In this document, you will learn how to:

1. Create groups and group projects in your Blackboard course
2. Access and contact groups
3. Grade group projects

What are Blackboard groups?

A group is a subset of students enrolled in a Blackboard course. Each group gets its own workspace, where members may privately collaborate on projects, share files, and communicate via e-mail. Only Instructors, Teaching Assistants, and Course Builders may create groups.

Which tools are available for group members?

Instructors may choose any or all of the following tools to be made available to group members:

- Blogs (can be graded)
- Collaboration (chat room and virtual classroom)
- Discussion Board
- E-mail
- File Exchange
- Journals (can be graded)
- Tasks
- Scholar
- Wikis (can be graded)

Create groups and group projects

In older versions of Blackboard, instructors created blogs and wikis first, then added group members later. **This is no longer the case!** If you intend on to use a blog, journal or wiki as a group project, you must create your groups **FIRST**.

There are several different ways to create groups, depending on how many you need to create, and how much control you want over membership.

1. Enter your course by clicking its name in the **My Courses** module.

   ![My Courses module](image)

   I don’t see my course!
   E-mail your course number and NetID to blackboard@stonybrook.edu.
2. Select **Groups** from the course menu. **OR** Select **Users and Groups > Groups** from the Control Panel.

Create single groups

On the Groups page, select **Create Single Group**, then your preferred **group type**.

- **Self-Enroll**
  Students may add themselves to this group by using a sign-up sheet. Instructors may set a maximum number of members.

- **Manual Enroll**
  Instructors must add students to this group. There is no limit to how many students can be added.

Both group types ask instructors to specify which tools to enable for members. If you want your group to have a blog or wiki, check the boxes on this page before clicking **Submit**!

Create multiple groups at once

On the Groups page, select **Create Group Set**, then your preferred **group type**.

- **Self-Enroll**
  Students may add themselves to any group by using a sign-up sheet. Instructors set a maximum number of members.

- **Manual Enroll**
  Once the groups are created, instructors may add students to each one.

- **Random Enroll**
  Blackboard will add students to your groups for you! If you have an uneven number of students, you may specify what to do with the remainder.

All group types ask instructors to specify which tools to enable for members. If you want your groups to have blogs or wikis, check the boxes on this page before clicking **Submit**!
Student-created groups

Instructors may allow students to create their own self-enroll groups. Once enrolled, students may edit the name, description and maximum capacity of the group. Instructors must enable this feature first before students can use it.

1. On the Groups page, select **Group Settings**.

2. Check the first box to allow students to create self-enrolled groups.
3. Check the second box to allow students to edit their groups.
4. Click **Submit**.

By default, student-created groups include all tools listed at the beginning of this document. Students cannot control which tools are available. Only instructors can disable unneeded group tools.

1. On the groups page, click the down-pointing arrow button to the right of the group and select **Edit**.

2. Uncheck the boxes for the tools you wish to disable, then click **Submit**.

Access and contact groups

Instructors, Teaching Assistants and Course Builders have access to all groups. Students only have access to groups they’ve been enrolled in.

Anyone can select **Groups** from the course menu.

Students will also see a **submenu** listing their groups beneath the course menu.

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If a self-enroll group has space available, students may add themselves by clicking **Sign Up** on the Groups page.

Instructors may contact any group easily by selecting the down-pointing arrow to the right of a group name, then selecting **Email**. Compose your e-mail, then click **Submit**.

If the Email tool is enabled in the group, students can also contact group members by going into the group and selecting **Send Email**.

### Grade group projects

**Prepare your Grade Center (optional)**

If you've enabled the grading option for a group blog, journal, or wiki, Blackboard will automatically create a column in the Grade Center for that project.

You may wish to edit the column information to make the name more descriptive.

**Example:** Change “Group 1” to “Group 1 Blog.”

Instructors may only enter grades for group members. Any students who are not in the group are grayed out.

If you have a lot of students distributed across many groups, you may want to set up **Smart Views** to view one group at a time in the Grade Center.

1. In your Grade Center, select **Manage > Smart Views**.
2. Select **Create Smart View**.
3. **Name** the Smart View after your first group.
4. Under **Selection Criteria > Type of View**, select **Course Group**.

5. For Select Criteria:
   - **User Criteria**: Group
   - **Condition**: Equal to
   - **Value**: [select your first group]

6. For **Filter Results**, select which columns you want to display.

7. Click **Submit**.

8. If you want to make this Smart View a favorite, click the star to the right of its name.

9. Repeat Steps 2-8 until you've made Smart Views for each group.

10. Click **OK** to return to the Grade Center.

11. **To display a Smart View:**

   Select **Filter**. Under **Filter > Current View**, hover over **Full Grade Center** to select from a list of all Smart Views.

   OR

   Go to **Control Panel > Grade Center** to select a favorite Smart View.

12. The Grade Center will refresh and only display those group members.

13. **To view all students:**

   Hover over the group’s name under **Filter > Current View** and select **Full Grade Center**.

   OR

   Go to **Control Panel > Grade Center** and select **Full Grade Center**.

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**View and grade student participation**

1. In the Grade Center, click the down-pointing arrow button where the first group member’s grade should go, then select **View User Activity**.
There are four major components of the next page. Wording may change depending on whether you’re grading a blog, journal, or wiki, but the structure of the page will be the same.

I gave the same grade to all group members, but one student stood out. Can I give him/her a different grade?

Sure! Go back to the Grade Center.

1. Select the down-pointing arrow to the right of the student’s grade and select View User Activity.
2. Click the **Edit Grade** button on the right side of the screen. Overwrite the current grade and feedback, then click **Save Grade**.

3. The student’s new grade will appear, as well as the **Group Grade**.

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I changed my mind. I want to revert the individual student’s grade back to the group grade.

No problem! Go back to your Grade Center.

1. Select the down-pointing arrow to the right of the student’s grade and select **View Grade Details**.

2. Click **Revert To Group Grade**, then **OK**.

3. The original grade and feedback will be restored.