

Groups

Group membership is determined by the instructor. Instructors may add, remove or edit group membership in any manner throughout the course. Blackboard offers an option called Random Enrollment, which will automatically place students in groups. In addition, it is your privilege as the instructor to monitor a group's activities at any time.

Group options include:

- **Group Discussion Board:** The group has a discussion area available to their group. Here they can discuss assignments for group projects.
- **Group Chat and Virtual Classroom:** This is the chat area. Like the discussion board, this area is exclusive to the group.
- **Group File Exchange:** Members can exchange documents or review each other's work.
- **Group Email:** Mail can be exchanged solely between members of the group.
- **Group Wiki:** Group members collaborate to create, edit, share and publish a collaborative project.

Best Practices

- Determine individual learning styles and use those learning styles to establish group membership. If you have a diverse group of learners on a project, their presentation should appeal to a larger spectrum of learning styles.
- Give group members a chance to collaborate before presenting them with their first assignment by allowing students to choose their group's name. This allows them to develop a sense of ownership. The naming process also allows time for the group to develop their group dynamic.

Types of Groups

- **Single Group** - Single Groups are used when an instructor wants to create only one group of students that will collaborate throughout the semester. The instructor may create several single groups of students that can collaborate at different times.
- **Group Set** - A Group Set is several collaborative groups created at the same time. The Group Set has a random enrollment option, which automatically distributes users in the course equally among the number of groups created. When making the group set, it will append a number to each group. If a Group Set called **Group Set – Research Project** is created with three groups, the groups will be named Research Project 1, Research Project 2, etc.

Enrollment Options

- **Manual Enrollment** - The instructor selects members from a list of all the students in the course
- **Random Enrollment** - is best suited for Group Sets. Blackboard distributes users among different groups, based on criteria chosen by the instructor.
- **Self Enrollment** - allows the students themselves enroll in a group.