

# Collaborating With **Groups**

Blackboard Learn 9.1  
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# Table of Contents

<b>1.0 Workshop Overview .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Roadmap .....	6
<b>2.0 Student Experience .....</b>	<b>7</b>
About Groups .....	8
Self-Enroll Groups .....	11
Using Group Communication Tools .....	13
Collaboration .....	15
File Exchange .....	17
Group Email .....	18
Group Discussion Board .....	20
Best Practice: Being a Responsible Group Member .....	21
Hands-on Activity .....	22
<b>3.0 Creating Groups .....</b>	<b>23</b>
Creating Single Groups .....	24
Tools for Group Collaboration .....	29
Self-Enroll Groups and Sign-up Sheets .....	35
Creating Group Sets .....	38
Focus on Design: Presenting Groups .....	40
Best Practice: Selecting Group Members .....	41
Hands-on Activity .....	43
<b>4.0 Managing Groups .....</b>	<b>44</b>
Editing and Managing Groups .....	45
Adding Group Links to Course Areas .....	46

Creating Group Assignments .....	48
Grading Group Assignments .....	51
Spotlight on Groups and Assignments .....	67
Hands-on Activity.....	68
Ask Dr. C .....	69
Best Practice: Provide Support .....	70
<b>5.0 Workshop Wrap Up .....</b>	<b>71</b>
Spotlight on Your Course .....	72

# 1.0 Workshop Overview

This workshop provides a hands-on introduction to the Groups tool and the communication and collaboration tools used to promote interaction among students.

Research<sup>1</sup> has shown students can benefit from group work in several ways:

- Students retain information longer than with other teaching methods.
- Perspectives from group members offer another opportunity to learn new material.
- Students have a positive feeling about the course material.
- Students who establish good relationships with their peers have a more positive learning experience.
- Successful group work leads to students feeling better about themselves.
- Students increase their social and communication skills.
- Students increase their critical thinking skills.

In this workshop you learn to facilitate collaboration among students by setting up groups. In Blackboard Learn™, groups can have their own Discussion Board, blog, journals, wikis, and live chats. Group members can exchange documents, submit group assignments, send email to other group members, and distribute tasks to keep the group on track.

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<sup>1</sup>"44 Benefits of Collaborative Learning." gdlrc.org. n.d. Web. 12 Nov. 2009.

# Roadmap

## 2.0 Student Experience

- Learn to access groups in several ways.
- Access the Group Homepage and explore the links available, including group tools.
- Use sign-up sheets to join the group of your choice.
- Offer students advice for being responsible group members.

## 3.0 Creating Groups

- Create groups and group sets, assign members, and select appropriate collaboration tools.
- Provide students with sign-up sheets to self-enroll in groups.
- Explore ways to make group member selections.

## 4.0 Managing Groups

- Change group membership and other properties.
- Allow students to access groups from the Course Menu, the My Groups area, or in a course area.
- Deliver group assignments to groups and assign one grade to all members. Edit an individual member's grade.
- Provide support to groups to enhance collaboration.

## 2.0 Student Experience

In this section, you use the Groups tool as a student to understand how it appears to your students. You experience the group self-enroll function and explore the Group Homepage and group tools.

The student point of view helps you make choices about how you provide tools and instructions to the groups you set up.

### Learning Outcomes

After completing this section, you will be able to:

- Access groups in several ways.
- View a Group Homepage.
- Self-enroll in a group.
- Use group tools.
- Discuss ways to help students be responsible group members.

# About Groups

The Groups tool allows instructors to organize students into groups of any size. Instructors can provide communication and collaboration tools that only group members can access, such as a private File Exchange area, a group Discussion Board, and a group journal.

## Accessing Groups

Students access groups in several ways:

- **Groups** listing page link – appears on the Course Menu or in a course area, such as a Content Area. The **Groups** listing page lists all available groups and sign-up sheets for Self-Enroll groups.
- **My Groups** – appears following the Course Menu. If a student is enrolled in a group, the area appears automatically.
- Group link – a link to a single group, sign-up sheet, or the **Groups** listing page made available in a course area.

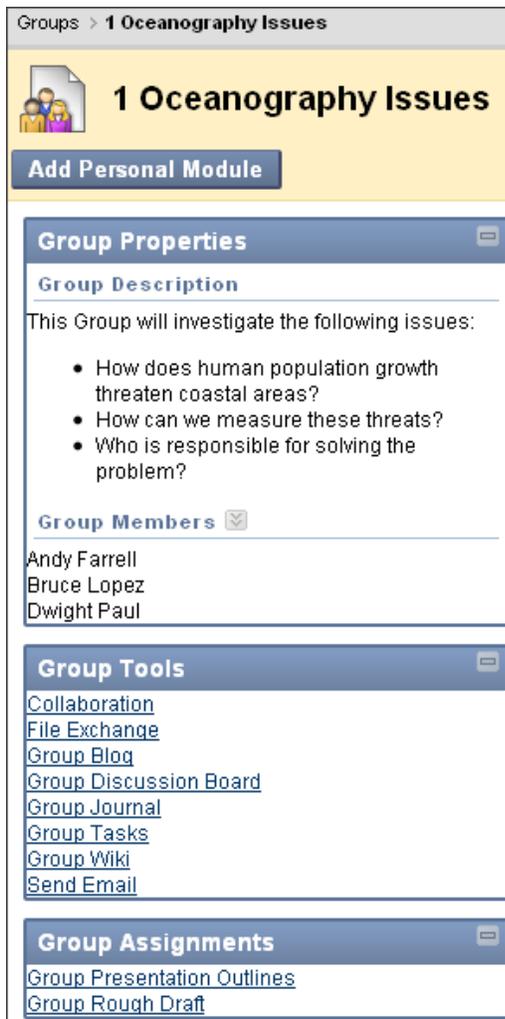
## Student Experience: About Groups

The screenshot displays the Blackboard LMS interface for a course titled 'Earth System Science - Sec 2'. The breadcrumb trail shows 'Groups > 1 Oceanography Issues'. The left-hand navigation menu includes 'Earth System Science - Sec 2' with sub-items 'Home Page' and 'Getting Started', followed by 'Week 1', 'Week 2', 'Week 3', 'Discussions', and 'Assignments'. Below this is the 'Groups' section, which is expanded to show 'My Groups'. Under 'My Groups', the group '1 Oceanography Issues' is selected and expanded to show a list of tools: 'Collaboration', 'File Exchange', 'Group Blog', 'Group Discussion Board', 'Group Journal', 'Group Tasks', 'Group Wiki', 'Send Email', 'Group Homepage', 'Customize Group Banner', and 'Customize Group Color'. Three callout boxes are present: 'A' points to the 'Groups' section, 'B' points to the 'My Groups' section, and 'C' points to the '1 Oceanography Issues' group. The main content area shows the group's homepage for '1 Oceanography Issues', which includes a group banner with a 'D' icon and an 'Add Personal Module' button. Below the banner is the 'Group Properties' section, containing a 'Group Description' (stating the group will investigate issues like human population growth threatening coastal areas) and a 'Group Members' list (listing Andy Farrell, Bruce Lopez, and Dwight Paul). The 'Group Tools' section lists various tools like 'Collaboration', 'File Exchange', 'Group Blog', 'Group Discussion Board', 'Group Journal', 'Group Tasks', 'Group Wiki', and 'Send Email'. The 'Group Assignments' section lists 'Group Presentation Outlines' and 'Group Rough Draft'.

- A. The **Groups** listing page lists all groups a student is enrolled in and any available sign-up sheets. A link to the **Groups** listing page can appear on the Course Menu or in a course area, such as a Content Area, folder, Learning Module, or Lesson Plan.
- B. Use the double arrows to expand or collapse the **My Groups** area found following the Course Menu. The **My Groups** area only appears if the instructor has added groups to the course and the student is a member of one or more groups.
- C. Expand the group to the right using the right-pointing arrows to view the Group Homepage in the content frame.
- D. The Group Homepage is specifically tailored for each group.

## Student Experience: About Groups

A Group Homepage is the hub for group activity and can contain a description of the group, a list of members, tools, and assignments. Students can customize the page by adding Personal Modules, such as My Calendar or Report Card, which are visible only to the member who added the modules.



The screenshot displays a Blackboard Group Homepage for a group named "1 Oceanography Issues". At the top, there is a breadcrumb trail "Groups > 1 Oceanography Issues" and a group icon showing three people. Below the icon is the group name "1 Oceanography Issues" and a button labeled "Add Personal Module".

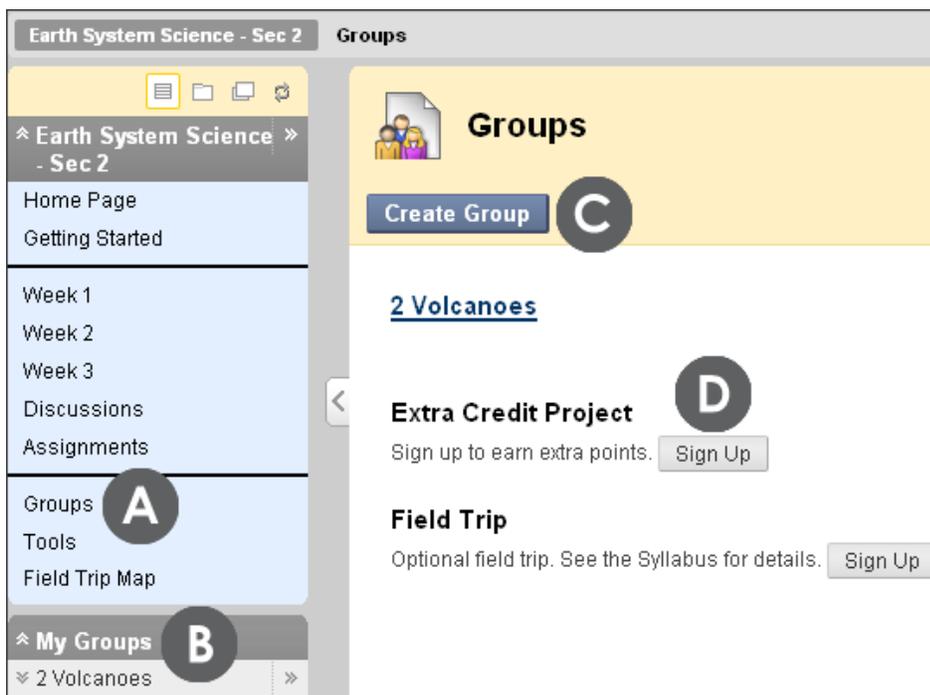
The main content area is divided into three sections:

- Group Properties:** This section includes a "Group Description" with the text "This Group will investigate the following issues:" followed by a bulleted list:
  - How does human population growth threaten coastal areas?
  - How can we measure these threats?
  - Who is responsible for solving the problem?Below the description is a "Group Members" section with a dropdown arrow, listing three members: Andy Farrell, Bruce Lopez, and Dwight Paul.
- Group Tools:** This section contains a list of links for various tools: Collaboration, File Exchange, Group Blog, Group Discussion Board, Group Journal, Group Tasks, Group Wiki, and Send Email.
- Group Assignments:** This section contains a list of links for assignments: Group Presentation Outlines and Group Rough Draft.

# Self-Enroll Groups

Instructors have the ability to populate groups manually, randomly, or by allowing students to join a group of their choice using sign-up sheets. A group sign-up sheet can appear on the **Groups** listing page or in a course area, such as a Content Area, folder, Learning Module, or Lesson Plan. The instructor chooses where students access sign-up sheets.

After students have joined a group, they access it on the **Groups** listing page or in **My Groups**.



- A. The **Groups** listing page link.
- B. **My Groups** contains the one group the student is enrolled in.
- C. Students can create groups, if an instructor has enabled this function.
- D. Click **Sign Up** to access the sign-up sheet.

## Student Experience: Self-Enroll Groups

On the **Sign Up Sheet** page, when students click **Sign Up**, they are added automatically to the group.

Groups > **Sign Up Sheet**

 **Sign Up Sheet**

**SignUp Sheet Name** : Rock Climb

**SignUp Sheet Instructions** : Let's take advantage of the long weekend and hike, climb, and see some amazing geological wonders!

**Field Trip**  
Optional field trip. See the Syllabus for details.  
Group Members : Bruce Lopez, Tony Brown  
Max Members Allowed : 12

Sign Up 

# Using Group Communication Tools

An instructor can add any or all of the following tools to a Group Homepage:

- Blogs
- Collaboration, in the forms of Chat or Virtual Classroom
- Discussion Board
- Email
- File Exchange
- Journals
- Tasks
- Wikis

If a tool does not appear as an option, the Blackboard administrator may have disabled it.

We look at some of these tools briefly, as they are covered in detail in other workshops, such as *Getting Started with Blackboard Learn*.

Once students are members of a group, they can access group tools to communicate with other members, view group tasks, and fulfill group assignments.

## Student Experience: Using Group Communication Tools

The screenshot displays the Blackboard LMS interface for a group named "1 Oceanography Issues". The page is divided into several sections:

- Left Navigation Panel:** Contains a breadcrumb trail "Earth System Science - Sec 2" and "Groups > 1 Oceanography Issues". Below this are links for "Home Page", "Getting Started", "Week 1", "Week 2", "Week 3", "Discussions", "Assignments", "Groups", "Tools", "Web Sites", and "Field Trip Map". A "My Groups" section is also visible, listing "1 Oceanography Issues" with a right-pointing double arrow (labeled 'A') and a list of tools: Collaboration, File Exchange, Group Blog, Group Discussion Board, Group Journal, Group Tasks, Group Wiki, and Send Email.
- Main Content Area:** Features a header for "1 Oceanography Issues" with an "Add Personal Module" button. Below this is the "Group Properties" section, which includes a "Group Description" (stating the group will investigate issues like human population growth and coastal threats) and a "Group Members" list (Andy Farrell, Bruce Lopez, Dwight Paul). The "Group Tools" section lists various tools: Collaboration, File Exchange, Group Blog, Group Discussion Board, Group Journal, Group Tasks, Group Wiki, and Send Email. A right-pointing double arrow (labeled 'B') is positioned next to the "File Exchange" tool. At the bottom, the "Group Assignments" section lists "Group Presentation Outlines" and "Group Rough Draft".

- In the **My Groups** area, select a group's tool to open it in the content frame.
- Expand the Group Homepage into the content frame using the right-pointing double arrows. On the Group Homepage, click a tool to access it.

# Collaboration

Students can use Virtual Classroom or Chat to collaborate with their group members in real-time. Students can meet for kickoff meetings, division of tasks, and progress updates. They can post the session time on the group Discussion Board or use the group Email tool to notify all group members with one email.

When the Collaboration tool is accessed, members see two default sessions: Lecture Hall and Office Hours. These can be edited to suit the needs of the group or new sessions can be created. Any group member can add collaboration sessions.

## **QUICK STEPS: Creating a Collaboration Session**

1. From **My Groups**, expand the group using the double arrows.
2. Select **Collaboration**.
3. On the **Collaboration Sessions** page, click **Create Collaboration Session** on the Action Bar.
4. On the **Create Collaboration Session** page, type a **Session Name**.
5. For **Schedule Availability**, you can set collaboration sessions to display on a specific date and time and to stop displaying on a specific date and time. Select the **Start After** and **End After** check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Type dates and times in the boxes or use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar** and **Time Selection Menu** to select dates and times. Display restrictions do not affect the collaboration session availability, only when it appears.
6. Select **Yes** to make the session available and allow members to use it.
7. Select **Chat** or **Virtual Classroom** from the drop-down list.
8. Click **Submit**.

## Student Experience: Collaboration

Earth System Science - Sec 2    Groups > 1 Oceanography Issues > Collaboration

### Collaboration Sessions

Create Collaboration Session 3

Filter: Show All    Go

Search by: Session Name    Search

Session Name	Tool	Start Date	End Date
<a href="#">Brainstorming Session</a> 4	Chat	12/17/09 1:00 PM	12/17/09 3:00 PM
<a href="#">Lecture Hall</a>			
<a href="#">Office Hours</a>			

Contextual menu for Brainstorming Session: Edit, Delete

Any available sessions appear as links. Click the title to join the session. Sessions set in the future are not active links. Click a session's Action Link (  ) to access the contextual menu. All group members can use the options to edit or delete sessions.

Create Collaboration Session 8

\* Indicates a required field.    Cancel    Submit

- 1. Session Name** 4  
\* Session Name: Mid-Project Report
- 2. Schedule Availability** 5  
Select Dates of Availability:  
Start After: 12/18/2009 04:00 PM  
End After: 12/18/2009 05:30 PM  
Available: 6  Yes  No
- 3. Collaboration Tool** 7  
Choose Tool for this Session: Chat, Virtual Classroom

# File Exchange

The File Exchange tool provides a space for group members to share files. For example, it can be used to distribute meeting notes, guidelines, checklists, rough drafts, and images.

All members, as well as an instructor, can add files. They can also delete files, regardless of who added them. Uploaded images appear in a new browser window.

## QUICK STEPS: Adding Files to File Exchange

1. From **My Groups**, expand the group using the double arrows.
2. Select **File Exchange**.
3. On the **File Exchange** page, click **Add File** on the Action Bar.
4. On the **Add File** page, type a **Name** that describes the file.
5. Click **Browse My Computer** to attach a file from your local drive. Students may see the **Browse Content Collection** function, if your school licenses the content management capability. After selecting a file, it appears on the **Add File** page.
6. Click **Submit**. Files appear in the order they were uploaded. Sort columns by clicking the column title or the caret.

The screenshot illustrates the File Exchange interface. The main window shows a list of files with columns for 'File Name', 'Posted by', 'File size (bytes)', and 'Date Posted'. A 'Delete' button is visible above the list. An 'Add File' dialog box is overlaid on top, showing the 'File Information' section with a text input for 'Name' (containing 'Project Notes from Chat Session'), buttons for 'Attach File' (with 'Browse My Computer' and 'Browse Content Collection' options), and a 'Selected File' section showing 'File Name: project\_notes.doc' and a 'Do not attach' button. A 'Submit' button is also present in the dialog.

# Group Email

The group Email tool allows for efficient communication. The recipient list is automatically populated with group members, so you can quickly select all or some of them. Emails are sent to members' external email addresses.

## **QUICK STEPS: Sending Email to Group Members**

1. From **My Groups**, expand the group using the double arrows.
2. Select **Send Email**.
3. Select members in the **Available to Select** box and click the right-pointing arrow to add the selected names to the **Selected Items** box. For Windows, to select multiple users in a list, press the SHIFT key and click the first and last users. To select users out of sequence, press the CTRL key and click each user needed. For Macs, press the COMMAND key instead of the CTRL key.
4. Type a **Subject** and **Message**. Click **Spell Check** at the bottom of the **Message** box to check your spelling.
5. Optionally, click **Attach a file** and **Browse** to select it.
6. Click **Submit**.

## Student Experience: Group Email

**Select Users** 6

\* Indicates a required field. Cancel Submit

**1. Email Information**

\* To

Items to Select	Selected Items
Brown, Tony Casper, Chris Dubois, Alyssa Farrell, Andy Paul, Doug Spooner, Sarah Stenson, Tom	Lopez, Bruce Gonzales, Monica Cooper, Ashby

3

Invert Selection Select All Invert Selection Select All

From Tony Brown (tbrown@myschool.edu)

Subject Interested in a study group? 4

Message

I have appreciated all the posts made on the Discussion Board and wondered if anyone would like to have a few study sessions in Chat?

Tony

abc ✓

A copy of this email will be sent to the sender.

Attachments [Attach a file](#) 5

The Email tool sends a copy of the correspondence to the sender's external email address.

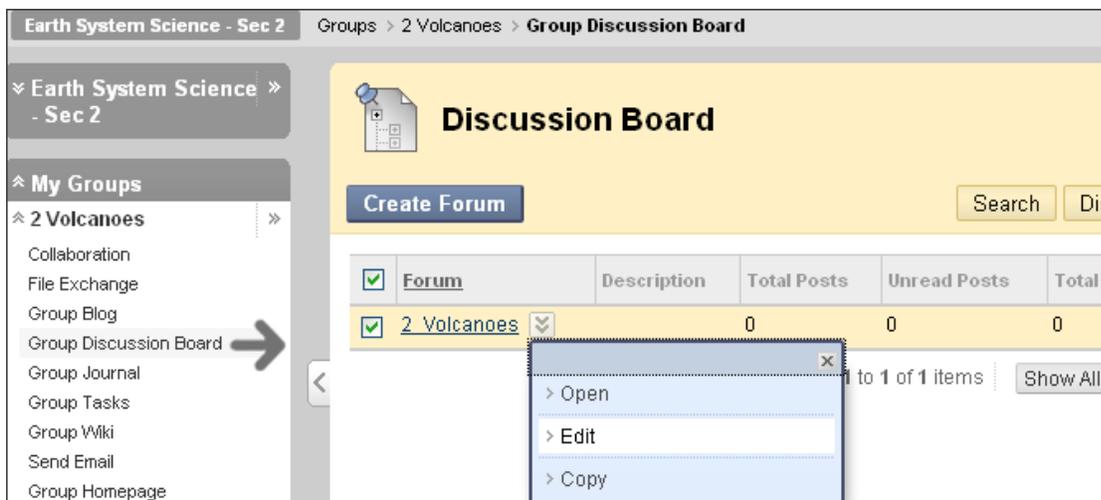
**NOTE:** If groups prefer to keep communication within the course, they can use Messages, the Blackboard Learn internal mail tool. Since the Messages tool is not available as a group tool, students need to select recipients from the list of all course members. The Messages tool keeps a record of all messages sent.

# Group Discussion Board

Instructors can enable a special group Discussion Board, available only to a group's members. It is separate from the regular course Discussion Board, which is available to all course members.

Students access their group Discussion Board in **My Groups** or from the Group Homepage. Students have the capability of creating new forums, just as the instructor does.

Each new group Discussion Board contains a forum titled with the group's name. The forum name can be edited and a description can be added.



# Best Practice: Being a Responsible Group Member

Let students know how they can be successful group members. You can discuss expectations in an initial Chat session set up to help them acclimate to the group environment, or you can add their responsibilities to a handout or your syllabus. You can include some of the following expectations:

- Come prepared to all group meetings. Preparation can include reading, research, writing, a brainstorming list, rehearsal of material, peer editing of materials, and more. In simple terms, complete all tasks assigned by the group.
- Do not lurk. Become an active participant in all group work. Ask yourself this question: How can I contribute and further our group work?
- Support your teammates. Celebrate each other's successes and achievement of goals.
- Provide encouragement and support.
- Answer correspondence as soon as possible.
- Recognize that problems and concerns need to be dealt with early.
- Be willing to compromise and keep an open mind.
- Let your group members know if you feel you have taken on too much work and need help. Ask for help as early as possible.
- Do not be afraid to ask the instructor for help, but ask for guidance when there is still plenty of time to use it.
- Be willing to assess your own work and work habits to gauge if you are a contributing member to the group's success.

## Hands-on Activity



For this activity, use your Student Course.

### Sign up for a Group

- Sign up for **Group Project 1, 2, 3, or 4** on the **Groups** listing page.

Access your Group Homepage and complete the following activities:

### Use Group tools

- Add a document or image to the **File Exchange** area to share a resource.
- Create a collaboration session using **Chat** to set up a meeting to assign tasks. Make it available and set a specific day and time to meet.
- Use the **Group Discussion Board** to invite your group to the **Chat** session.

## 3.0 Creating Groups

In this section, you create groups and provide communication and collaboration tools for students.

Group projects and collaborative assignments provide valuable instructional benefits. They can improve critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills through clarification and evaluation of others' ideas—all valuable skills in academic and work environments. Group work also encourages active learning where students construct, rather than acquire, knowledge.

Lastly, groups allow students to establish a closer virtual relationship with members of the class and promote a sense of online community.

### Learning Outcomes

After completing this section, you will be able to:

- Create single groups and enroll students in them.
- Select group collaboration tools.
- Create Self-Enroll groups and sign-up sheets.
- Create group sets, with randomly enrolled students.

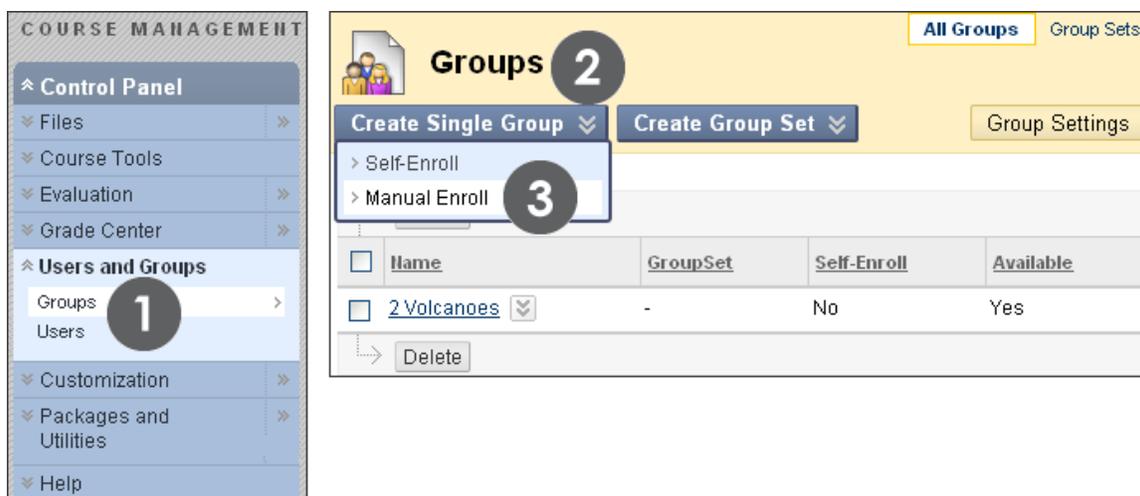
# Creating Single Groups

Groups can be created one at a time or in sets. The instructor can manually select group members or allow students to self-enroll. First, we explore single group creation with manual enrollment.

As you learned, each group has its own space, or homepage, with links to tools to help students collaborate. Only the instructor and the group members can access the group tools. For example, each group can have a private Discussion Board that is only accessible to a group's members.

## QUICK STEPS: Creating a Single Manual Enroll Group

1. On the **Control Panel**, expand the **Users and Groups** section and select **Groups**. Alternatively, you can use the **Groups** link on the **Course Menu**, if you have made it available.



2. On the **Groups** listing page, point to **Create Single Group** on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
3. Select **Manual Enroll**.
4. On the **Create Group** page, type a **Name** and optional **Description**.

**Create Group**

\* Indicates a required field. Cancel Submit

**1. Group Information**

\* Name  **4**

Description Visual Editor is:  ON

Normal 3 Arial **B I U** abc x<sub>2</sub> x<sup>2</sup>

abc ✂ 📄 📁 ↶ ↷ 🌐 📅 🖋️ 🎨 | √x ↔ <> 🖨️ ↻

This Group will investigate the following issues:

- How does human population growth threaten coastal areas?
- How can we measure these threats?
- Who is responsible for solving the problem?

Path: [body](#) **5**

\* Group Available  No  Yes

- To make the **Group Available**, select the **Yes** option.
- Select the check boxes for necessary tools.

**2. Tool Availability**

Blogs

No grading

Grade : Points possible :

**7**

Show participants in "needs grading" status  after every  Entries

**8**

Name	Type	Date Last Edited	Show Rubric to Students
<b>basic rubric</b>	Used for Grading	June 29, 2011	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**6**

Collaboration

Discussion Board

Email

File Exchange

Journals

No grading

Grade : Points possible :

Tasks

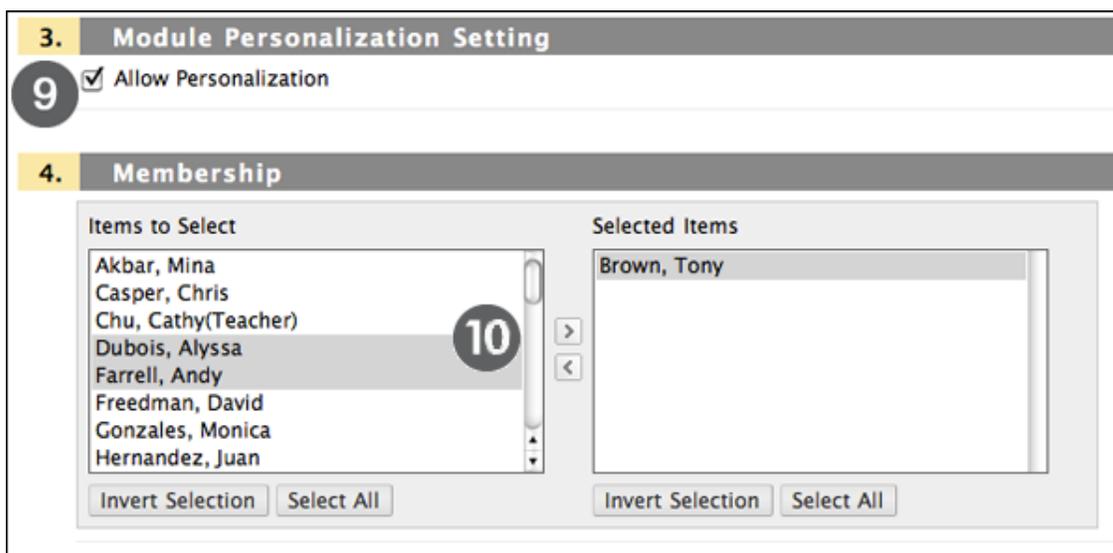
## Creating Groups: Creating Single Groups

7. Select the **Grade** option and type **Points possible** for **Blogs, Journals, and Wikis**, if you want to grade student submissions. Alternatively, select **No Grading**. For graded Discussion Board forums or threads, enable the group Discussion Board tool during group creation. Then, access the group Discussion Board tool and create graded forums and threads.

If you chose to make the blog, journal, or wiki graded, select the check box for **Show participants in needs grading status** and select a number from the drop-down list. After a user meets the specified number, the item appears on the **Needs Grading** page. If you do NOT select the check box, the **Needs Grading** icon (  ) does not appear in the Grade Center or the tool's topic page and items do not appear on the **Needs Grading** page.

**NOTE:** If you choose three entries from the drop-down list and a user submits two, the **In Progress** icon (  ) appears in the Grade Center cell and within the tool until the specified number is met.

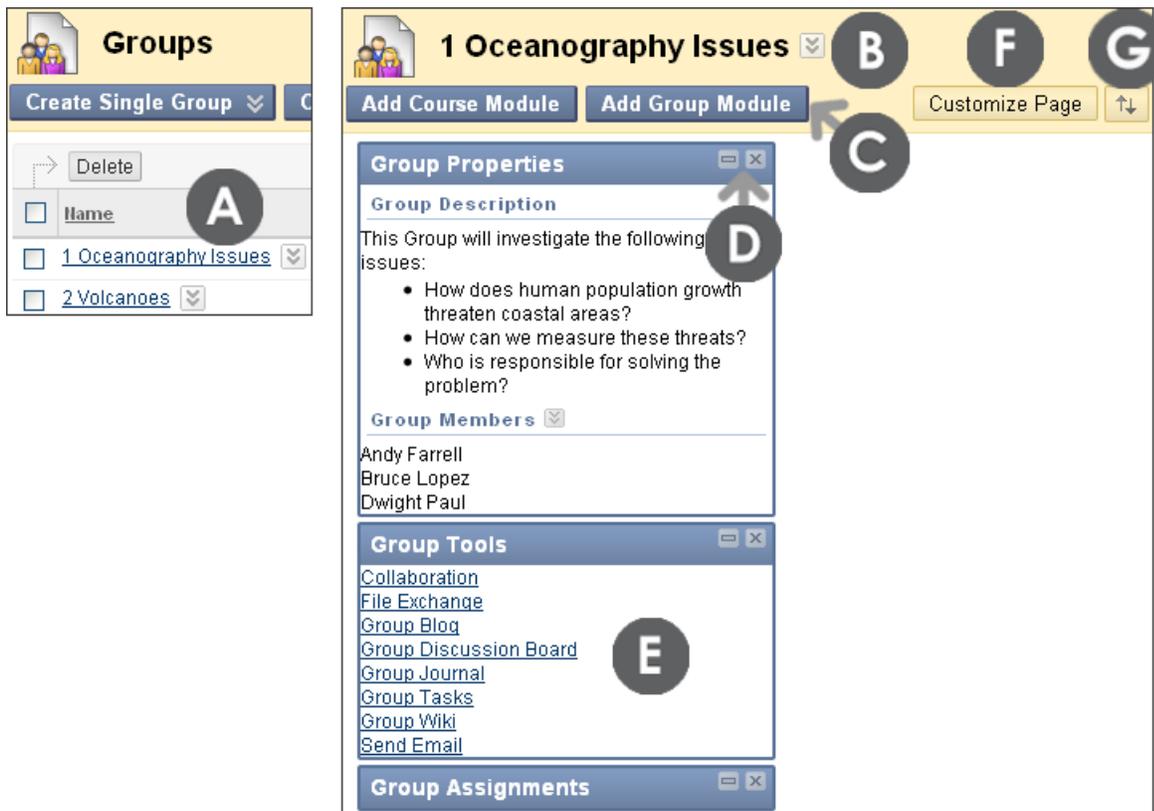
8. You can create and associate one or more rubrics for blogs, journals, and wikis. Point to **Add Rubric** to access the drop-down list and select:
  - **Select Rubric** – Select from a list of existing rubrics and click Submit.
  - **Create New Rubric** - To learn about creating rubrics, see the *Using Rubrics* manual.
  - **Create From Existing** – To learn about creating rubrics, see the *Using Rubrics* manual.
9. Select the check box for **Allow Personalization** to allow students to add Personal Modules to the Group Homepage, such as **What's New** and **My Calendar**. Only the group member who added the modules can view them.



The screenshot shows two sections of a Blackboard interface. The top section, titled '3. Module Personalization Setting', contains a checkbox labeled '9' and 'Allow Personalization' which is checked. The bottom section, titled '4. Membership', features two list boxes. The 'Items to Select' list on the left contains names: Akbar, Mina; Casper, Chris; Chu, Cathy(Teacher); Dubois, Alyssa; Farrell, Andy; Freedman, David; Gonzales, Monica; and Hernandez, Juan. A circular callout with the number '10' is positioned over the 'Dubois, Alyssa' entry. Below this list are 'Invert Selection' and 'Select All' buttons. The 'Selected Items' list on the right contains 'Brown, Tony'. Below this list are also 'Invert Selection' and 'Select All' buttons. Navigation arrows are located between the two list boxes.

10. Select members in the **Items to Select** box and click the right-pointing arrow to add the selected names to the **Selected Items** box. For Windows, to select multiple users in a list, press the SHIFT key and click the first and last users. To select users out of sequence, press the CTRL key and click each user needed. For Macs, press the COMMAND key instead of the CTRL key.
11. Click **Submit**.

The newly created group appears on the **Groups** listing page.



- A On the **Groups** listing page, select the group to view. Alternatively, click the group's Action Link (  ) and select **Open**.
- B Click the group name's Action Link (  ) and select **Edit** to change the group name, description, availability, settings, or membership.
- C Click **Add Course Module** on the Action Bar to add a module to the group Homepage, such as **My Calendar**. Remove modules using the **Delete** function in the module's title bar. Click **Add Group Module** on the Action Bar to add a group module, if you previously deleted one. All Group Modules appear by default.

## Creating Groups: Creating Single Groups

- D View information about the group in the **Group Properties** module. **Collapse** or **Delete** the module using the functions in the module's title bar.
- E Select a group tool to use.
- F Click **Customize Page** on the Action Bar to change the color palette for the group. The color palette choice is seen by all the members of the group, but does not affect colors in the rest of the course.
- G Click the Keyboard Accessible Reordering tool on the Action Bar to reorder the modules or use the drag-and-drop function: press and hold the module's title bar, move it to a new location, and release. The modules can be rearranged in a two column layout. The second column is currently empty in our example.

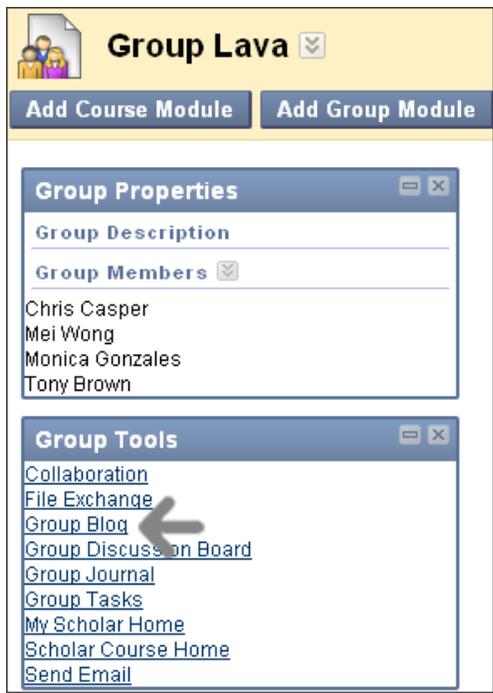
# Tools for Group Collaboration

Students access the tools added to the Group Homepage under Group Tools. Only the instructor and the group members can access tools enabled for the group, with the exception of the group blog and group wiki tools. Group blogs and wikis appear to all course members when the tools are accessed on the **Tools** page. The following pages provide information about the tools that can be enabled for groups.

## Group Blog Tool

The **Blogs** tool allows group members to post entries and add comments in order to share ideas. To add instructions or change the default settings for the group blog, select the group blog from the Group Homepage. Next, click the title's Action Link (  ) and select **Edit**. The **Edit Blog** page appears and changes can be made.

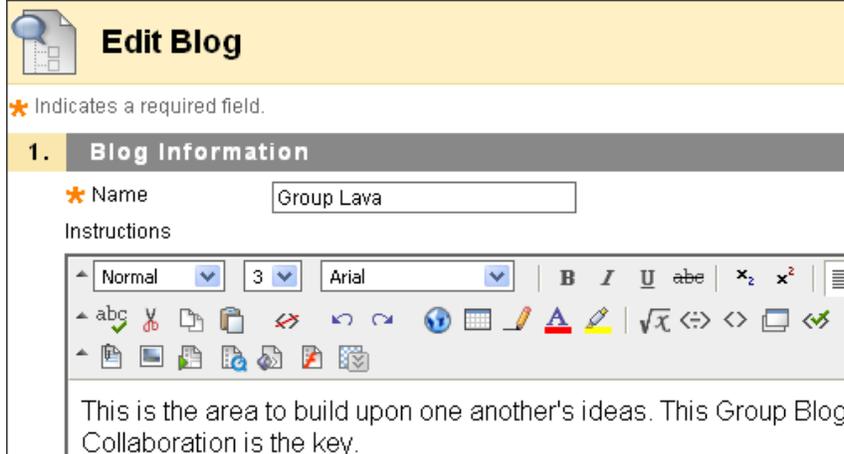
## Creating Groups: Tools for Group Collaboration



The screenshot shows the 'Group Lava' interface. At the top, there is a header with a group icon and the text 'Group Lava'. Below the header are two buttons: 'Add Course Module' and 'Add Group Module'. The main content area is divided into two panels. The top panel is titled 'Group Properties' and contains a 'Group Description' field and a 'Group Members' section with a list of names: Chris Casper, Mei Wong, Monica Gonzales, and Tony Brown. The bottom panel is titled 'Group Tools' and contains a list of links: Collaboration, File Exchange, Group Blog (with a red arrow pointing to it), Group Discussion Board, Group Journal, Group Tasks, My Scholar Home, Scholar Course Home, and Send Email.



This screenshot shows a close-up of the 'Group Lava' interface. It features a 'Group Lava' header with a dropdown arrow. Below the header is a 'Create Blog Entry' button and a contextual menu with an '> Edit' option.



The screenshot shows the 'Edit Blog' page. At the top, there is a header with a globe icon and the text 'Edit Blog'. Below the header is a note: '\* Indicates a required field.' The main content area is divided into sections. The first section is titled '1. Blog Information' and contains a 'Name' field with the value 'Group Lava'. Below the 'Name' field is an 'Instructions' section with a rich text editor. The rich text editor has a toolbar with various icons for text formatting (bold, italic, underline, text color, background color), alignment, and other functions. Below the toolbar is a text area containing the text: 'This is the area to build upon one another's ideas. This Group Blog Collaboration is the key.'

The default name for the group blog is the name of the group. You can change the group blog's name on the **Edit Blog** page, if you want. Alternatively, edit the name and settings for a group blog from the **Blogs** listing page using a blog's contextual menu.

You can grade a group blog, but once that setting is made, you cannot reverse it. When a grade is typed for a group blog, the grade is automatically given to all the members of the group and is populated in the corresponding column in the Grade Center for each group member. All members are assigned a grade, regardless if a member did not contribute. You can edit an individual member's grade to assign a different grade than the group grade.

If you chose to grade blog entries, you can determine when entries go into needs grading status. Select the check box for **Show participants in needs grading status** and select the number of entries from the drop-down list. Applying this setting displays the **Needs Grading** icon (  ) in the Grade Center and places the entries in the queue on the **Needs Grading** page after the specified number of entries are made by each user. If you select a grading option and do NOT select the check box, the **Needs Grading** icon does not appear in the Grade Center and entries do not appear on the **Needs Grading** page.

You cannot delete a group blog without deleting the group, but you can make it unavailable by clearing the check box for the group **Blog** tool on the **Edit Group** page or by making it unavailable on the **Edit Blog** page. Any existing group blog entries are not removed—just made unavailable until the group Blog tool is selected or made available for the group again. The group blog grade column remains in the Grade Center, if the group blog is graded.

### **Group Journal Tool**

The **Journals** tool allows group members to share their thoughts with each other and communicate with the instructor. Journal entries made in the group journal are visible to all group members and the instructor. A group journal has no journal topics; it is created by the journal entries submitted by group members. Similar to the group Blog tool, add instructions or change the default settings for the group journal by selecting the group journal from the group Homepage. Next, click the title's Action Link (  ) and select **Edit**. The **Edit Journal** page appears and changes can be made.

The default name for the group journal is the name of the group. You can change the group journal's name on the **Edit Journal** page, if you want. Group journals **cannot** be edited from the Journals tool accessed on the **Tools** page, as they are not available to all course members.

You can grade a group journal, but once that setting is made, you cannot reverse it. When you enter a grade for a group journal, the grade is automatically given to all the members of the group and is populated in the corresponding column in the Grade Center for each group member. All members are assigned a grade, regardless if a member did not contribute. You can edit an individual member's grade to assign a different grade than the group grade.

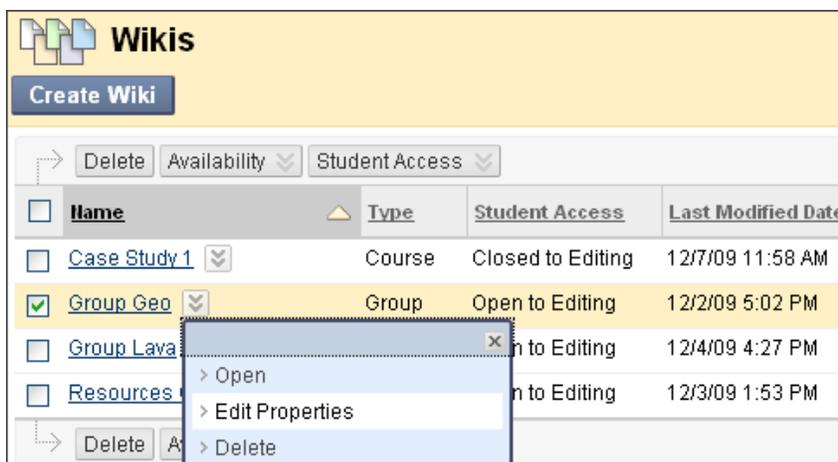
If you chose to grade journal entries, you can determine when entries go into needs grading status. Select the check box for **Show participants in needs grading status** and select the number of entries from the drop-down list. Applying this setting displays the **Needs Grading** icon (  ) in the Grade Center and places the entries in the queue on

the **Needs Grading** page after the specified number of entries are made by each user. If you select a grading option and do NOT select the check box, the **Needs Grading** icon does not appear in the Grade Center and entries do not appear on the **Needs Grading** page.

You cannot delete a group journal without deleting the group, but you can make it unavailable by clearing the check box for the group Journal tool on the **Edit Group** page or by making it unavailable on the **Edit Journal** page. Any existing group journal entries are not removed—just made unavailable until the group Journal tool is selected or made available for the group again. The group journal grade column remains in the Grade Center, if the group journal is graded.

### Group Wiki Tool

Wikis are used to create a collaborative space for group members to view, contribute, and edit content. By default, Group wikis can be read by all course members. You must be a member of the group to make a comment on a group wiki page. The instructor can change the default setting to allow only group members to view a group wiki. To add instructions or change the default settings for the group wiki, select **Wikis** on the **Tools** page. On the **Wikis** listing page, click the group wiki's Action Link (  ) and select **Edit Properties**. The **Edit Wiki** page appears and changes can be made.



The default name for the group wiki is the name of the group. You can change the group wiki's name on the **Edit Wiki** page, if you want.

Each newly created group wiki requires a first page, which is the home page. The instructor or any group member can create the home page. The home page cannot be deleted, but if the wiki is open to editing, any group member can edit it. The instructions you add only appear on the home page because it cannot be deleted.

You can grade a group wiki, but once that setting is made, you cannot reverse it. When you enter a grade for a group wiki, the grade is automatically given to all members of the group and is populated in the corresponding column in the Grade Center for each group member. All members are assigned a grade, regardless if a member did not contribute. You can edit an individual member's grade to assign a different grade than the group grade.

If you chose to grade wiki contributions, you can determine when contributions go into needs grading status. Select the check box for **Show participants in needs grading status** and select the number of contributions from the drop-down list. Applying this setting displays the **Needs Grading** icon (  ) in the Grade Center and places the contributions in the queue on the **Needs Grading** page after the specified number of contributions are made by each user. If you select a grading option and do NOT select the check box, the **Needs Grading** icon does not appear in the Grade Center and contributions do not appear on the **Needs Grading** page.

You can delete a group wiki from the **Wikis** listing page. The group wiki is no longer listed under Group Tools on the Group Homepage. The group Wiki tool can be enabled again when a new group wiki is needed.

**Important:** In the *Advanced Communication* manual, read more about assigning group grades, changing an individual member's grade, determining settings, and general tool usage for journals, blogs, and wikis.

### **Other Group Collaboration Tools**

The **Collaboration** tool allows members of the group to create and attend real-time Chat or Virtual Classroom sessions.

The **Group Discussion Board** tool allows members to communicate as a group, as well as create and manage their own forums. Group Discussion Boards have no grading options.

The group **Send Email** tool provides a list of group members for quick selection of recipients.

The **File Exchange** tool allows members to share files. This tool is only available to groups. Group members can browse their computers and upload files. If your school has licensed the content management capability, students can also browse the content collection for files to upload. File Exchange allows members to share meeting notes, checklist documents, images, and rough drafts for peer review and editing. All group

## Creating Groups: Tools for Group Collaboration

members and the instructor can add files. They can also delete files, regardless of who added them. Files appear in the order they were uploaded.

The **Group Tasks** tool allows group members to define and separate the workload into tasks, while distributing the list to the entire group. Each task has a status and a due date to help keep members on track. Group members can view the group assigned tasks in the group Tasks tool or in the course Tasks tool. Other course members and the instructor do not see tasks for groups they are not enrolled in when viewing the course Tasks tool.

# Self-Enroll Groups and Sign-up Sheets

Self-enrollment allows students to add themselves to a group using a sign-up sheet. You can make sign-up sheets available to students on the Groups listing page or by adding a link to a course area, such as a Content Area, folder, Learning Module, or Lesson Plan. When you create a group using sign-up sheets, the group can be immediately available to use or made available after all members have signed up.

## **QUICK STEPS: Creating a Self-Enroll Group**

1. On the **Control Panel**, expand the **Users and Groups** section and select **Groups**.
2. On the **Groups** listing page, point to **Create Single Group** on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
3. Select **Self-Enroll**.
4. On the **Create Self-Enrollment Group** page, type a **Name** and optional **Description**.
5. To make the **Group Available**, select the **Yes** option. Members can use the group area immediately. Or, to create a sign-up sheet for the group that limits enrollment, select **Sign-up Sheet Only**. The group is unavailable until the instructor changes the setting.
6. Select the necessary tools and grading options.
7. Select the check box for the **Module Personalization Setting** to allow students to add Personal Modules to the group Homepage.
8. Type a **Name of Sign-up Sheet** and optional **Sign-up Sheet Instructions**.
9. Select **Sign-up options**.
10. Click **Submit**.

## Creating Groups: Self-Enroll Groups and Sign-up Sheets

### 4 Sign-up options

**\* Name of Sign-up Sheet**

**Sign-up Sheet Instructions**

Normal 3 Times New Roman B I U abc x<sub>2</sub> x<sup>2</sup>

abc ✂ 📄 ↶ ↷ 🌐 📅 🖋️ 🎨 √ x < > 🖨️ ↻

If you are interested in participating in the pollution study as described in the Syllabus, sign up for this group.

Path: [body](#)

**Maximum Number of Members**

Show Members

Allow Students to sign-up from the Groups Area

### 5 Submit

After students have signed up for a group using a sign-up sheet, you must edit the settings and make the group available so students can access the Group Homepage.

## Creating Groups: Self-Enroll Groups and Sign-up Sheets

The following table explains the options for Self-Enroll groups and sign-up sheets.

Option	Description
Group Availability	<p>Controls whether or not students can access the group after enrollment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No – sign-up sheet is unavailable; the group is unavailable.</li><li>• Yes – sign-up sheet is available; the group is available immediately after a student signs up.</li><li>• Sign-up Sheet Only – sign-up sheet is available; the group is unavailable even after a student signs up. To make the group available to students who have self-enrolled, an instructor must edit the group to change its availability.</li></ul>
Name of Sign-up Sheet	Use a descriptive name so users understand the nature of the Sign-up Sheet.
Instructions	This field is optional and can provide information in addition to the group description.
Maximum Number of Members	Type in a number so students know how many are allowed to join. Once this number has been reached, other users cannot join the group. You can leave this blank.
Show Members	Allow users to see existing members before they sign up.
Allow Students to sign-up from the Groups Area	<p>This option automatically adds the sign-up sheet to the <b>Groups</b> listing page. If you use this option, be sure a Groups link is available on the Course Menu or in a course area to provide student access.</p> <p>If this option is not selected, the sign-up sheet is unavailable to students until the instructor adds a link to the sign-up sheet.</p>

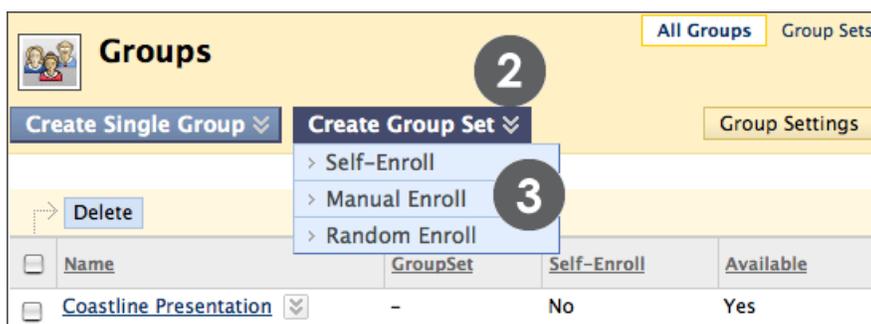
# Creating Group Sets

You can generate several groups at one time by using group Sets.

In addition to Manual and Self-Enroll, you can select Random Enroll for group sets. This option populates the groups automatically—you simply choose the number of groups or members per group. For example, if 24 students are enrolled in your course, you can request 4 groups and the system randomly enrolls 6 students per group.

## QUICK STEPS: Creating a Group Set

1. On the **Control Panel**, expand the **Users and Groups** section and select **Groups**.
2. On the **Groups** listing page, point to **Create Group Set** on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
3. Select **Self**, **Manual**, or **Random Enroll**.
4. On the **Create Enrollment Group Set** page, type a **Name** and optional **Description**.
5. To make the **Group Available**, select the **Yes** option.
6. Select the necessary tools and grading options.
7. Select the check box for the **Module Personalization Setting** to allow students to add Personal Modules to the group space.
8. Depending on the type of enrollment, select sign-up sheet options, members, or random enrollment options.
9. Click **Submit**.



## Creating Groups: Creating Group Sets

4 Membership	
* Determine Number of Groups by	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Number of Students per Group <input type="text" value="4"/>
	<input type="radio"/> Number of Groups <input type="text"/>
* Determine How to Enroll any Remaining Members	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Distribute the remaining members amongst the groups
	<input type="radio"/> Put the remaining members in their own group
	<input type="radio"/> Manually add the remaining members to groups

### Random enrollment membership options

When Random Enroll groups are created, select the number of students per group or the number of groups. Next, select the option to determine how to enroll any remaining members:

- Distribute the remaining members amongst the groups.
- Put the remaining members in their own group.
- Manually add the remaining members to groups.

# Focus on Design: Presenting Groups

Here are some options for setting up groups to achieve different learning objectives.

## **Option A: Default setup**

### **What it looks like:**

Every student's groups appear by default in **My Groups**.

### **How it works:**

After you create groups and add users, the groups are available to enrolled members in **My Groups** where each group name can be expanded for quick access to its tools. Since **My Groups** is populated automatically, this option is the easiest to implement.

## **Option B: Provide a link to the Groups listing page on the Course Menu**

### **What it looks like:**

A Course Menu link to the **Groups** listing page displays all groups a student is enrolled in and available sign-up sheets.

### **How it works:**

Since **My Groups** does not list sign-up sheets, create a link to the **Groups** listing page on the Course Menu, if you use Self-Enroll groups. Adding the link to the Course Menu is easy and convenient to use. Use the Course Menu's **Add Menu Item** drop-down list and create a **Tool Link** or a **Course Link**, and select the **Groups** listing page from the pop-up Course Map.

## **Option C: Provide links to the Groups listing page, individual Group Homepages, or sign-up sheets in a course area**

### **What it looks like:**

A link to the **Groups** listing page, a Group Homepage, or a sign-up sheet appears in a Content Area, folder, Learning Module, or Lesson Plan in close proximity to related content.

### **How it works:**

Create groups using the Groups tool. Next, go to the course area where you want to add the group Link. Point to **Add Interactive Tool** on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list and select **Groups**. Make your selection on the **Create Link: Group** page.

# Best Practice: Selecting Group Members

As you learned, you can create groups one at a time or in sets. You can manually select group members, have the system randomly select them, or allow students to self-enroll. When determining how many members to add to groups or how best to select members, consider the following information.

## **Size**

Try creating groups with at least four members. Four member groups can accommodate an absence and the group work can still move forward. The size does not permit any student to lurk and work can usually be distributed evenly. Also, four members bring enough diversity, opinions, and learning styles for worthwhile brainstorming, productivity, and solutions. If you assign group activities more than once, consider rotating groups throughout the term, while still allowing adequate time for groups to bond.

## **Manually Assigning Members**

With a bit of knowledge about your students, you can successfully assign members to groups to ensure heterogeneity or diversity. Groups containing assorted personality traits or mixed abilities have been shown to produce the best results. Students have reported preferring a group assignment made by an instructor to membership they have chosen for themselves.

You want to create groups that include individuals with varied strengths, knowledge, and even work habits. Gender and cultural differences need to be considered also. Heterogeneous groups work especially well for generating new ideas and exploring a project from different points of view. The stronger members of a group gain deeper knowledge of the subject as they assist others who are stuck or may have given up. The weaker students not only acquire knowledge from the motivated students, but may also gain insight on how their group members approach their learning. Hopefully, the end result is students who feel good about themselves for helping others and students who are motivated to work harder based on peer examples.

### **Randomly Assigning Members**

Random assignment to groups may work best for instructors who teach courses containing many students and may not have the opportunity to know them individually, or use learning style surveys to full advantage. Though random assignment is easy for an instructor, as no preparation is required, some students may view random assignment as the instructor not caring.

By assigning students to groups, you avoid the risk that students who select their own partners spend too much time socializing, forming cliques, or that some students feel excluded or disregarded because they are chosen last. Also, some instructors feel one of the goals of group work is to collaborate with people you do not know, and random assignment increases this likelihood.

### **Self-Enrollment**

Self-enrollment allows students to use a sign-up sheet in order to join a group. You can make sign-up sheets available to students on the **Groups** listing page or by adding a link to a course area. When students self-enroll in groups, they tend to do so based on previous relationships or characteristics: friends, teammates, organization membership, social groups on campus, ethnicity, and gender. Students who have few affiliations may find it difficult to become a member of groups comprised of like individuals.

Homogeneous groups may not need to spend a great deal of time bonding, as they may already have a high level of trust and agreement. These groups may fit your intended outcomes best.

You need to consider how to promote inclusiveness or use self-enrollment only for those courses where you have students with like abilities, interests, and affiliations. Self-enrollment can also be used for group formation based on interest, non-graded collaborations, extra credit, volunteer situations, or for study groups.

## Hands-on Activity



For this activity, use your Practice Course.

### Create Groups

- Create a single group with manual enrollment titled **Extra Credit**. Make the group available, add members, and select tools for the group.
- Create a group set with random enrollment containing two groups. Use the base name **Mars**.
- Create a single **Self-Enroll** group. Make the group available, set a maximum number of members, and allow students to sign up from the **Groups** listing page.

### Self-Enroll in a Group

- Click **Groups** on the Course Menu and turn **Edit Mode** to **OFF** to view the groups and sign-up sheets as students see them.
- Sign up for the **Self-Enroll** group you created. Notice that after signing up, the link to the group is available and also appears in **My Groups** following the Course Menu.

## 4.0 Managing Groups

In this section, you learn how to edit and manage the groups you have created for your course. You also learn how to create assignments specifically for groups and grade the submitted group assignments.

### Learning Outcomes

After completing this section, you will be able to:

- Navigate the **Groups** listing page.
- Edit a group's settings.
- Add a group Link to a course area.
- Create and grade group assignments.
- Discuss ways to provide support for group work.

# Editing and Managing Groups

On the **Groups** listing page, you can create groups, as well as edit and manage them. Each group's contextual menu provides quick access to the Group Homepage and Email. You can also access the options to edit group properties and delete groups.

Editing a group allows you to add or remove members, as well as change its name, availability, and tools. In addition, you can allow students to create their own Self-Enroll groups using the **Group Settings** option on the Action Bar.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Name	GroupSet	Self-Enroll	Available
<input type="checkbox"/>	1 Oceanography Issues	-	No	Yes
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2 Volcanoes	-	No	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Extra Credit P		Yes	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Field Trip		Yes	Yes

- A. When you want to delete multiple groups, select the check boxes and click **Delete** on the Action Bar. Alternatively, delete one group at a time using a group's **Delete** function in the contextual menu.
- B. Use the group's contextual menu to edit properties.
- C. View the lists by **All Groups** and **Group Sets**.
- D. By default, students are allowed to create and edit and their own Self-Enroll groups. Click **Group Settings** on the Action Bar to disable these capabilities.

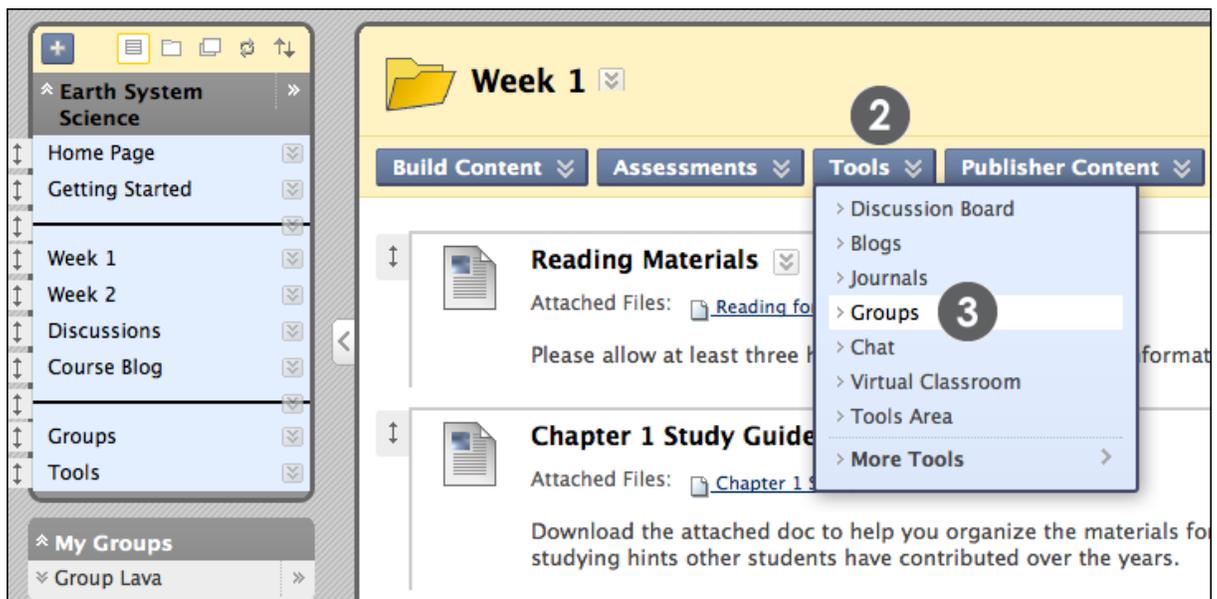
# Adding Group Links to Course Areas

You can allow students to access groups in several ways. **My Groups** automatically provides a link to any group in which a student is enrolled. You can also provide a link to the **Groups** listing page on the Course Menu so students can view all available groups and sign-up sheets. In addition, you can manually add links to individual groups and sign-up sheets in Content Areas, Learning Modules, Lesson Plans, and folders.

**NOTE:** When you add a link to a specific group in a course area, all students see the link. However, if the student is not a member of the group, he or she is not able to access the group homepage.

## QUICK STEPS: Adding a Group Link

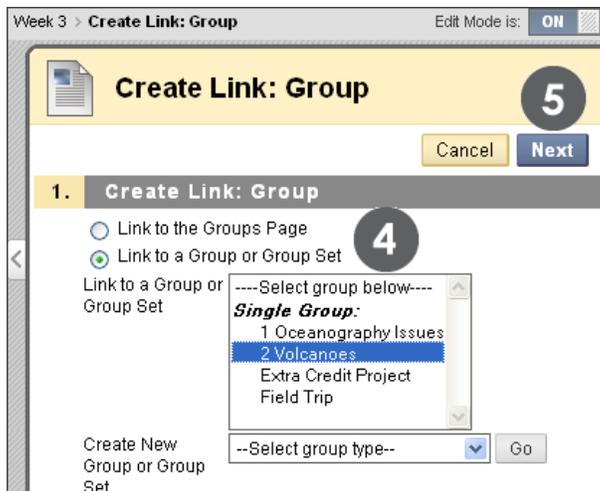
1. In **Edit Mode**, access the course area where you want to add a group link. In our example, we add a group link to a Content Area.
2. On the Action Bar, point to **Tools** to access the drop-down list.
3. Select **Groups**.



In the example, group links are shown on the Course Menu, under **My Groups**, and being linked in a Content Area. The instructor added herself to the **Group Lava** Group and, therefore, can see the **My Groups** link following the Course Menu.

## Managing Groups: Adding Group Links to Course Areas

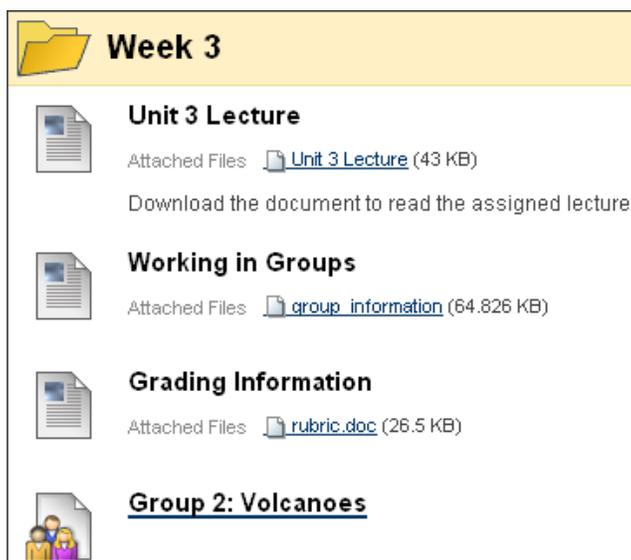
4. On the **Create Link: Group** page, select the type of link: Groups Page, single group, or group set. If linking to a group or group set, select it from the list.
5. Click **Next**.



6. On the next **Create Link: Group** page, complete the **Link Information** to specify how it will appear in the Content Area. Select **Options**, as needed.

**Note:** On the **Create Link: Group** page, you can also create a new group or group set.

7. Click **Submit**.



Student view of a single group link added to a Content Area

# Creating Group Assignments

## **Why Collaborate?**

Ideally, all learning includes active student participation and interaction among students. To ensure students do collaborate, the Groups tool and group assignments can be used to foster an interactive online environment. A good rule of thumb to use before adding group activities is to only assign group work for projects that an individual student cannot do as well independently, and finish in the desired amount of time. You want to select group assignments that create interdependence. Positive interdependence can help produce meaningful relationships, greater productivity, and growth.

Group activities must not be seen as busy work or just another way to assign the work. Only use group collaboration when it enhances your learning objectives. If it provides value, consider alternative teaching techniques or using it for a different project. Otherwise, students may see it as a hindrance instead of a benefit to their learning.

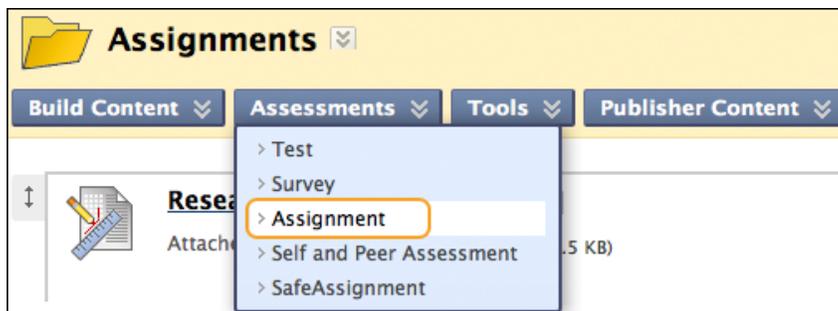
You can create an assignment that is to be completed and submitted by a single group or multiple groups. Each group submits one collaborative assignment and all members receive the same grade.

Before creating an assignment for groups, ensure that the correct members are assigned to your groups. All students that are required to participate in the group assignment need to be assigned to the selected group or groups. If a student is in multiple groups receiving the same assignment, an attempt is recorded for that student every time one of his or her groups submits the group assignment.

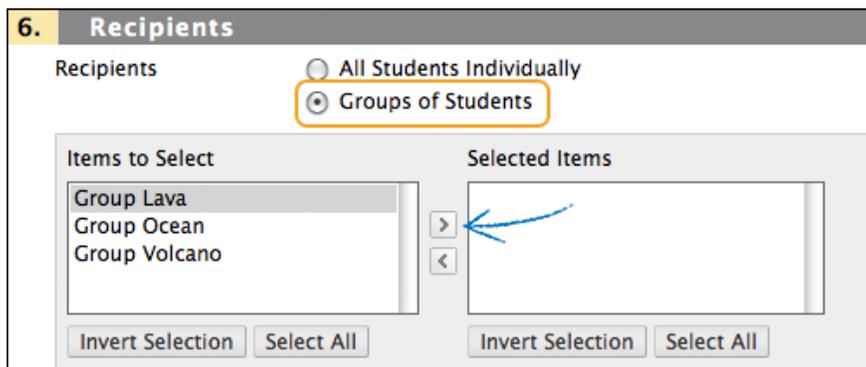
You can create a single assignment and assign it to all groups, or create several unique assignments and assign them to individual groups.

## QUICK STEPS: Creating a Group Assignment

1. In **Edit Mode**, access the course area where a group assignment will be created. In our example, we are creating a group assignment in the **Assignments** Content Area.
2. On the Action Bar, point to **Assessments** to access the drop-down list.
3. Select **Assignment**.



4. Provide the appropriate assignment information, attach assignment files, and select the settings.
5. In the **Recipients** section, select the **Groups of Students** option.
6. In the **Items to Select** box, select the group or groups.  
**Note:** For Windows, to select multiple groups in a list, press the SHIFT key and click the first and last groups. To select groups out of sequence, press the CTRL key and click each group needed. For Macs, press the COMMAND key instead of the CTRL key.
7. Click the right-pointing arrow to move the selection into the **Selected Items** box.



8. Click **Submit**.

## Managing Groups: Creating Group Assignments

In our example, the assignment is created in the **Assignments** Content Area and the **Group Lava** group is selected to receive the assignment. The assignment appears in the Content Area where it was created and on the group homepage, but only to the group's members in both places. The following image shows the instructor view.

The image shows two side-by-side screenshots from a Blackboard LMS interface. The left screenshot displays the 'Assignments' content area. At the top, there are navigation tabs: 'Build Content', 'Assessments', 'Tools', and 'Publisher Content'. Below these, two assignment items are listed. The first is 'Research Paper Assignment' with an attached file 'research\_paper.doc (26.5 KB)'. The second is 'Initial Group Plan', which is highlighted with an orange box. Its description reads: 'As a group, decide on your topic for the Group Presentation and attach a document outlining your plans. Be sure to sufficiently narrow your focus. Each group member receives the same grade for this assignment and only one group member will submit the document for the group. Points possible: 50.' The right screenshot shows the 'Group Lava' group homepage. It features a header with the group name and an 'Add Personal Module' button. Below this are sections for 'Group Properties' (including Group Description and Group Members), 'Group Tools' (with links for Collaboration, File Exchange, Group Blog, Group Discussion Board, Group Journal, and Send Email), and 'Group Assignments'. The 'Group Assignments' section is highlighted with an orange box and lists the 'Initial Group Plan' assignment.

# Grading Group Assignments

Whether an instructor assigns members to each group or students select their teammates, most students are committed to accomplishing a common goal. Individual accountability is essential for a group to work effectively and produce worthwhile results. When each member of the group receives the same grade, individual accountability can become an issue.

Determining individual grades for a group project can be challenging. An instructor can use peer assessment to obtain feedback from group members to add a participation grade or determine bonus points. Students receive a wider range of feedback when those critiques are shared.

Peer assessment can also be part of group collaboration, if you provide students with opportunities to assess their group and members' contributions while the process is occurring. Quick checks of how the collaborative process is working can have two important results. Instructors can gauge how the group is functioning, and under-achieving students may understand the level of contribution that is expected. Ultimately, the assigned grade should be a combination of how the group has evaluated its success and each other, and if the group deliverable meets the assignment's requirements.

Provide rubrics and guidelines before students assess each other's work. Take the time to meet in Chat with each team to discuss team roles, how the team is expected to work together, how often meetings need to take place, and how the peer assessment portion affects the final grade.

## Managing Groups: Grading Group Assignments

A simple weekly progress report can be an easy way to help group members stay on track. Questions can include some of the following:

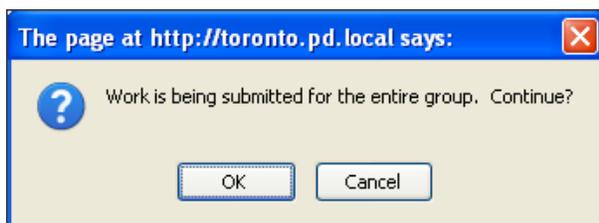
- Were the week's goals achieved?
- Was enough time spent on the group work?
- Did all members contribute equally?
- Did the group work well together?
- What else could you have contributed to help your team this week?
- What else could others have contributed to help your team this week?
- Who contributed the most or least this week?
- What is one aspect of the team dynamic that you would change?

Another way to assess how students feel about their groups is to ask the question: What are three positives and one negative about your group experience this week?

### **Student Perspective: Group Assignment Submission**

Students need to collaborate to complete a group assignment, as all members receive the same grade for the submission. One student submits the assignment by clicking the group assignment link and adding the assignment materials for the group. If one student accesses the group assignment, the next student who clicks the assignment link is informed which member has also accessed it.

After clicking **Submit**, a pop-up message alerts the student that he or she is submitting the assignment for the entire group. The student clicks **OK** to submit the group assignment.



Once a group assignment is submitted, another group member cannot resubmit it unless multiple submissions are allowed.

When a group assignment link is clicked after submission, students see the **Review Submission History** page.



## Review Submission History

F OK

### 1. Assignment Information

Name:	Initial Group Plan
Instructions	As a group, decide on your topic for the Group Presentation and attach a document outlining your plans. Be sure to sufficiently narrow your focus. Each group member receives the same grade for this assignment and only one group member will submit the document for the group. Points possible: 50.
Due Date	
Points Possible	50
Group Name	Group Lava <span data-bbox="552 703 609 766">A</span>

### 2. Review Submission History

Submission ( December 2, 2011 3:26:26 PM EST )

**Submission Materials**

Group Assignment: Group Members : Chris Casper, Mei Wong, Monica Gonzales, Tony Brown B

Group Assignment: Submitted By : Chris Casper C

Submission Field :  
Chris is the leader (me!)

Tony is keeping track of everything, so the Recorder.

Monica and Mei are in charge of the visual aid, which is going to be an actual website. We are quite excited about that.

Friday, the 19th: Group Outline  
Wed, the 24th: Bibliography  
Friday, the 26th: Mockup of visual aid  
Wed, the 31st: Intro and conclusion  
Friday, the 1st: Full blown outline  
Tues. the 6th: Rough draft

That's as far as we know and the directions said we could stop at that point.

We are all writing and presenting.

We are meeting twice a week in Chat: M and Th at 5:30 p.m. if you want to attend.

Tony is sending in the weekly updated; each of us must comment on each portion and initial it.

We are distributing a study guide. We will add twenty potential test questions, with the realization that about seven will appear on the combined Group Presentation test.

Student Comments :

Attached Files : [group plan lava.doc](#) D

**Instructor Feedback** E

Grade : ! out of 50

- A. The group name is listed.
- B. The members of the group are listed.
- C. Group members can view who submitted the group assignment.

## Managing Groups: Grading Group Assignments

- D. Group members can view the file that was submitted for the group.
- E. In the **Instructor Feedback** section, group members can see the assignment is not graded yet because the exclamation mark shows. The exclamation mark means the assignment is ready to be graded.
- F. Click **OK** to go back to the course area holding the group assignment.

On the **Review Submission History** page, if a group assignment can be submitted more than once, students see **Start New Submission** on the Action Bar. Any group member can make another submission. When more than one submission exists, they appear on the page in the **Review Submission History** section. Click the plus sign to display the information about a submission.

**Review Submission History**

OK Start New Submission

**1. Assignment Information**

Name: Group Rough Draft  
Instructions  
Due Date  
Points Possible 100  
Group Name 1 Oceanography Issues

**2. Review Submission History**

➤ Attempt #2 ( December 15, 2009 4:55:55 PM EST )  
➤ Attempt #1 ( December 15, 2009 4:54:31 PM EST )

### Instructor Perspective: Group Assignment Grading

The entire grading process for assignments is not detailed here; a simple overview is provided. More information about creating and grading assignments can be found in the *Working with Assignments* manual.

You can access group assignments for grading through:

- The **Needs Grading** page
- OR-
- The Grade Center

After accessing the **Grade Group Attempt** page by either method, the grading process is the same.

## QUICK STEPS: Accessing a Group Assignment From the Needs Grading Page

1. On the **Control Panel**, expand the **Grade Center** section.
  2. Select **Needs Grading**. The total number of items to grade appears on the **Needs Grading** page.
  3. Use the **Filter** drop-down lists to narrow the list of items to grade by **Category**, **Item**, **User**, and **Date Submitted**. For example, you can filter the list by **Category** and display only assignments and by **User** to select a specific group.
  4. Click **Go**. The filtered items appear on the **Needs Grading** page. Click a column heading or the caret to sort the items.
  5. Access the **Grade Group Attempt** page by clicking a name in the **User Attempt** column.
- OR-
6. Access the **Grade Group Attempt** page by clicking an item's contextual menu and selecting **Grade All Users**.
  7. The **Grade Group Attempt** page appears and you can proceed with grading.

The screenshot shows the Blackboard interface for the 'Needs Grading' page. On the left, the 'Control Panel' is expanded to 'Grade Center', with 'Needs Grading' selected (callout 2). The main area shows a 'Needs Grading' header with a 'Grade All' button. Below this is a filter section with dropdowns for 'Category' (All Categories), 'Item' (All Items), 'User' (All Users), and 'Date Submitted' (Any Date), along with a 'Go' button (callout 4). A summary line indicates '5 total items to grade.' Below this is a table with columns: Category, Item Name, User Attempt, Date Submitted, and Due Date. The table lists five items, with the 'User Attempt' column containing links like 'Sarah Spooner', 'Chris Casper', 'Bruce Lopez', 'Melissa', and 'Group Lava'. A contextual menu is open over the 'Group Lava' link, showing options '> Grade All Users (1)' (callout 6) and '> Grade Anonymously (1)'. A callout 3 points to the 'Item' dropdown, and a callout 5 points to the 'Melissa' link in the 'User Attempt' column.

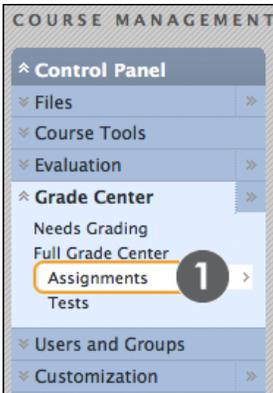
Category	Item Name	User Attempt	Date Submitted	Due Date
Blog	Unit 2 Opinion	<a href="#">Sarah Spooner</a>	December 2, 2011 3:38:21 PM	
Blog	Unit 2 Opinion	<a href="#">Chris Casper</a>	December 2, 2011 3:39:36 PM	
Assignment	Research Paper Assignment	<a href="#">Bruce Lopez</a>	December 2, 2011 3:37:46 PM	
Assignment	Research Paper Assignment	<a href="#">Melissa</a>	December 2, 2011 3:40:20 PM	
Assignment	Initial Group Plan	<a href="#">Group Lava</a>	December 2, 2011 3:26:26 PM	

### **QUICK STEPS: Accessing a Group Assignment From the Grade Center**

When a group assignment is created, a Grade Center column is created automatically. In the Grade Center, group assignments that have been submitted, but not graded, are indicated with an exclamation mark—the **Needs Grading** icon. All group members' cells display the exclamation mark, regardless of who submitted the group assignment.

If a group submits an incorrect file—and there is only one submission allowed—an instructor must clear that attempt so the group can resubmit.

1. On the **Control Panel**, expand the **Grade Center** section and select **Assignments** or **Full Grade Center**.
2. In the **Grade Center**, click the group assignment column's Action Link and select **Grade Attempts**.  
-OR-
3. Locate any group member's cell for the group assignment containing an exclamation mark. Point to the cell to access the Action Link and click it to access the contextual menu. Select the **Group Attempt**.



**Grade Center : Assignments**

Create Column Create Calculated Column Manage Reports

Move To Top Email Sort Columns By: Layout Position

Grade Information Bar Last Saved

<input type="checkbox"/>	Last Name	First Name	Username	Initial Group P	Research Paper	Opinion P
<input type="checkbox"/>	Brown	Tony	tbrown	!	--	9.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Casper	Chris	ccasper	!	--	--
<input type="checkbox"/>	Farrell	Andy	afarrell	--		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gonzales	Monica	mgonzales	!		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hernandez	Juan	jhern	--		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lopez	Bruce	blopez	--		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Paul	Dwight	dpaul	--	--	--
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spooner	Sarah	sspooner	--	--	--
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tsai	Mark	mtsai	--	--	--
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wong	Mei	mwong	!	!	--

3

> View Grade Details

> Exempt Grade

> Group Attempt Group Lava 12/2/11 !

4. The **Grade Group Attempt** page appears and you can proceed with grading.

**QUICK STEPS: Grading on Grade Group Attempt Page**

1. On the **Grade Group Attempt** page, you can collapse or expand the **Assignment Information**.
2. View who submitted the assignment for the group.
3. In the **Submission History** section, all attempts appear.
4. Download assignment files.
5. Type a **Group Grade** and optional **Feedback to the Group** and **Instructor Notes**. Optionally, use the Text Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, external links, multimedia, and Mashups to your feedback or notes.
6. Click **Submit** to complete grading. Click **Save as Draft** to complete grading at another time. If more than one group has submitted this assignment or if more than one attempt from this group exists, you can click **Save and Exit** to complete the grading of this attempt only, or **Save and Next** to grade the next group attempt.



# Grade Group Attempt: Initial Group Plan

Jump to...

Hide User Names

Group Name: **Group Lava (Attempt 1 of 1)** View: **Assignments**

6

< 1 of 1 >

Delete

Save as Draft

Exit

Submit

1

## Assignment Information

**Instructions** As a group, decide on your topic for the Group Presentation and attach a document outlining your plans. Be sure to sufficiently narrow your focus. Each group member receives the same grade for this assignment and only one group member will submit the document for the group. Points possible: 50.

**Due Date**

**Submitted Date** Friday, December 2, 2011 3:26:26 PM EST

**Status:** Needs Grading

**Group Members** Chris Casper (ccasper) , Mei Wong (mwong) , Monica Gonzales (mgonzales) , Tony Brown (tbrown)

**Submitted By** Chris Casper

2

## 1. Submission History

Attempt #1 ( You are reviewing this attempt )

3

## 2. Review Current Attempt

**Submission**

Chris is the leader (me)

Tony is keeping track of everything, so the Recorder.

Monica and Mei are in charge of the visual aid, which is going to be an actual website. We are quite excited about that.

Friday, the 19th: Group Outline  
Wed, the 24th: Bibliography  
Friday, the 26th: Mockup of visual aid  
Wed, the 31st: Intro and conclusion  
Friday, the 1st: Full blown outline  
Tues. the 6th: Rough draft

That's as far as we know and the directions said we could stop at that point.

We are all writing and presenting.

We are meeting twice a week in Chat: M and Th at 5:30 p.m. if you want to attend.

Tony is sending in the weekly updated; each of us must comment on each portion and initial it.

We are distributing a study guide. We will add twenty potential test questions, with the realization that about seven will appear on the combined Group Presentation test.

**Attached Files**

4

[group\\_plan\\_lava.doc](#)

**Comments**

## 3. Grade Current Attempt

**Group Grade**

5

- out of 50

**Feedback to Group**

Text Editor is: ON

Rich text editor toolbar with options for font style (Normal), font size (3), font family (Arial), bold (B), italic (I), underline (U), text color (abc), background color (x<sub>2</sub> x<sup>2</sup>), bulleted list, numbered list, link, unlink, insert link, insert image, insert table, insert video, insert audio, insert code, insert table of contents, and other editing tools.

## Managing Groups: Grading Group Assignments

The group grade you assigned is added automatically to each group member's cell in the Grade Center, even if a member did not contribute. Students can view the group grade on the **Review Submission History** page accessed by clicking the assignment link on the group homepage, in the course area where the assignment is linked, or on their **My Grades** pages.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Last Name	First Name	Initial Group P
<input type="checkbox"/>	Brown	Tony	50.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Casper	Chris	50.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Farrell	Andy	--
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gonzales	Monica	50.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hernandez	Juan	--
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lopez	Bruce	--
<input type="checkbox"/>	Paul	Dwight	--
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spooner	Sarah	--
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tsai	Mark	--
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wong	Mei	50.00



### Review Submission History

**1. Assignment Information**

<b>Name:</b>	Initial Group Plan
<b>Instructions</b>	As a group, decide on your topic for the Group Presentation and document outlining your plans. Be sure to sufficiently narrow your group member receives the same grade for this assignment and group member will submit the document for the group. Points possible
<b>Due Date</b>	
<b>Points Possible</b>	50
<b>Group Name</b>	Group Lava

**2. Review Submission History**

**Submission ( December 2, 2011 3:26:26 PM EST )**

**Submission Materials**

Group Assignment: Group Members : Chris Casper, Mei Wong, Monica Gonzales, Tony

Group Assignment: Submitted By : **Chris Casper**

Submission Field :

Chris is the leader (me!)

Tony is keeping track of everything, so the Recorder.

Monica and Mei are in charge of the visual aid, which is going to be an actual 19 to be website. We are quite excited about that.

Friday, the 19th: Group Outline  
 Wed, the 24th: Bibliography  
 Friday, the 26th: Mockup of visual aid  
 Wed, the 31st: Intro and conclusion  
 Friday, the 1st: Full blown outline  
 Tues. the 6th: Rough draft

That's as far as we know and the directions said we could stop at that point.

We are all writing and presenting.

We are meeting twice a week in Chat: M and Th at 5:30 p.m. if you want to attend.

Tony is sending in the weekly updated; each of us must comment on each portion and

We are distributing a study guide. We will add twenty potential test questions, with that about seven will appear on the combined Group Presentation test.

Student Comments :

Attached Files : [group plan lava.doc](#)

**Instructor Feedback**

Grade : 50.0 out of 50

Comments :

Great job! Yes, I will attend at least one of next week's chat sessions. You are working together nicely.

Attached Files :

## Multiple Attempts

If more than one attempt is submitted by a group, all attempts appear in the contextual menu for the grade's cell. After selecting an attempt, type a grade and feedback. View the next attempt by the group or click **Save and Exit**. Click the arrows on the Action Bar to navigate to other groups' attempts.

The last attempt's grade appears in the group members' cells by default. If the last of the multiple attempts is ungraded, the exclamation mark remains in the cell. To change the displayed grade to the first attempt, highest grade, lowest grade, or an average of attempts, use the Grade Center column's contextual menu to select **Edit Column Information** and select from the **Score attempts using** drop-down list.

## Edit a Group Grade

Follow the same steps for adding a group grade to change a group's grade. Edit the **Group Grade** and **Feedback to Group**, and click **Save and Exit**.

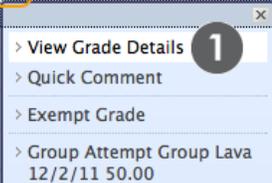
## Change an Individual Member's Group Grade

You can assign an individual group member a different grade than the group by editing the grade for the member in the Grade Center. If a group member's grade is changed and a new group grade is given, the new group grade does not affect the individual's new grade. The individual's new grade does not appear to the other group members.

## QUICK STEPS: Changing an Individual Member's Group Grade

1. In the **Grade Center**, access the member's **Grade Details** page.

Last Name	First Name	Initial Group P	Research Pape	Opinion
Brown	Tony	50.00	--	9.00
Casper	Chris	50.00	--	--
Farrell	Andy	--	--	--
Gonzales	Monica	50.00	--	--
Hernandez	Juan	--	--	--
Lopez	Bruce	--	--	--
Paul	Dwight	--	--	--
Spooner	Sarah	--	--	--



- On the **Grade Details** page, click **Edit User Grade**. Click **Grade Group Attempt** to review the submission before changing the grade.

**Grade Details** Jump to...

User **Monica Gonzales (mgonzales)** < > Column **Initial Group Plan (Assignment)** < >

**Current Grade:** **50.00** out of 50 points **Exempt**  
 Grade based on Last Graded Attempt  
 Due: None  
 Calculated Grade 50.00  
[View Attempts](#)

**Attempts** [Manual Override](#) [Column Details](#) [Grade History](#)

Delete **Last Attempt** ↓ [Go](#)

Date Created	Date Submitted (or Saved)	Value	Feedback to User	Grading Notes	Actions
Dec 2, 2011 3:26:26 PM	Dec 2, 2011 3:26:26 PM (Completed)	50.00	Great job! Yes, I will attend at least one of next week's chat sessions. You are working		<a href="#">Grade Group Attempt</a> <a href="#">Delete User Attempt</a> <a href="#">Ignore Attempt</a> <span style="border: 2px solid red; padding: 2px;">2</span> <a href="#">Edit User Grade</a>

[View Full Comment](#)

Group Group Lava has submitted the maximum number of attempts allowed for this assignment. You may allow this group to submit an additional attempt. Allow Additional Group Attempt

- Click **Allow Additional Group Attempt** so you can add a grade and feedback and allow the group to refine and improve their grade with another attempt.
  - Click **Delete User Attempt** to remove that attempt from the current member's cell.
  - **Ignore Attempt** will not include the attempt's score in that student's grade calculations and will not count the submission against the maximum number of attempts. Ignoring an attempt applies only to an individual student, not to the entire group.
- On the group member's **Grade Details** page, type a new grade in the **Current Grade Value** text box.
  - Type optional **Feedback to User**. Optionally, use the Text Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, external links, multimedia, and Mashups to your feedback.
  - Type optional **Grading Notes**, only available to you.
  - Click **Save**.



# Grade Details

Jump to...

User **Monica Gonzales (mgonzales)** < > Column **Initial Group Plan (Assignment)** < >

**Current Grade:** **50.00** out of 50 points **Exempt**  
 Grade based on Last Graded Attempt  
 Due: None  
 Calculated Grade 50.00

[View Attempts](#)

**Attempts** [Manual Override](#) [Column Details](#) [Grade History](#)

Delete **Last Attempt**

Date Created	Date Submitted (or Saved)	Value	Feedback to User	Grading Notes	Actions
--------------	---------------------------	-------	------------------	---------------	---------

### Current Grade Value

42.00

### Feedback to User

Text Editor is: **ON**

Rich text editor toolbar with options for Normal, font size (3), font family (Times New Roman), bold, italic, underline, text color, background color, bulleted list, numbered list, link, unlink, insert link, insert image, insert table, insert video, insert audio, insert iframe, undo, redo, and other standard editing tools.

I would like you to make more of a contribution to the group conversations in Chat and the Group Discussion Board.

Path: [body](#)

### Grading Notes

Text Editor is: **ON**

Rich text editor toolbar with options for Normal, font size (3), font family (Arial), bold, italic, underline, text color, background color, bulleted list, numbered list, link, unlink, insert link, insert image, insert table, insert video, insert audio, insert iframe, undo, redo, and other standard editing tools.

Path: [body](#)

[Cancel](#) [Save](#)

Group Group Lava has submitted the maximum number of attempts allowed for this assignment. You may allow this group to submit an additional attempt.

[Allow Additional Group Attempt](#)

# Managing Groups: Grading Group Assignments

Edit attempt was successful.

## Grade Details

Jump to...

User **Monica Gonzales (mgonzales)** < > Column **Initial Group Plan (Assignment)** < >

**Current Grade:** **42.00** out of 50 points **Exempt**  
 Grade based on Last Graded Attempt  
 Due: None  
 Calculated Grade 42.00  
[View Attempts](#)

Attempts [Manual Override](#) [Column Details](#) [Grade History](#)

Delete **Last Attempt** Go

Date Created	Date Submitted (or Saved)	Value	Feedback to User	Grading Notes	Actions
Dec 2, 2011 3:26:26 PM	Dec 2, 2011 3:26:26 PM (Completed)	42.00	I would like you to make more of a contribution to the group conversations in Chat and <a href="#">View Full Comment</a>		<a href="#">Grade Group Attempt</a> <a href="#">Delete User Attempt</a> <a href="#">Ignore Attempt</a> <a href="#">Edit User Grade</a> <a href="#">Revert To Group Grade</a>

Group Group Lava has submitted the maximum number of attempts allowed for this assignment. You may allow this group to submit an additional attempt. [Allow Additional Group Attempt](#)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Last Name	First Name	Initial Group P	Research Paper	Opinion P
<input type="checkbox"/>	Brown	Tony	50.00	--	9.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Casper	Chris	50.00	--	--
<input type="checkbox"/>	Farrell	Andy	--	--	--
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gonzales	Monica	42.00	--	--
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hernandez	Juan	--	--	--
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lopez	Bruce	--	--	--
<input type="checkbox"/>	Paul	Dwight	--	--	--
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spooner	Sarah	--	--	--
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tsai	Mark	--	--	--
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wong	Mei	50.00	--	--

- > View Grade Details
- > Quick Comment
- > Exempt Grade
- > Overridden Group Attempt  
Group Lava 12/2/11 42.00  
Group Score: 50.00

The new grade for the group member appears on the member's **Grade Details** page and in the member's cell in the Grade Center. The member's grade is designated as an overridden grade.

## Revert a Member's Edited Grade

You can revert a member's edited grade to the original group grade, which all group members received.

### QUICK STEPS: Reverting an Individual Member's Group Grade

1. In the **Grade Center**, access the member's **Grade Details** page.
2. After a member's group grade is edited, the **Revert To Group Grade** function appears, as shown in the preceding image. Click **Revert To Group Grade**.
3. Click **OK**. The member's grade is changed to the original group grade.

Click **Return to Grade Center** to return to the Grade Center page and view the grades.

## Adding and Deleting Group Members

If a member of a group is added after a grade is given for a group assignment, the new member does not receive a grade, as they were not part of the process. Even if the instructor updates the group grade, the new member does not receive a grade. A grade can be typed for the new member from the member's **Grade Details** page, but there is no submission available to view when grading.

If a member of a group is removed, and a grade has been typed for a group assignment, any grading updates are applied to that group member's cell. To remove a score for a member you have removed from a group, click **Clear Grade** on the member's **Grade Details** page. You are asked if you are sure you want to delete the attempt. The group assignment grade is deleted from the member's cell in the Grade Center.



## Grade Details

[Jump to...](#)

User **Monica Gonzales (mgonzales)** < > Column **Group Lava (Blog)** < >

**Current Grade:** **25.00** out of 25 points [Exempt](#)  
Grade based on Last Graded Attempt  
Due: None

[Grade User Activity](#)

[Attempts](#) [Manual Override](#) [Column Details](#) [Grade History](#)

Date Created	Date Submitted (or Saved)	Value	Feedback to User	Grading Notes	Actions
Nov 10, 2011 12:16:22 PM	Dec 8, 2011 3:45:25 PM (Completed)	25.00	Great collaboration. I'm thrilled to see the excitement you are all bringing to this assignment.		<a href="#">Grade Group Attempt</a> <a href="#">Clear Grade</a> <a href="#">Edit User Grade</a>

[Icon Legend](#)

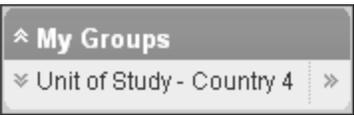
# Spotlight on Groups and Assignments

We look at how the Groups and Assignments tools can be used together to create collaborative learning experiences.

## The Scenario

In a teacher education course, online students create lesson plans that incorporate a unifying theme across different subject areas. The instructor divided students into groups, each with a designated country as the theme. Each student develops a lesson plan in one subject area. Finally, the group combines the lesson plans into one themed unit of study as their final product. View the process in the following table.

## The Group Work Process

In Blackboard Learn	Student process
	<p>John receives an email from his instructor that directs him to the Group Homepage.</p>
	<p>John accesses the Group Homepage and sees the names of other group members and the group assignment.</p>
	<p>John posts to the Group Discussion Board to volunteer for a project task. The group members use weekly chats to keep track of their progress.</p>
	<p>The group uses File Exchange to review each other's lesson plans before combining them into one comprehensive unit.</p>
	<p>They submit the final project for a grade by using the group assignment link on the Group Homepage.</p>

## Hands-on Activity



For this activity, use your Practice Course.

### Edit and manage groups

- Add yourself to each group so you receive group Email.
- Delete one of the **Mars** groups.
- In a Content Area, add a link to one of the groups you created.

### Create a graded group assignment

- In a Content Area, create a "group assignment" and select a **Mars** group as the **Recipients**. Be sure to add **Points possible**.
- Because you added yourself as a group member, you can view the group assignment in the Content Area as students do by turning **Edit Mode** to **OFF**.
- Access the Group Homepage where you can also view the **Group Assignment**.
- From the **Grade Center**, view the grade column that was automatically created.

### Grade a group assignment

- From the **Grade Center**, grade **Group Saturn's Group Outline** assignment submission. In the **Grade Center**, view the group grade, and note how all members have the same grade.
- Edit **Sarah Spooner's** group grade. Return to the **Grade Center**, view the group grade column, and note how only **Sarah Spooner's** grade changed.
- Edit the group grade and type a score that is different than what you assigned to **Sarah Spooner**. In the **Grade Center**, view the group grade column, and note how **Sarah Spooner's** grade did not change from the individual grade you assigned.
- Revert **Sarah Spooner's** grade to the group grade. Return to the **Grade Center**, view the group grade column, and note that all group members have the same grade now.
- Group Jupiter's **Group Plan** assignment has two submissions. View and grade the last attempt. Return to the grade column to see if a grade has been added.

## Ask Dr. C



In the following table, Dr. C discusses common issues during group collaboration.

<b>Your question</b>	<b>Dr. C's reply</b>
<p>What can I do to help group discussions stay organized and on track?</p>	<p>When a group is created, a default forum is automatically created in a group Discussion Board. Instructors or students can create additional discussion forums. Let students know they can create forums and utilize threads to organize their conversations.</p> <p>Instructors have full access to every group Discussion Board, so they can manage the availability of forums and threads, as well as delete or move them.</p>
<p>Students often complain only a few group members do all of the work. How can I encourage ALL members to participate?</p>	<p>Assign students different roles so they have an expectation to fulfill in order for the group to complete the assignment.</p> <p>For example, assign the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Team leader</li><li>• Recorder</li><li>• Editor or proofreader</li><li>• Researcher</li></ul> <p>Outline how much of the grade depends on individual contributions versus the group's final product.</p> <p>Ask for private peer critiques, submitted only to the instructor, to gauge group participation.</p>

# Best Practice: Provide Support

The following table lists tips for using technology to facilitate group work.

<b>Goal</b>	<b>Use of technology</b>
Prepare students for success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have a real-time kickoff meeting in Chat to explain how the group should function.</li><li>• Provide direction during initial group discussions.</li><li>• Handle technical difficulties promptly and provide a list of frequently asked questions.</li></ul>
Create instructor presence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide feedback throughout the process in the group tools, such as group Discussion Board and group Journal.</li><li>• Enroll yourself in the groups to receive group Email.</li><li>• Hold regular office hours.</li></ul>
Set timelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use Announcements, Calendar, and group Email to remind students of upcoming due dates. Alternatively, the Notification modules on the course Home Page can be used in place of Announcements and the Calendar.</li></ul>
Provide objectives and instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide an assignment overview, grading rubric, instructions, task checklists, and resources.</li></ul>
Promote sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teach students the different ways to share ideas and work, such as through the group Discussion Board, Chat, group Blogs, or File Exchange.</li></ul>
Keep it interesting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assign unique case studies to each group.</li><li>• Have participants role-play and take on their assigned persona in online interactions.</li><li>• Create groups randomly or pick a heterogeneous mix of students to generate various viewpoints.</li></ul>

## 5.0 Workshop Wrap Up

The Workshop Wrap Up provides the opportunity to reflect on what has been learned by focusing your attention on the key concepts presented in the workshop. Also, the next page includes a worksheet for designing collaborative learning projects.

This workshop provided the skills to use the Groups tool to enhance your students' learning. Often, the learning process is as valuable as the outcome and you discovered ways to make the Groups tool run smoothly for your students.

In this workshop, you learned how to do the following:

- Create groups, add members, and enable collaboration tools.
- Allow students to self-enroll in the groups of their choice using sign-up sheets.
- Create group sets.
- Consider how best to select members for your groups.
- Edit and manage groups.
- Add group Links to course areas.
- Create and grade group assignments.
- Explore ways to organize and use groups in your course.
- Support group work in your course.

As with any new tool or feature, start with basic tasks and build upon them for more advanced use of the tool.

# Spotlight on Your Course

Use this guide to document the phases for designing collaborative learning projects.

## **Forming the groups**

- How many students will be in each group?
- Will you randomly assign students, form groups based on certain characteristics, or allow students to volunteer for group membership?

## **Planning the project**

- What is the final product of the project?
- What learning outcomes does this project accomplish?
- What specific instructions will you provide?

## **Exchanging work on the project**

- Which communication tools will students use to collaborate? (group Discussion Board, Email, Chat, File Exchange, group Journal, group Blog, group Wiki)
- Will students meet face-to-face or synchronously using conference calls?
- What is your role, if any, in this step?

## **Submitting the project**

- In what format will the group submit their work?
- Do you want all groups to be able to view the final projects?

## **Evaluating the project**

- How will you evaluate the project? Will you provide a grading rubric?
- Will all students receive the same grade, or will grades be assigned based on individual contribution?
- Will group members help determine the grades of others in their group?

Source:

Reid, J., Forrestal, P., & Cook, J. (1989). *Small group learning in the classroom*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann.