



Group Management

August 2011

Groups

Groups can be created in Blackboard to allow students to collaborate on projects and assignments. They can be created one at a time or in sets.

Once created, each group has its own space in the course to work together. An assortment of tools can be made available to the members of the group. To create groups locate the **Users and Groups** section of the **Control Panel** on the left side of the screen and click on the **Groups** link.



Types of Groups

Instructors can create a single group or multiple groups (group sets) in which students are enrolled manually, automatically, or by allowing the students to enroll themselves. These enrollments can be changed at any time by the instructor. Once students are assigned to groups they will see a link to the group below the Course Menu.

- **Manual Enrollment** - you set the number of groups to create and select which students go in each group.
- **Random Enrollment** - you set either the number of students per group or the number of groups to create and Blackboard assigns the students randomly.
- **Self Enrollment** - you create the number of groups and set a maximum number of students for each group. Students sign up for the group they want to be a part of using **Sign-Up Sheets**.

Each group type has access to all of the group tools depending on how you create the group.

Creating Groups

Single Group

1. Click **Users and Groups** from the Control Panel.
2. Click **Groups**.
3. Choose **Self-Enroll** or **Manual Enroll** from the **Create Single Group** drop-down list.
4. Type the Group **Name**.
5. Type a **Description** of the Group.
6. Click **Yes** to make the **Group Available**.
7. Select the **Tools** available to the Group by clicking the appropriate check boxes.
8. Type a number in the **Points Possible** field if the **Grade** option is selected for **Blogs, Journals, and Wikis**.
9. Click **Allow Personalization** to allow individual group members to personalize group space modules.
10. Choose the **Sign-up Options** for Self-Enroll or Choose **Membership** options for Manual Enroll.
11. Click **Submit**.

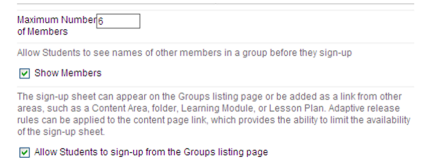
* It is the instructor's responsibility to assign students to groups when using the manual enroll option.

Multiple Groups

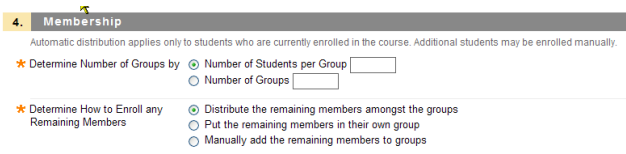
1. Click **Users and Groups** from the Control Panel.
2. Click **Groups**.
3. Click **Create Set of Groups**.
4. Choose **Self-Enroll, Manual Enroll** or **Random**.
5. Type the Group **Name**.
6. Type a **Description** of the Group.
7. Click **Yes** to make the **Group Available**.
8. Select the **Tools** available to the Group by clicking the appropriate check boxes.
9. Type a number in the **Points Possible** field if the **Grade** option is selected for **Blogs, Journals, and Wikis**.
10. Click **Allow Individual Group Members to Customize their Group Space Modules**.
11. Choose the **Sign-up Options** for Self-Enroll or Choose **Group Set Options** for Manual Enroll or Choose **Membership** options for Random enrollment.
12. Click **Submit**.

Self-Enroll—Sign-up Options

When creating a Self-Enroll group there are two options for allowing students to sign up for the group. Selecting **Sign-up Sheet Only** allows the students to pick the group they want to participate in but does not make the group available for activities to begin. Making the group available still requires a Sign-up Sheet, but the students will have access to the group immediately after signing up. To set up the Sign-Up Sheet --



1. Type a **Name** for the Sign-up Sheet. Be sure the name is descriptive so that students will understand the nature of the Sign-up Sheet.
2. Use the Text Box to type a **Description** of the Sign-up Sheet and any instructions for signing up. This information is optional, but can help students understand expectations and any limitations to signing up.
3. Type the **Maximum Number of Members**. Once this

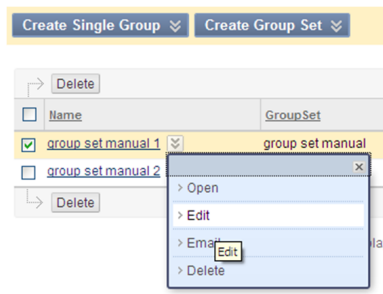


number has been reached, other students will not be able to join the Group.

4. Allow students to see the others who have already signed up by selecting **Show Members**.
5. Allow students to access the Sign-up Sheet from the Groups listing page by selecting **Allow Students to sign-up from the Groups listing page**.

Random Enroll Group

Random distribution applies only to students who are currently enrolled in the course. Additional students may be enrolled manually.



Naming Groups

When naming a Set of Groups, the name of each group has a number added to it when they are first created. For example, a Set of Groups named "Intro to Biology" results in groups named "Intro to Biology 1", "Intro to Biology 2", "Intro to Biology 3", depending upon the number of groups in the set. The group names are edited after they are created.

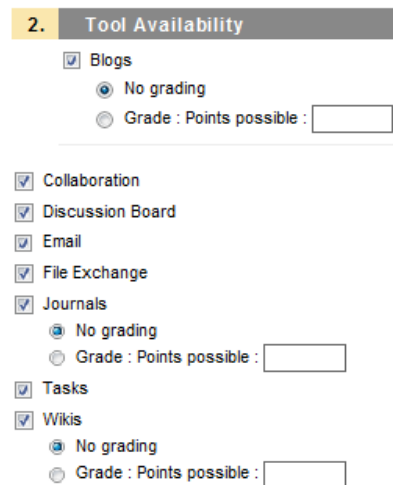
Editing Existing Group

Edit from the contextual menu for the group; the Edit Group page appears. Group properties may be edited, new Students may be added, Group users may be listed or edited, and students may be deleted from the group.

Tool Availability

Instructors may select the tools available for group use based on the tasks and work assigned. A Grading Option is available for Blogs, Journals and Wikis. Tools that can be made available to a Group include:

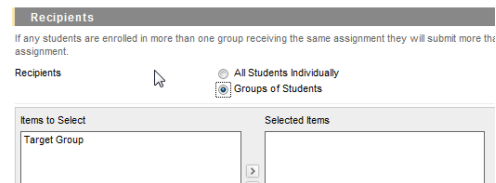
- **Blogs:** In the Group area, all members of a Group can create entries for the same Blog, building upon one another. Any course member can read and comment on a Group Blog, but cannot make entries if they are not a member of the Group. Blogs are an effective means of gaining insight into students' activities and provide a way to share the knowledge and materials collected and created by the group with the rest of the course.
- **Collaboration:** Students within the Group can create and attend Chat sessions and Virtual Classroom sessions.



- **Discussion Board:** Students within the Group can create and manage their own Forums.
- **Email:** Students within the Group can email individual members or the entire Group.
- **File Exchange:** Group members and the Instructor can share files in this area. All members, as well as the Instructor, can add files. They can also delete files, regardless of who added them.
- **Journals:** When used in the Group area, all members of a Group can view each other's entries, but the Group Journal can only be viewed by the Group and the Instructor.
- **Tasks:** Students within the Group can create Tasks that are distributed to all Group members.
- **Wikis:** Students within the Group can edit their Group Wiki. All students within the course can view a Group Wiki. The Instructor can view and edit a Group Wiki.

Creating Group Assignments

Instructors can create an Assignment and release it to a specific group within a Course. Only the Instructor and those students in the Group have access to the Assignment. Course Groups must exist prior to creating Group Assignments. Group assignments are within content areas using the Assignment tool. Select **Groups of Students** and the select the groups that will have access to the assignment.



Grading Group Assignments

The overall grade for the assignment is displayed to students as a numeric value, letter grade, percentage, text or complete/incomplete depending upon the Primary Display choice for the Column created in the Grade Center for the assignment.

Note: Group Assignments are automatically reflected in the Grade Center by the addition of a column for the Assignment.

- Course Groups must exist prior to creating Group Assignments.
- Students that are not enrolled at the time a Group Assignment has been submitted do not have access to that submission; they can see that the submission occurred.
- Students that are unenrolled from the Group cannot see the Group Assignments. They can access their submissions from My Grades.
- If the Assignment is edited between creation and the Due Date, the entire Group may lose any work already in progress.
- If a Group is deleted from the Assignment after they have begun the work and prior to submission then they lose access to the Assignment and their work is lost.

See **Assessments - Assignments** quick guide for more information on using the Blackboard Assignments feature.

Questions?

Contact - Teaching & Learning Center

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