



Virtual Classroom

Introduction

This quick sheet will assist you in navigating within Virtual Classroom as a Student. Before you start, please take a moment to review the technical prerequisites and conventions used within this document.

Technical Prerequisites

You will need access to:

- An Internet connection
- A Web browser such as Netscape 4.0 or higher and IE 4.0 or higher that can accommodate both JavaScript and Java
- An e-mail account

Conventions Used in this Material

There are several formatting conventions used throughout this document. Please take note of the following formatting styles:

- Tasks you perform are listed as STEPS.
- Within the steps, buttons and other parts of the Virtual Classroom screen are indicated in **BOLD**.

Virtual Classroom

Each course includes a synchronous chat room for student and group communications. Virtual Classroom, as we call the chat room, can be used to hold “live” classroom discussions, TA sessions, and office hour type question/answer forums. You can even have guest speakers and subject matter experts talk with the class in the Virtual Classroom.

When developing an activity that requires a Virtual Classroom, consider the following:

- The Virtual Classroom is a Java application and may initially take a few minutes to load into a browser window. Before developing assignments that require the Virtual Classroom, be sure that all students have Java enabled browsers.
- Due to the synchronous nature of the Virtual Classroom, multiple users must participate at the same time. Be sure to notify students about a scheduled Virtual Classroom session to ensure attendance.
- Sometimes a Virtual Classroom session can be overwhelming if there are too many users. Consider grouping students into several small groups to keep the conversation manageable.

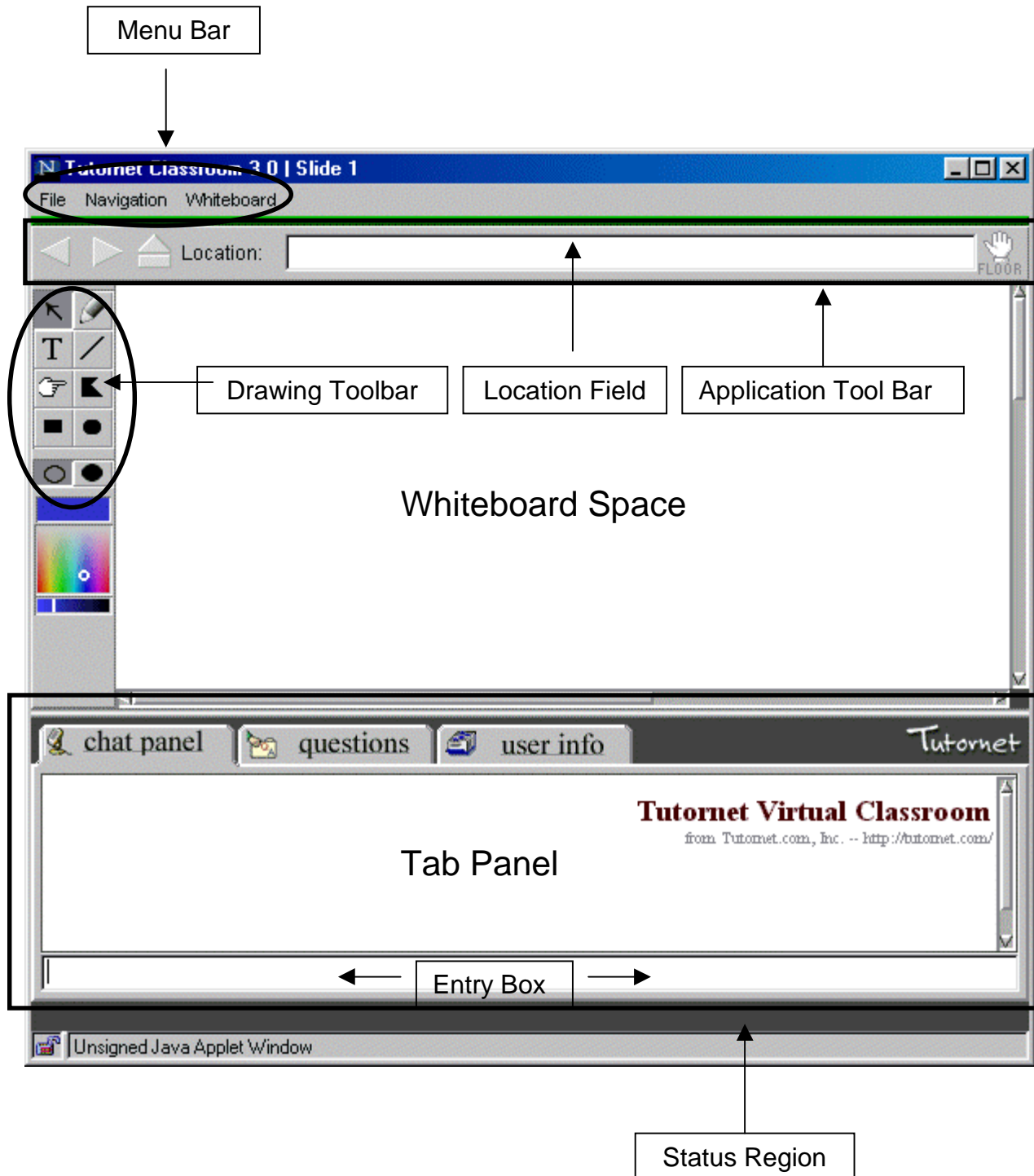
Accessing Virtual Classroom

To access the Virtual Classroom:

Step 1: Click the **Communications** navigation button.

Step 2: Click **Virtual Classroom**.

Overview of Virtual Classroom



A Virtual Classroom contains several distinct areas:

Whiteboard Space	You can display web pages on the whiteboard space, which is the large center area. You can also write or draw on this space using the drawing toolbar.						
Menu Bar	Use the menu bar to change the information that appears on the whiteboard space, such as selecting a font to use on the whiteboard space, moving an object on the whiteboard space behind another object, and moving from one slide on the whiteboard space to another slide.						
Application Tool Bar	The application toolbar contains a “floor” tool for requesting access to additional classroom activities and tools in navigating web pages.						
Location Field	Use the location field to enter the URL of a web page you would like to use in your discussion. The web page is then displayed on the whiteboard space. Users can also write or draw on the web page with the drawing toolbar.						
Drawing Toolbar	Use the drawing toolbar to write and draw on the whiteboard space.						
Tab Panel	<p>The tab panel is used to enter chat, ask questions of your instructor, and view user information.</p> <p>The following tabs are available:</p> <table><tr><td>Chat Panel:</td><td>Use this tab to talk with others in your course.</td></tr><tr><td>Questions:</td><td>Use this tab to submit a question – either privately or publicly - to the Instructor.</td></tr><tr><td>User Info:</td><td>Use this tab to learn about others in your course, such as their names.</td></tr></table>	Chat Panel:	Use this tab to talk with others in your course.	Questions:	Use this tab to submit a question – either privately or publicly - to the Instructor.	User Info:	Use this tab to learn about others in your course, such as their names.
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User Info:	Use this tab to learn about others in your course, such as their names.						
Status Region	Status messages are displayed at the bottom of your Virtual Classroom window in the status region. View important system messages as well as information about many Virtual Classroom controls in this space.						

Virtual Classroom Basics

Entering Chat

With the Chat Panel tab, you can chat with your instructor and your classmates.

To enter chat:

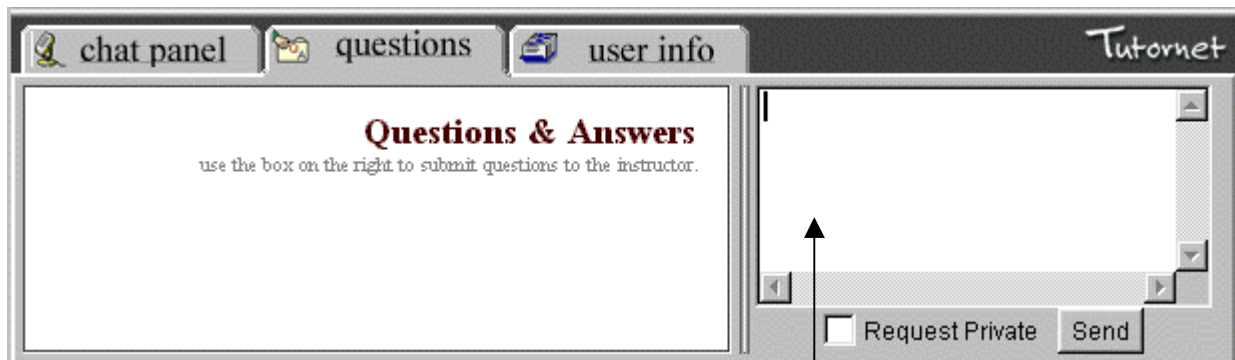
- Step 1:** Click the **Chat Panel** tab.
- Step 2:** Type a message in the **Entry Box**.
- Step 3:** Hit the **Enter** button on your keyboard.

Asking a Question

With the Questions tab, you can ask the instructor questions.

To ask the instructor a question:

- Step 1:** Click the **Questions** tab. The **tab panel** will now appear as shown in the figure below.



- Step 2:** Type your question in the **Question Entry Box**.
- Step 3:** Click the **Request Private** box if you would like only the instructor, not your classmates, to see your question. Otherwise, everyone in your course will see your question.
- Step 4:** Click **Send** to send the question to the instructor.

Viewing User Information

With the User Info tab, you can find out the names of your classmates in the Virtual Classroom.

To view user information:

- Step 1:** Click the **User Info** tab.
- Step 2:** Highlight the desired user. You will then see your classmate's names.

To learn about instructional features, refer to the Blackboard.com Student Manual.

Contact Information

Please contact Blackboard Inc. for information on upgrades and enhancements to Blackboard.com by using the following contact information:

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