the **Users Panel**.

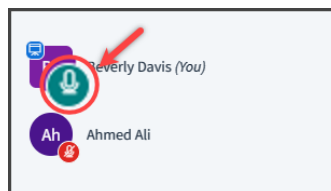This displays **participant's names** in a session.

On each initial **participant's** icon there can be two smaller icons.

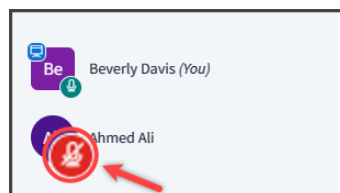In the example the icons represent:

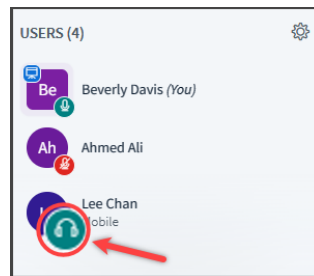Beverley Davis is the **moderator** (facilitator).

Beverley Davis has an active microphone.

Ahmed Ali has a muted microphone.
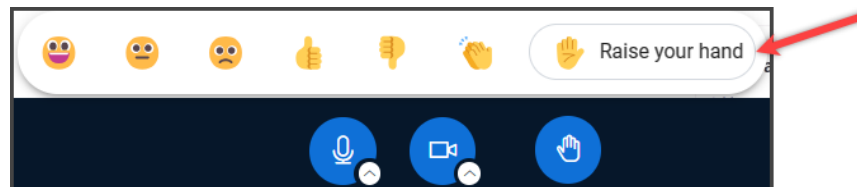
Lee chan has selected the **Listen only** mode.

Note: These icons may change as BBB is in continuous development.

Users can click on their names to set their status as **away** or **active**.

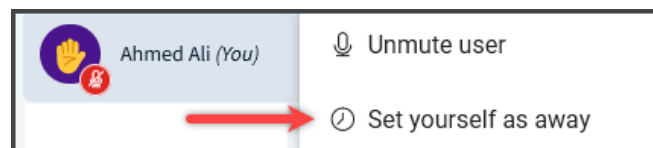If users want to put up their hand up or express themselves using emojis, they click on the **Reactions Bar** (hand icon) at the bottom of their screen.
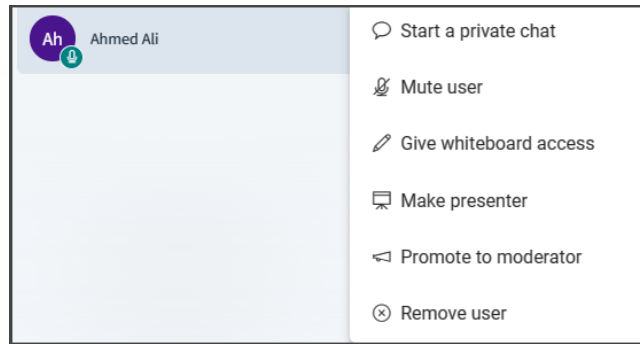

They can click any of the available options.

When a reaction is chosen, the user icon changes and the selected emoji will be displayed in place of the user's initials.


If the moderator clicks on a user's name, a more comprehensive menu appears.

- If the user's microphone is active, the moderator can click on the user's name, and then the **Mute user** option to silence the user's audio.

- The moderator can **start a private chat** with each learner. This allows participants to choose specific users to chat with in a back-channel mode. This allows for private conversations that will not disturb the class. Good uses of this are for individual technical problems or individual clarification of topics or terms.

- The moderator can also mute a user, give a user whiteboard access, demote to viewer, or remove a user from the room.

- The moderator can make another participant the presenter, or change a participant's status from presenter to viewer.

- Moderators can also remove users from a session if needed.


Chat panel

The **Chat** panel is the second column to the left side of the BBB screen. This panel initially displays the BBB welcome message or a message that the course developer/instructor sets in the BBB settings.
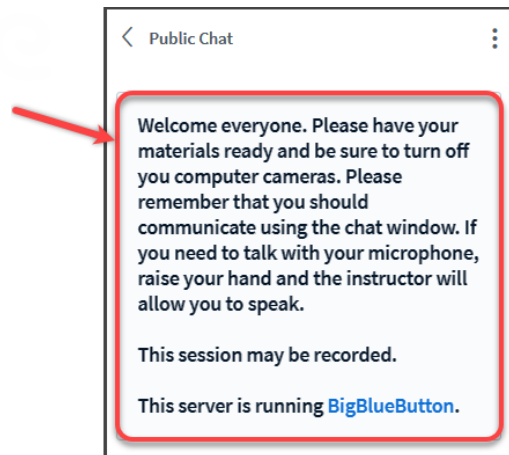
The **Chat** panel has three distinct parts, these are:

a. The **Chat Options** tab that allows moderators/presenters to **Save** a Chat session, **Copy** the text of a chat session or **Clear** all text in a chat session,

b. **Chat post** listings that shows all chats that participants have posted during the session, and

c. **Chat input** text field (messages), which is used to type message and send them to all participants.   This is also a good way to share Internet links during a session.
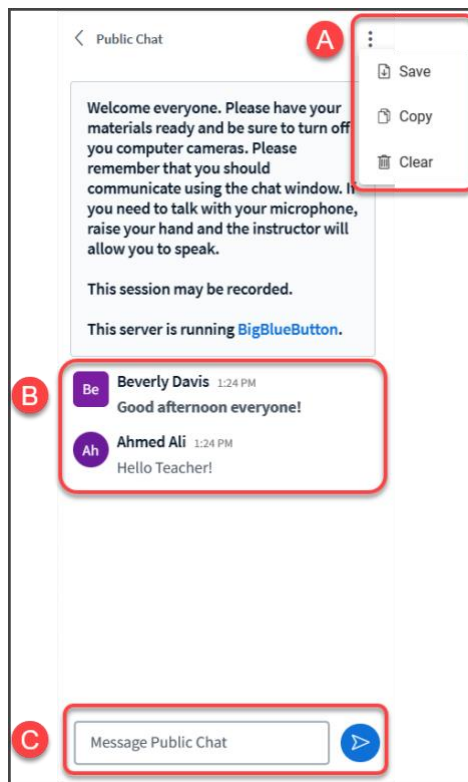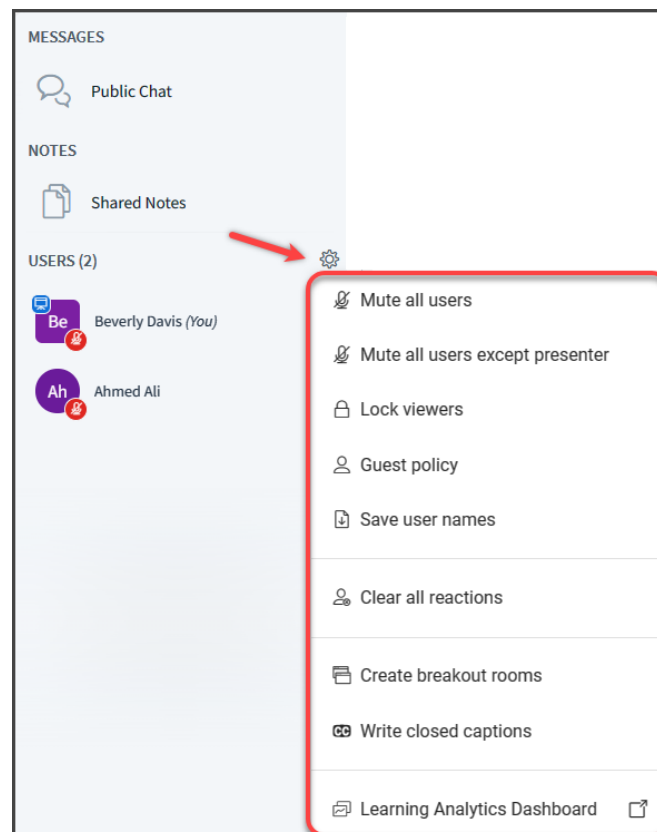
Manage Users

On the **Users** panel, the moderator can access a **Manage users** icon that looks like a cog. Moderators can use this menu to manage the session while it is happening.
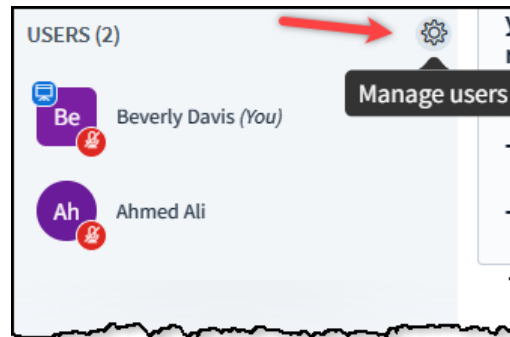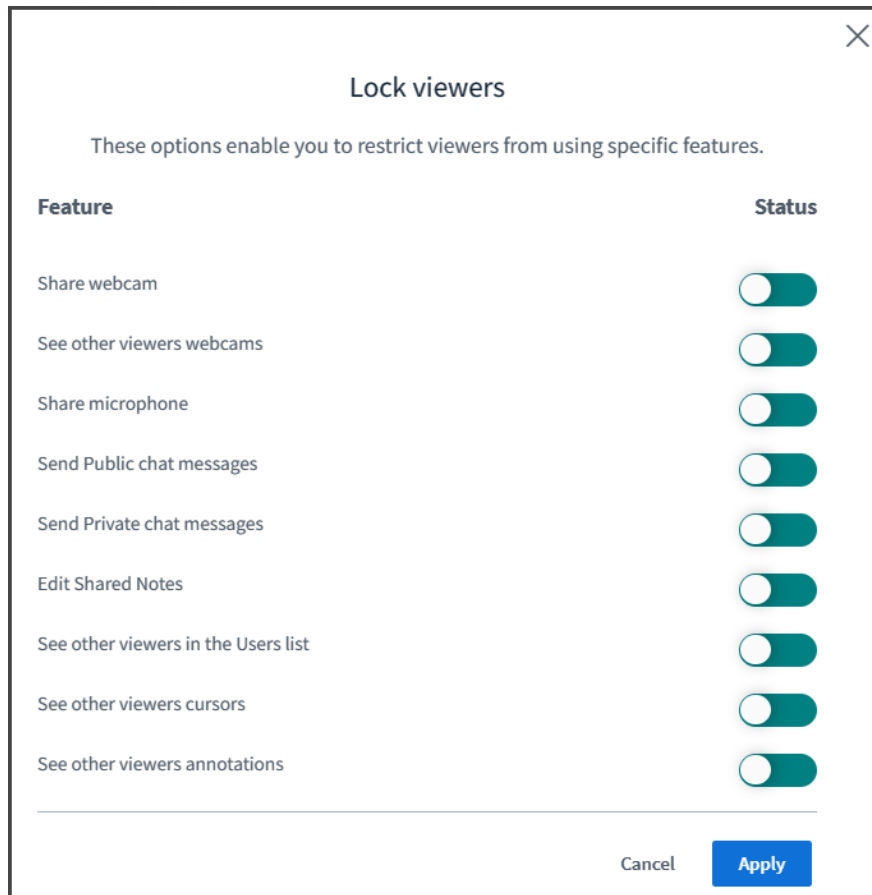

- Moderators can **Mute all users** during a quiet activity, or **Mute all users except presenter.**
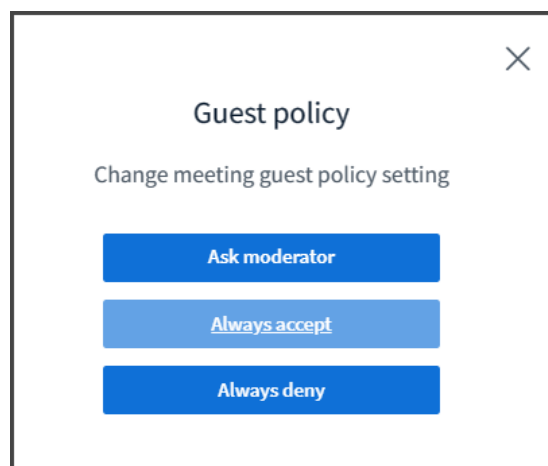
- Moderators are able to **Lock viewers**' privileges as needed.

- A moderator can change the **Guest Policy** during the meeting.

- Moderators can **Save user names** in a text file.

- Moderators can **Clear all reactions** after learners have responded to a prompt.

The last two **Manage User** settings are used by instructors more frequently and are explained in more detail.

Breakout Rooms

Moderators can divide the class into groups and **Create breakout rooms** for group work and discussions through the **Manager users** icon.
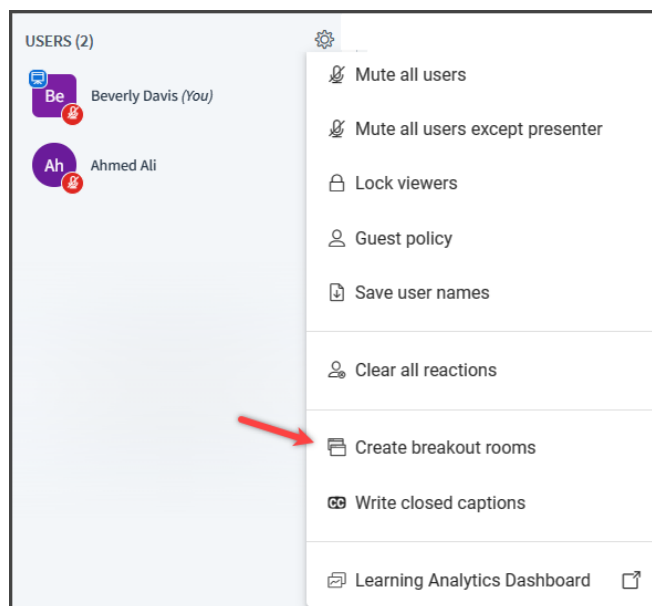
The following example shows how groups are generated during the session. Please note that in this example, there are only four students, but in a real class there are likely to be more.

Breakout room groups can be assigned by clicking on the **Randomly assign** link or by dragging the names of the students into different rooms.

1. Choose a time **Duration** after which the participants return to the main session. Note that you can increase or decrease the duration while students are in breakout rooms.
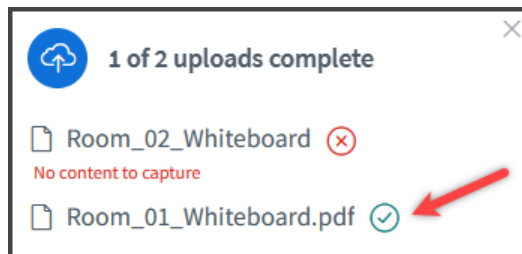

2. Check **Allow users to choose rooms**, if that works for your particular situation. You can also choose to save the whiteboard, shared notes and invitation to assigned moderators for each room.

Note that if you choose the **Save** options, the whiteboard file will be saved as a pdf file after the breakout rooms are ended. You can click on the file name to open it.

3. Click on the **Create** button.
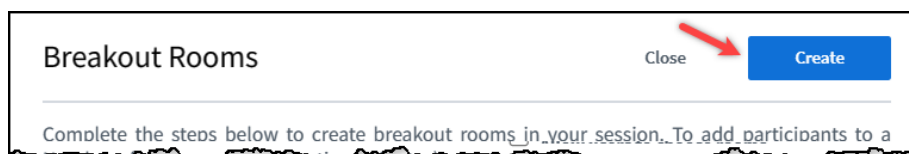
Note that each participant will see a message asking if they want to join the room. They should click on **Join room**.
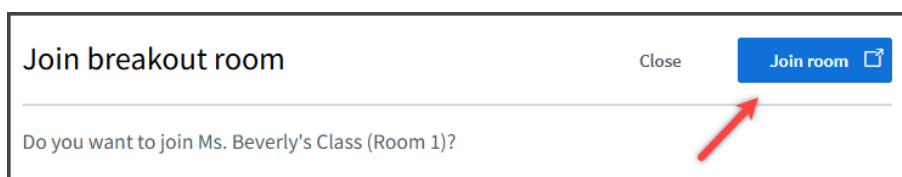
When they enter the room, each participant should choose their audio settings once again.

During the breakout session, the groups and time remaining are listed in the **Breakout Rooms** panel. Instructors can send messages to all rooms from this panel.

Teachers can join the rooms or, by using the ellipsis in the top right hand side of the **Breakout Rooms** panel, **Change the duration**, **Manage users** or **End breakout rooms**.
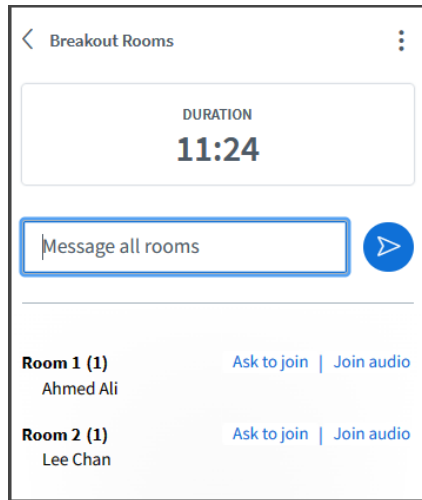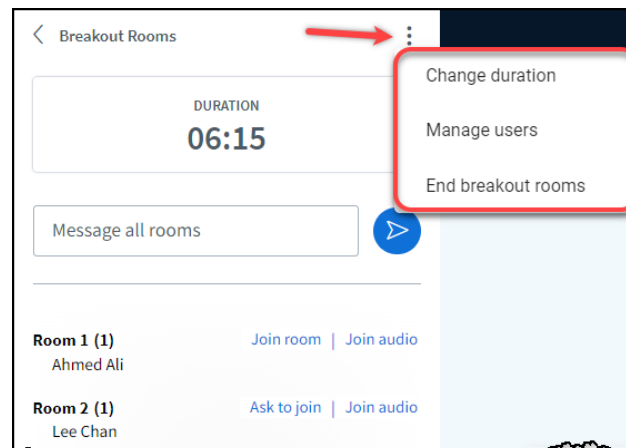

Note: The recording of the **BigBlueButton** session will freeze when learners are in the **Breakout Rooms**.

Closed Captioning

Should you require live **Closed Captions**, you can select the option from the **Manage Users'** panel.
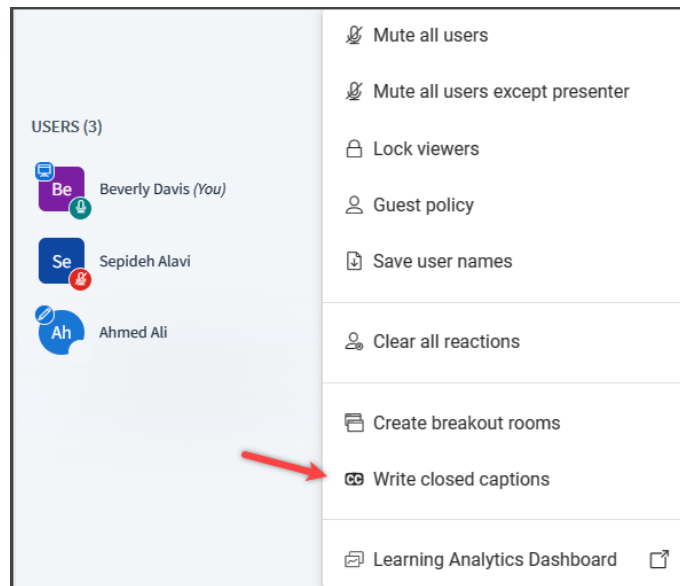
A pop-up appears asking you to select the language needed for the session.
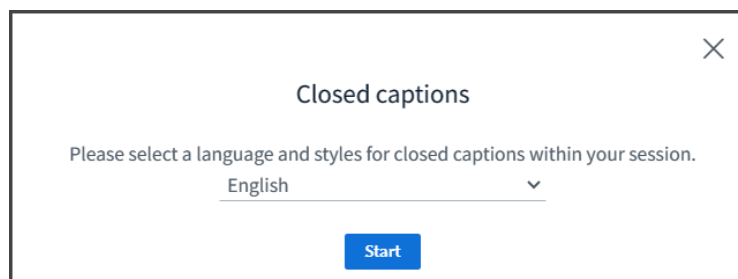
Choose the language from the drop down menu and click **Start**.

The **CC** button appears at the bottom of the presentation panel.

Click on the **CC** button to turn **Closed Captions** on.

Live captioning is supported by having someone type directly into the **Closed Caption** column, which in turn shows up on the presentation screen.

Learning Analytics Dashboard

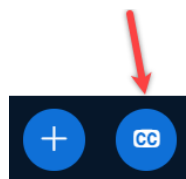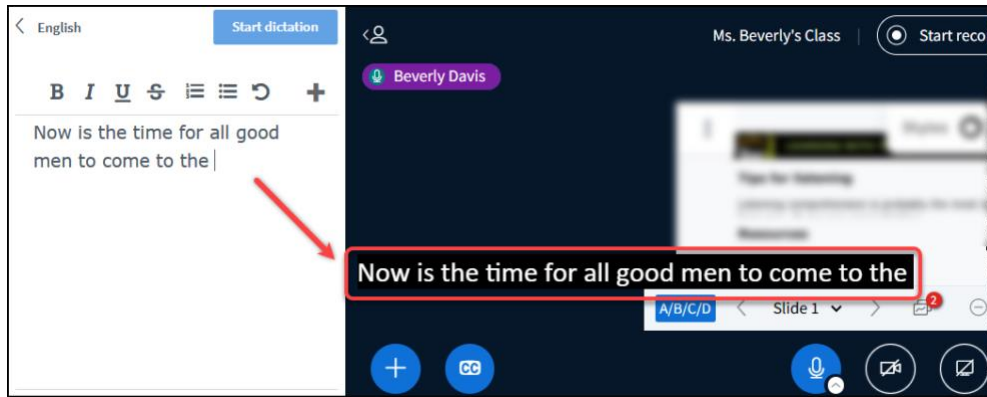During a BBB session, you can choose to see data about student activity that may help you analyze activity, engagement, and time spend during a session. There are several views available, including the **Active Users**, **Activity Score**, **Timeline**, and single **User Overview**. If **Polls** are used in the session, you will be able to see student responses, except for those polls where the responses were collected anonymously.

1. To access this feature, go to **Manage Users** and click on **Learning Analytics Dashboard.**
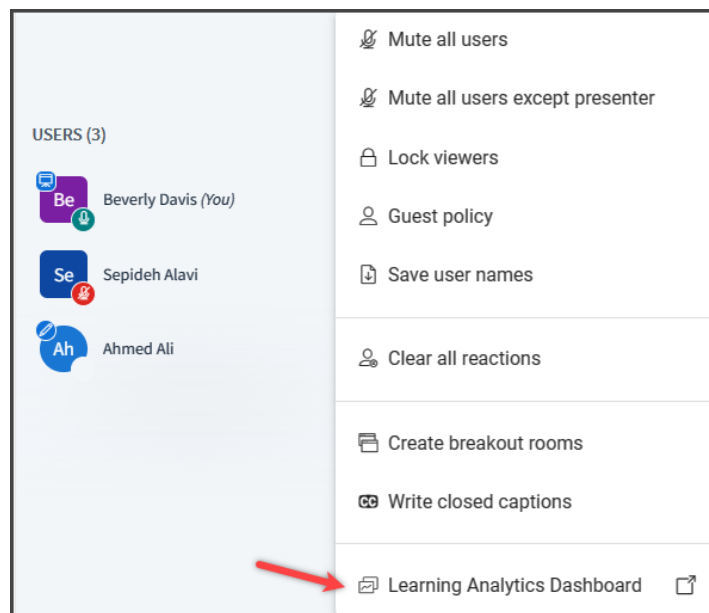
Note: When you access the **Learning Analytics Dashboard**, the entire dashboard will appear in a new tab. At the end of the session, a new tab will open with the dashboard. At that point, you can take a screenshot and/or download the data to a .csv file within 30 minutes, if you wish.
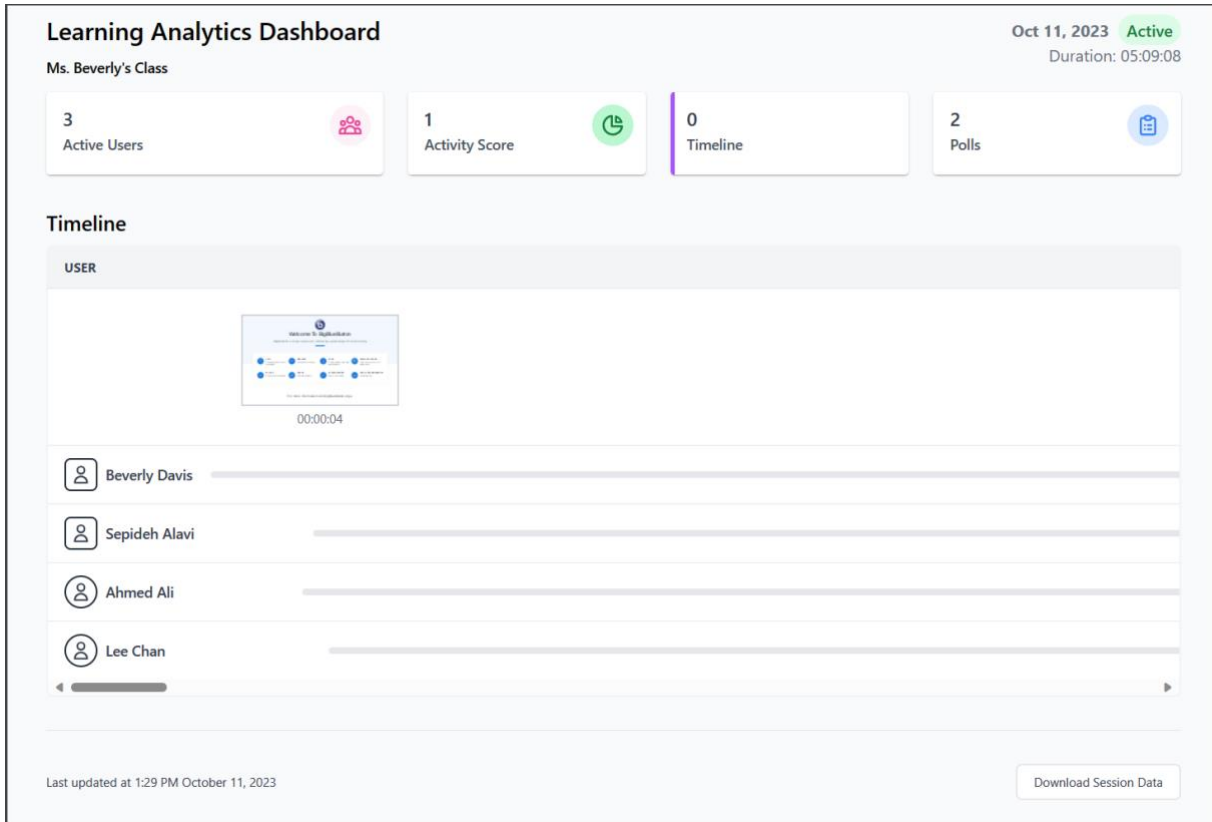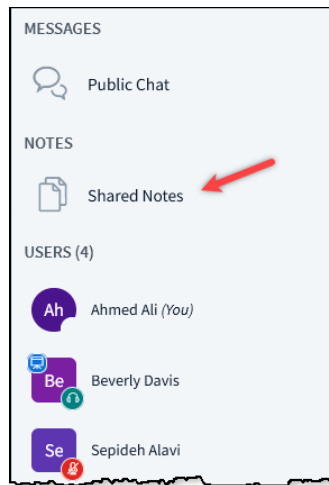

Shared Notes

The **Shared Notes** feature is located in the left column of the screen, under the **Notes** heading.

1. Click on **Shared Notes** to open the **Shared Notes** column. Here instructors and students can type and post their notes. In the example below, the learners are instructed to watch a video and write what they felt.
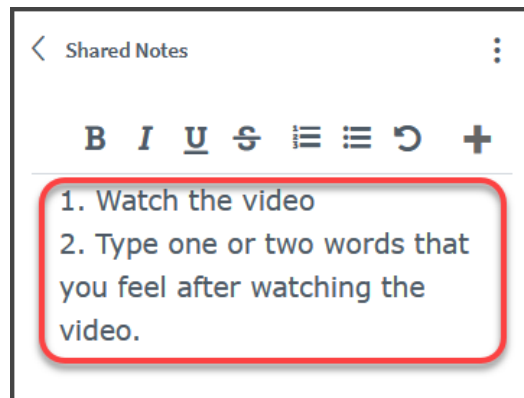
Note that text can be edited using the editing icons above the typing area.

By clicking on the **Notes options** vertical ellipsis, instructors can choose to **Convert notes to presentation** or **Pin notes onto whiteboard**.
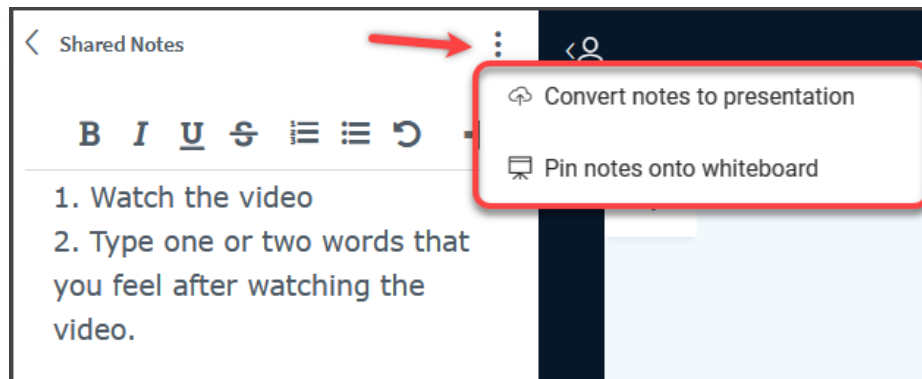
Note that these two actions will transfer and show the notes in the presentation area, but will not show live messages and notes added to the **Shared notes** column during the presentation.
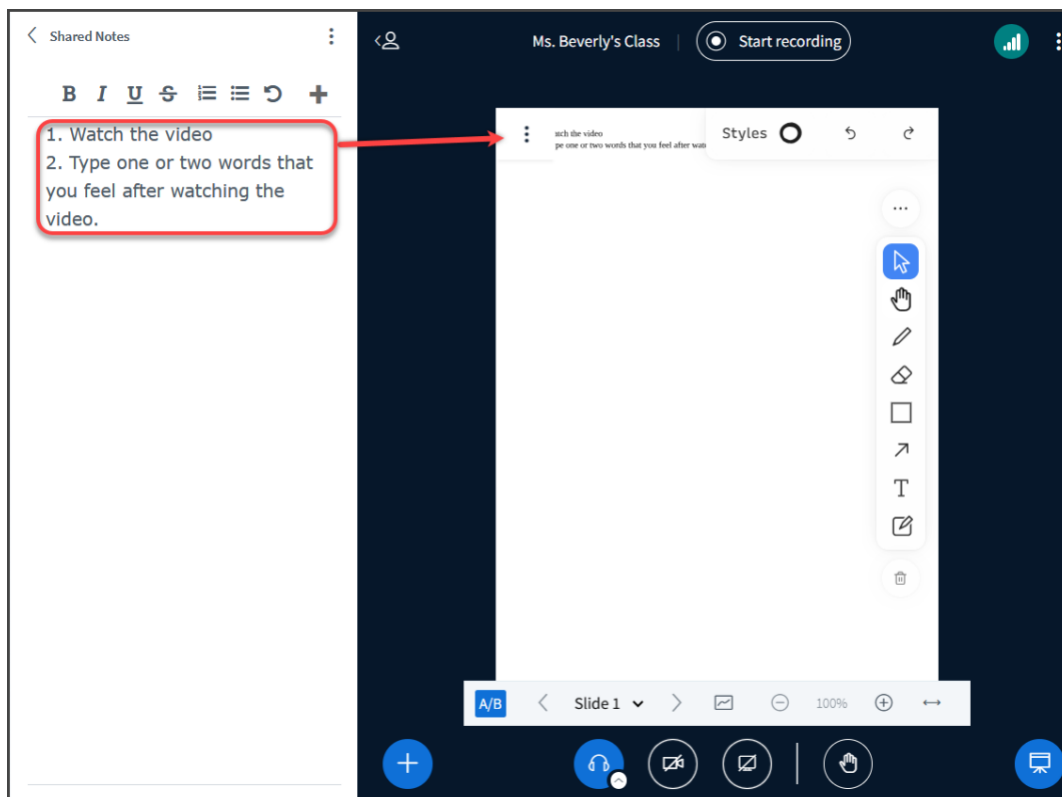
Students have the option to enlarge the screen by clicking on **Options** and choosing **Fullscreen Presentation**. They are also able to take a **Snapshot of current slide** if they need it.
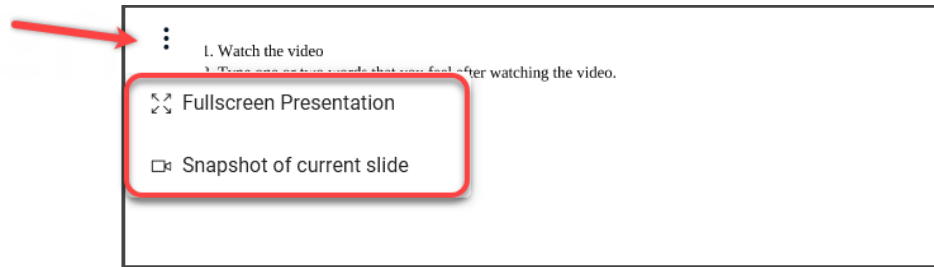
Sharing a Web Camera

Sharing your web camera allows the students to see and connect with you as the moderator/presenter.

1. To turn on the web camera, click on the **web camera** icon at the bottom of the screen.
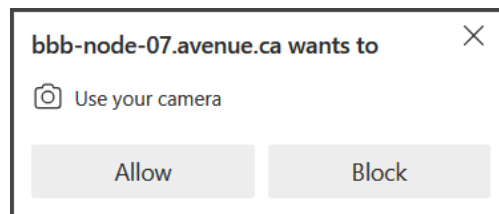

2. A pop-up appears, click on the **Allow** button to turn on the web camera.

Note: Other popup windows that look different may appear, but they all ask for your permission to use your computer camera.

3. Another pop-up appears that allows you to adjust your webcam settings. Use this to choose the **Camera**, **Quality** of your video, a **Virtual background settings** and **Brightness level**.
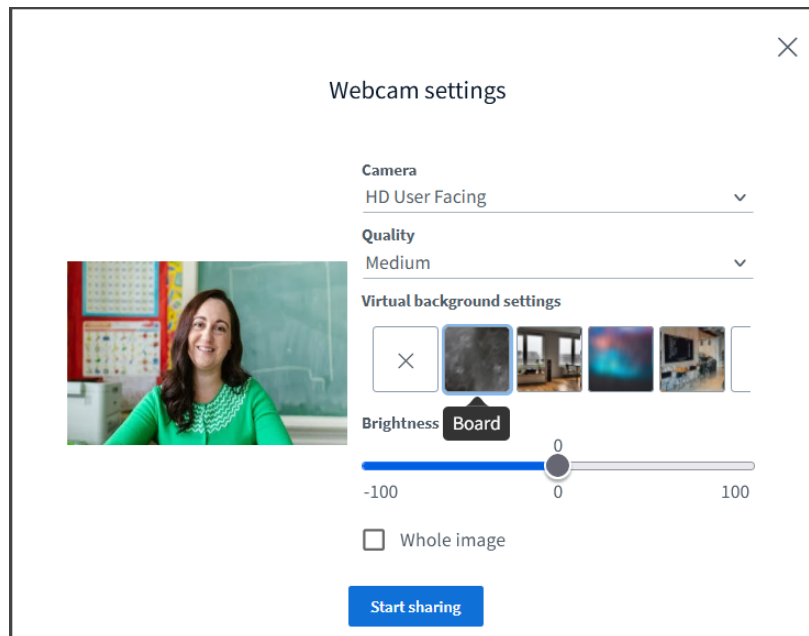
4. Click on the **Start sharing** button.

5. Your web camera video appears on the main screen.

6. The **webcam** sharing icon turns blue.

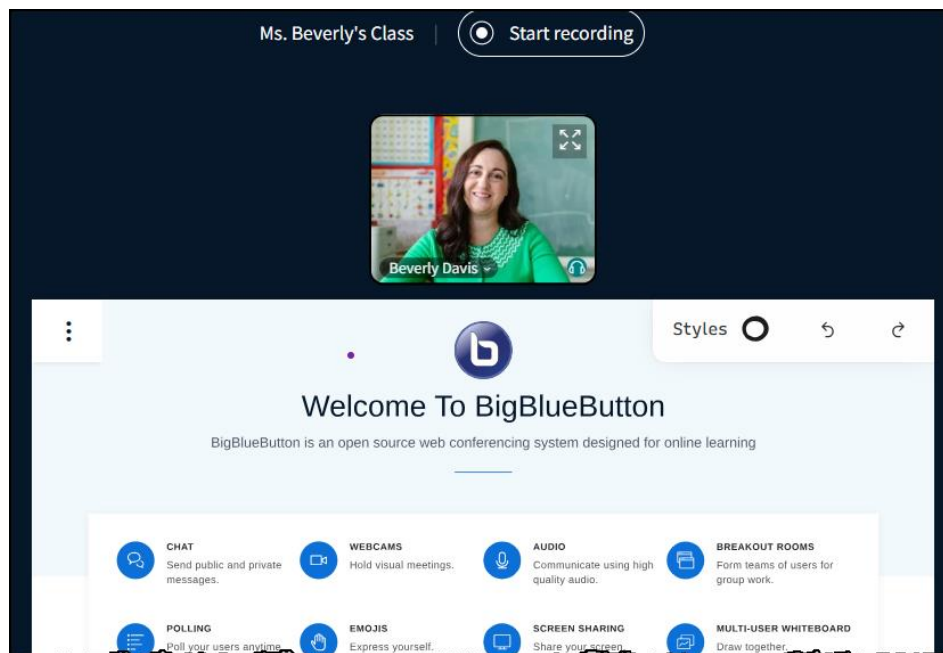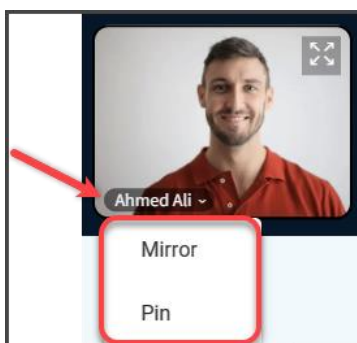You can mirror or pin the camera on a certain individual by clicking their name on the camera screen.


7. To stop sharing the web camera, click on the **webcam** icon again.

8. To share a window on your computer or your computer screen, click on the **Share your screen** icon.

A pop up appears for you to choose what you want to share. In Microsoft Edge or Chrome browsers, you can share a specific **Tab**, a **Window**, or your **Entire Screen**. Other browsers may provide slightly different options.

9. Choose what you want to share from the list under each tab.

10. Click on the **Share tab audio**, if you want to share the audio as well.

11. Click on **Share** to share your screen.
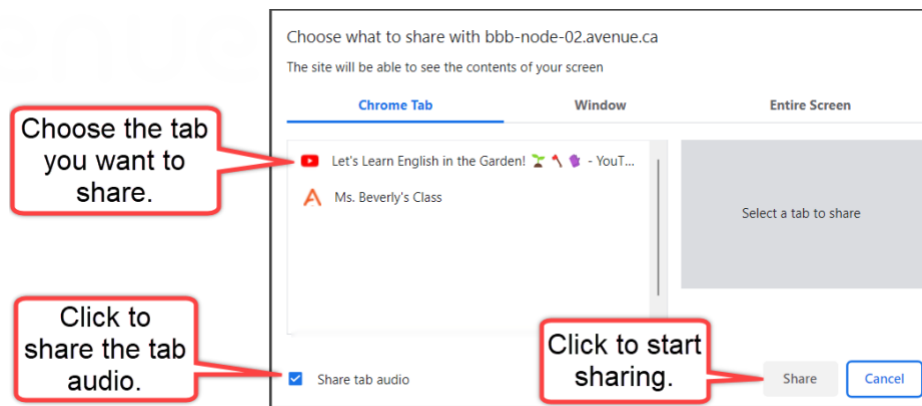
Learners now see the selected screen, window or tab.

12. Select the **Stop sharing** icon to stop sharing the window.
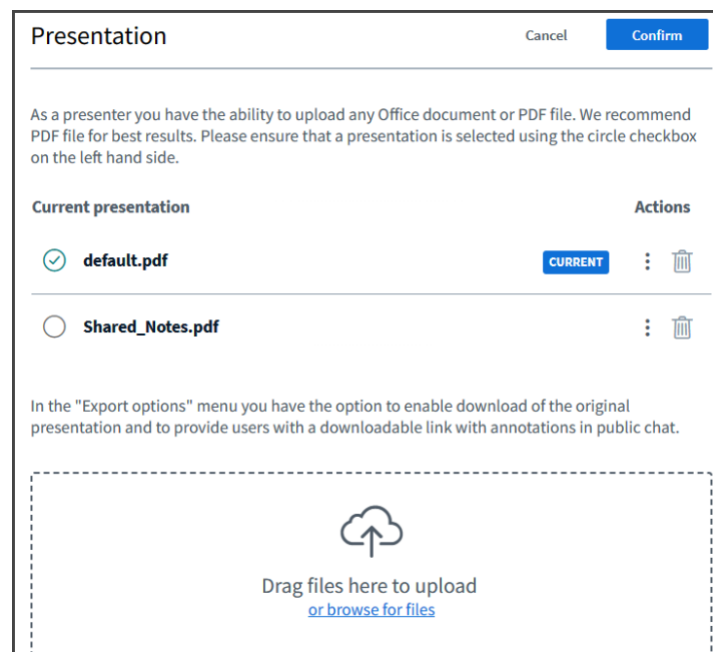

Sharing a Presentation

A common way to focus learners in an online session is to have a set of slides in the presentation area of **BBB**. It is a good practice to convert files to PDF format before uploading a slide show.

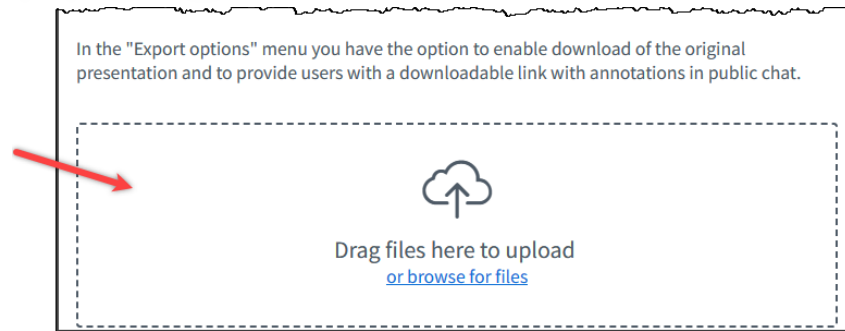1. Click on the **Plus** icon at the bottom of the screen.
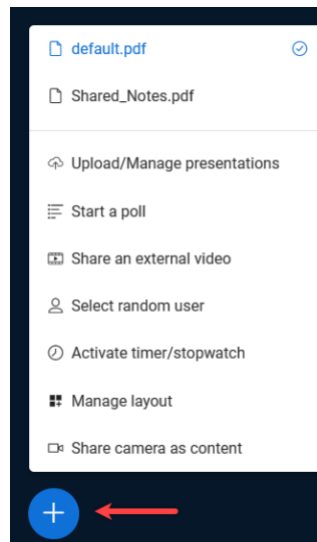
Note the default.pdf on top of the menu is the BigBlueButton Welcome screen. If you have used other presentations or shown your **Shared notes** as a presentation previously in the session, they will also appear on the upper part of the menu.

2. From the presentation menu, choose the **Upload/Manage presentations** option.

3. The **Presentation** screen appears.

4. Drag your **presentation** file into the **Drag files here to upload** box.

In the "Export options" menu you have the option to enable download of the original presentation and to provide users with a downloadable link with annotations in public chat.

Drag files here to upload
or browse for files

5. Click on the **Upload** button. The upload may take a minute.

6. Once uploaded, the **slideshow** appears in the main part of the BBB screen.

At the bottom or side of the presentation screen,, there are a number of **Annotation options** and a button that allows the instructor to **Turn on or off whiteboard** annotations for other users. The multiuser whiteboard allows users to interact with the presentation area. These features can be used by the instructor while leading a lesson or by learners responding to instructor directions. The instructor can know which student is doing what by the **name tag** on their cursor.

Annotation options

Turn multi-user whiteboard on
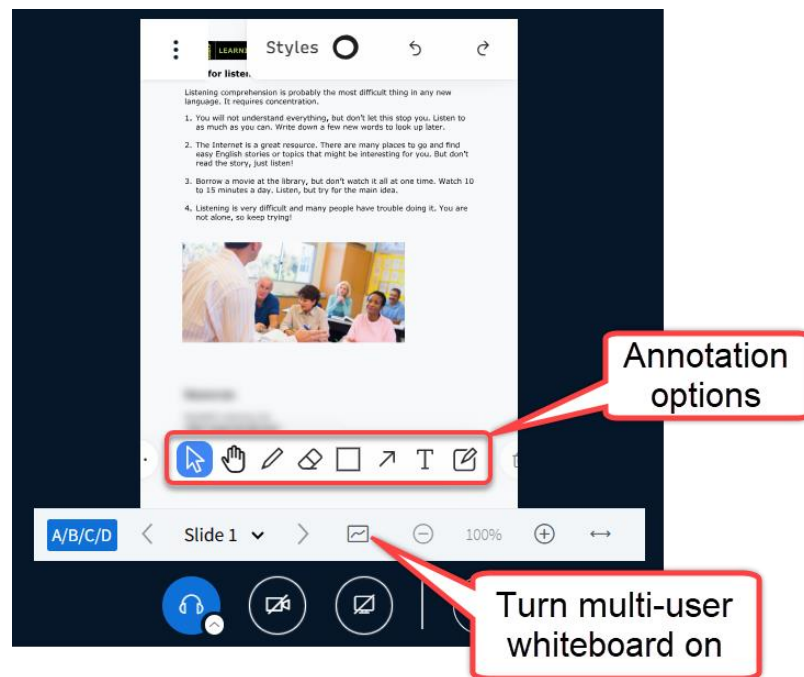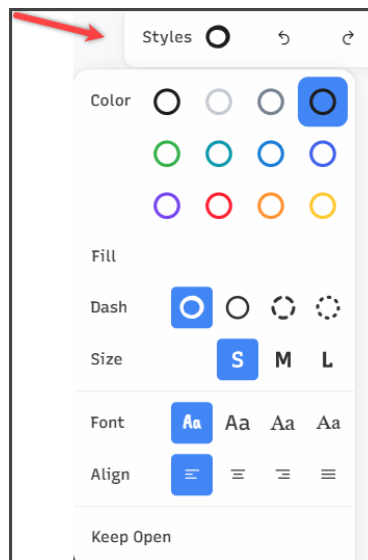
The annotations bar provides options for:
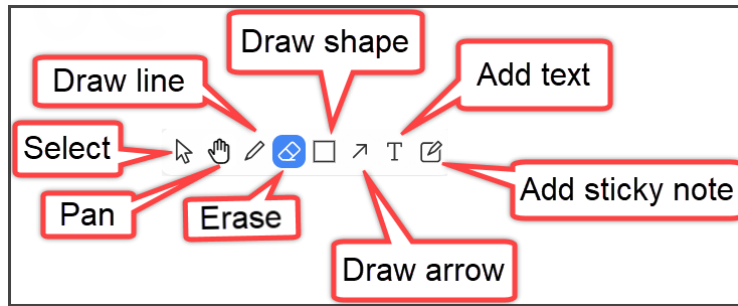
Two more icons on the side of the annotations toolbar allow for **More formatting options** and **Clearing annotations**.

Another toolbar is also available on the presentation that provides **Styles** options for the annotations. These include color, shape fill, line design, and font size and alignment.

Note: By default, students can see all cursor movements and name tags. Teachers can change this setting so that each student only sees their own cursor. This is configured in the **Manage Users** -> **Lock viewers** area.
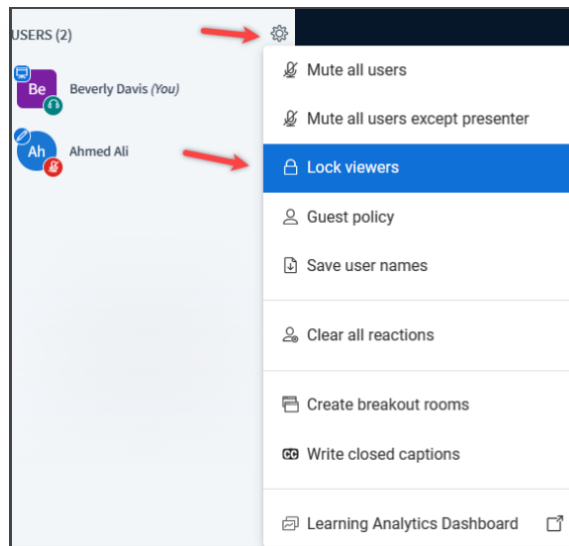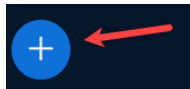
Note: at any time during a presentation, a teacher or student can take a snapshot of the current slide (whether it is annotated or not.)
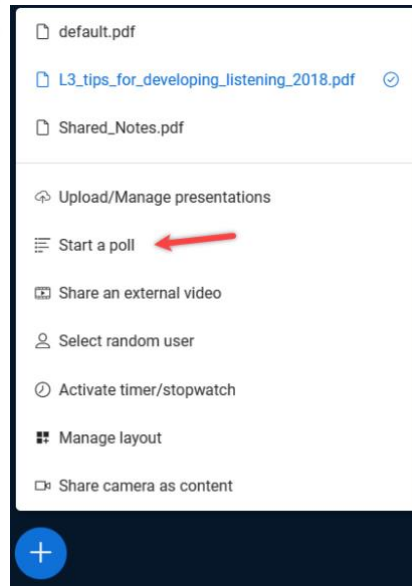
Using Polls

Polls are a good way to check in on learners for comprehension, new directions and opinions. Adding **Polls** is simple in **BBB**.
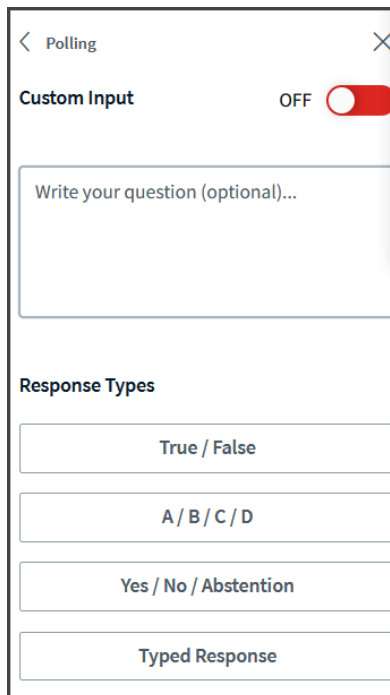
1. Click on the **Plus** icon at the bottom of the screen.

2. In the pop-up that appears, choose the **Start a poll** option.

3. The **Polling** panel appears. The **Custom Input** option is set to **Off** by default.

4. There are different types of **polls** available. Add the poll question and choose the type of response you would like for the question, including True/False, Multiple Choice, Yes/No/Abstention, and Typed Response.

Note: Through the A/B/C/D response type option, you can select the number of multiple-choice options, and whether you want the poll to be multi-select. You can also choose to have the poll completed anonymously.

5. Click on the **Start Poll** button to begin polling.

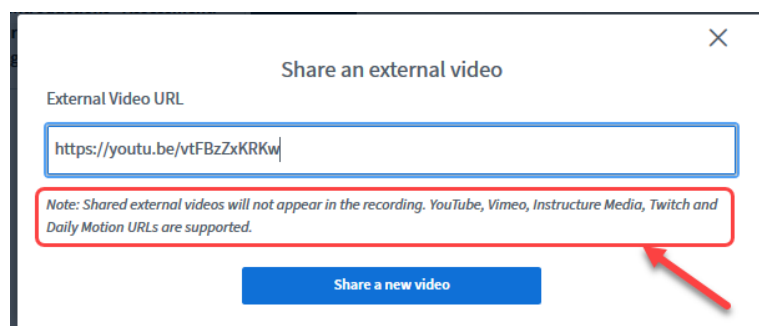Instructors can see the responses to the poll in the **Polling** column.

Sharing an External Video

Videos are a common way to provide context for your lessons. Adding videos is straightforward with BBB.

1. Click on the **Plus** icon at the bottom of the screen.

2. In the pop-up that appears, choose the **Share an external video** option.
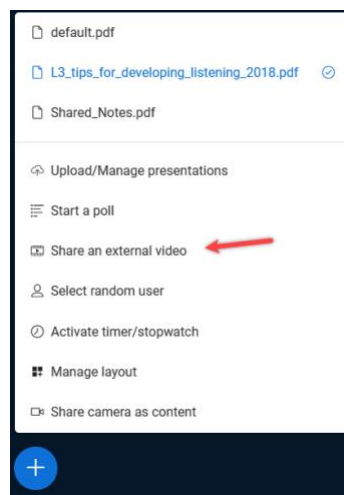
The **Share an external video** screen appears.

Note: not all online videos will work in BBB. Check the list on this screen before continuing.
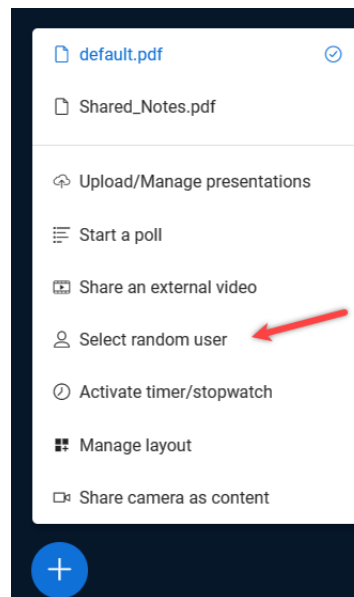
3. The **video** now appears in the main presentation area of the BBB.

Select a random user

BBB has the ability to randomly select a student to respond to question or other prompt.

1. Click on the **Plus** icon at the bottom of the screen.

2. In the pop-up that appears, choose the **Select random user** option.

BBB will generate a random name that displays on the screen, and the teacher has the option to re-select if one name is being generated too often.
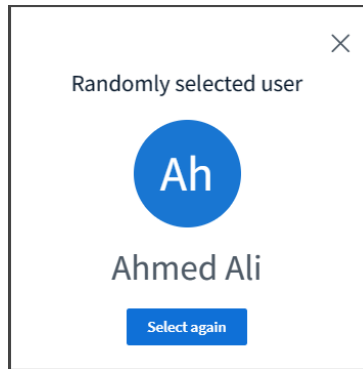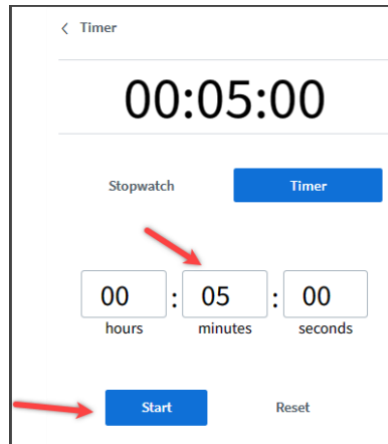
Activate timer/Stopwatch

Instructors have the option to activate a stopwatch for timed activities such as a quiz or other proficiency building activities.

1. Click on the **Plus** icon at the bottom of the screen.

2. In the pop-up that appears, choose the **Activate timer/stopwatch** option.
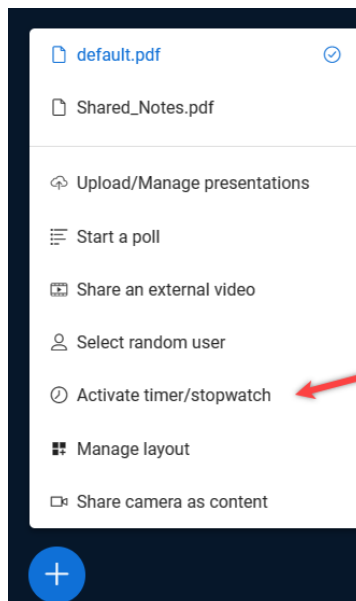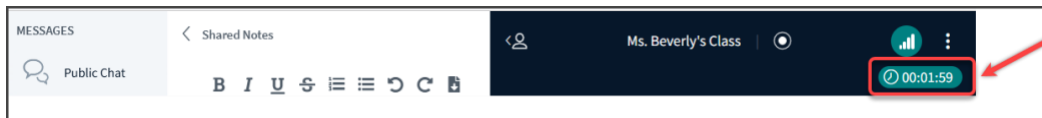

The **Timer** column appears.
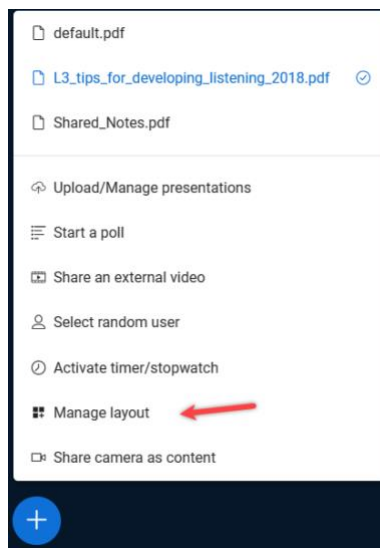
3. Set a time and click **Start**.

All users are able to see the timer on the top-right corner of the screen.
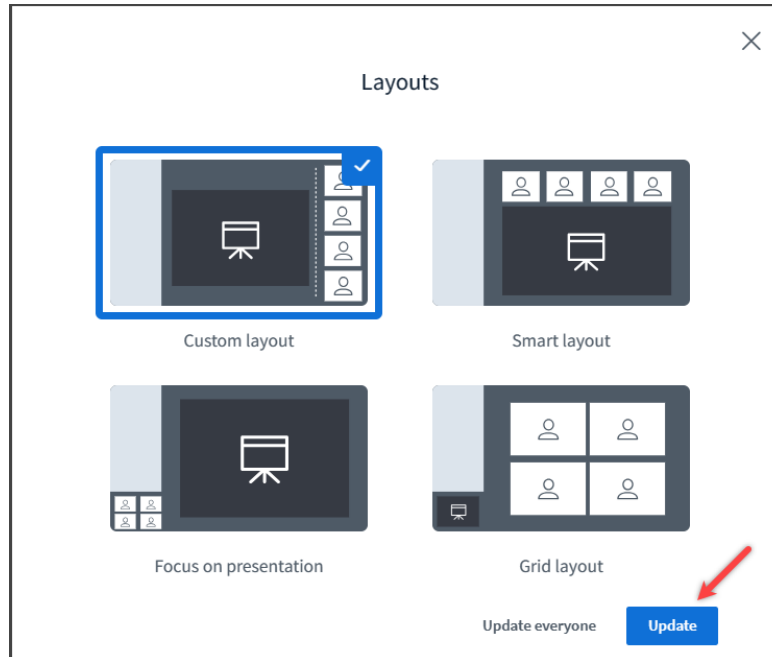

Manage Layout

All users have the option to change the layout of their screen.

1. Click on the **Plus** button at the bottom of the presentation.
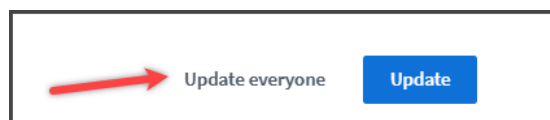
2. Click on **Manage layout**.

Four different layouts appear, each showing the position of the participants' videos on the screen. Each user has the option to choose their preferred layout.

3. Click on **Update** once the Layout is selected. Note that Moderators have the additional option of Updating everyone's layout.


Share Camera as Content

Presenters can choose to show their own webcam as the main presentation. This is helpful if they want to share their real background such as the classroom or library they are teaching at or show real objects to the learners.

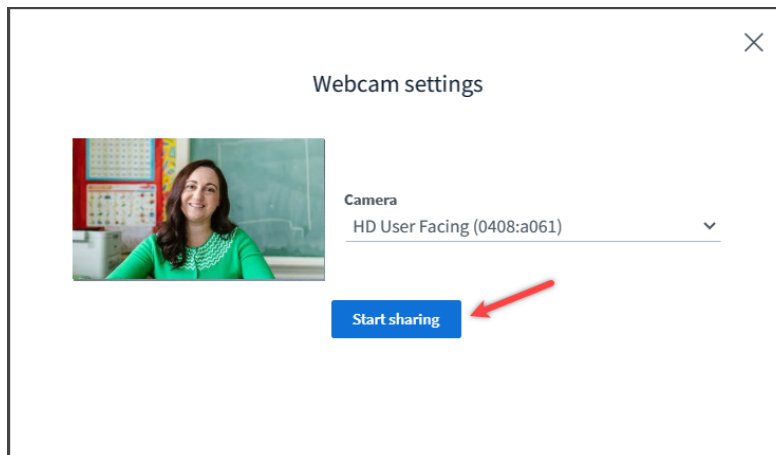Note: Make sure you webcam is off before trying this feature.

1. Click on the **Plus** button at the bottom of the presentation.

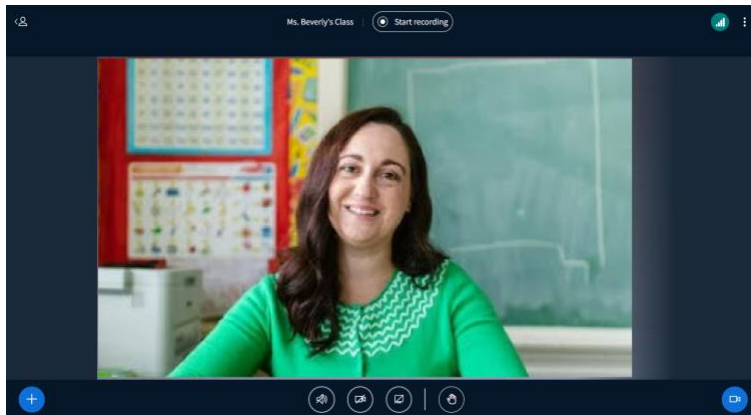2. Click on **Share camera as content**.
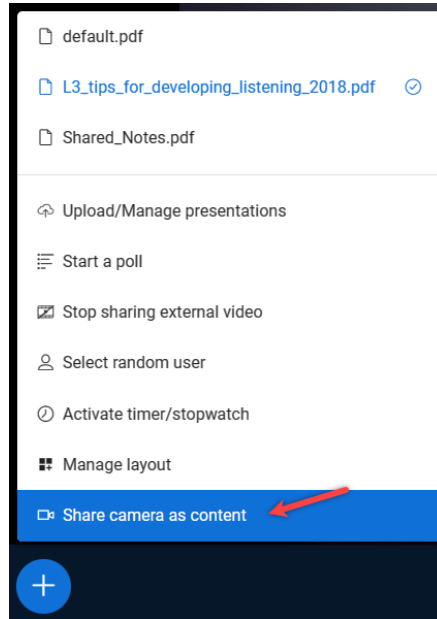
The **webcam setting** page appears. Note that virtual backgrounds and other video settings do not work with this feature.

3. Click on **Start sharing**.

Your webcam now appears in the presentation area of the page.

Resources

BigBlueButton Tutorials
BigBlueButton Version 2.7 New Features