

Basics of Using Groups in Blackboard

The following is a guide for creating and managing groups inside of Blackboard Learn. Additional resources, videos and handouts can be found at <http://www.gvtc.org/bblearn> under the guides and tutorials area.

Group Fundamentals

- Groups in Blackboard are designed to facilitate communication among students who may be working on a specific task together such as a group project.
- Groups can also be used without the course tools to allow the instructor to view information on a specific subset of students such as *Move on When Ready* or *VA* students. Note: Tools can be seen even if the group is unavailable to students unless all of the tools are unchecked under Tool Availability.
- Only the instructor and group members have access to any group areas or information.
- Students cannot un-enroll themselves from a group.
- Groups are not needed for test exceptions. Test exceptions can be done at the test level customized for each student's needs. [Handout Posted: Tips – Test Exceptions]

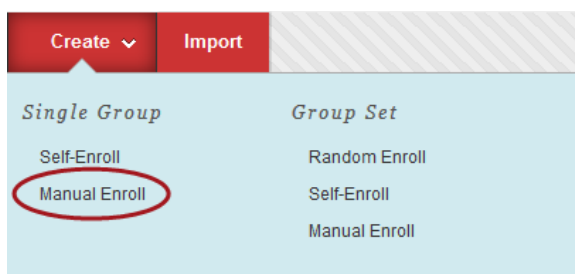
<input type="checkbox"/>	Name	Group Set	Enrolled Members	Self-Enroll	Available
<input type="checkbox"/>	Manual Single Group	-	0	No	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Project 1	Project	0	No	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Project 2	Project	0	No	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Project 3	Project	0	No	Yes

Creating a Manual Enroll Group

This type of group allows the instructor to assign students to the group either one group at a time or multiple groups at a time (users can also be assigned after the group is created).

To create one group and enroll students:

1. Under the **Control Panel** → **Users and Groups** → **Groups**
2. Click the **Create** button and choose **Manual Enroll** from the first column titled **Single Group**.



3. Define the group on the **Create Group** screen.
 - a. Provide a Group Name.
 - b. Determine if the Group will be visible to students.
 - Select **No** if the Group is for your management view only. (Such as monitoring *Move on When Ready* students).
 - Select **Yes** if the Group is for coursework/projects/group submissions.

★ Group is visible to students No Yes

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c. Determine what tools will be available to the group.

- Uncheck all the tools if the group is for your management view only. (Such as monitoring *Move on When Ready* students).
- If the group is for coursework determine which tools will be needed for the students to complete their assessments/projects.

TOOL AVAILABILITY

- Blogs
 - No grading
 - Grade: Points possible:
- Discussion Board
 - Allow any group members to create forums.
 - Do not allow student group members to create forums.
- Email
- File Exchange
- Journals
 - No grading
 - Grade: Points possible:
- Academic Materials
- Commercial Content Tools

d. Recommend **uncheck Allow Personalization** (this keeps a consistent look and feel for students).

e. Recommend **checking Create smart view** for this group.

Create smart view for this group

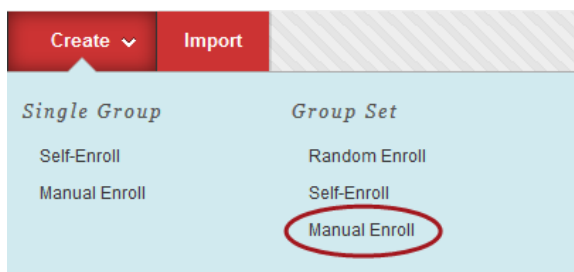
f. Click the **Add Users** button to pick which students will be assigned to this group. If you are not ready to assign students to the group you add them later following the directions in the section [*Adding New Users to Groups after the Group has been Created*].

- If you choose to Add Users at this step a pop-up window will appear that lets you browse the students currently enrolled in the course.
- Place a checkmark next to the name of each student to be enrolled.
- Click the Submit button at the bottom of the pop-up window.

4. Click the **Submit** button in the lower right-hand corner.

To create multiple groups at a time and enroll students:

1. Under the **Control Panel** → **Users and Groups** → **Groups**
2. Click the **Create** button and choose **Manual Enroll** from the second column titled **Group Set**.



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3. Define the group on the **Create Group Set** screen.

a. Provide a Group Name.

- This name will serve as the base for the number of groups created.
- Example: The name is assigned → Project and you choose to create 3 groups, the groups will be named Project 1, Project 2, and Project 3 respectively.
- The names can be changed later (on the next screen in step 4).

b. Determine if the Group will be visible to students.

- Select **No** if the Group is for your management view only. (Such as monitoring *Move on When Ready* students).
- Select **Yes** if the Group is for coursework/projects/group submissions.

✳ Group is visible to students No Yes

c. Determine what tools will be available to the group.

- Uncheck all the tools if the group is for your management view only. (Such as monitoring *Move on When Ready* students).
- If the group is for coursework determine which tools will be needed for the students to complete their assessments/projects.

TOOL AVAILABILITY _____

- Blogs
 - No grading
 - Grade: Points possible:
- Discussion Board
 - Allow any group members to create forums.
 - Do not allow student group members to create forums.
- Email
- File Exchange
- Journals
 - No grading
 - Grade: Points possible:
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- Commercial Content Tools

d. Recommend **uncheck Allow Personalization** (this keeps a consistent look and feel for students).

e. **Define how many groups** are to be created at once.

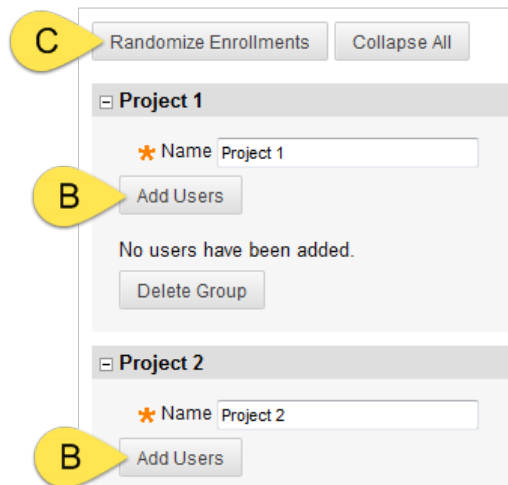
f. Recommend **checking Create smart view** for this group.

Create smart view for this group

4. Click the **Submit** button in the lower right-hand corner. This displays the **Group Set Enrollment** screen.

- #### a. At this stage you can either specify which users go in which groups or you can use the Randomize Enrollments button to randomly assign students (this is a different method than creating a Random Enroll set which provides more options for distributing students).

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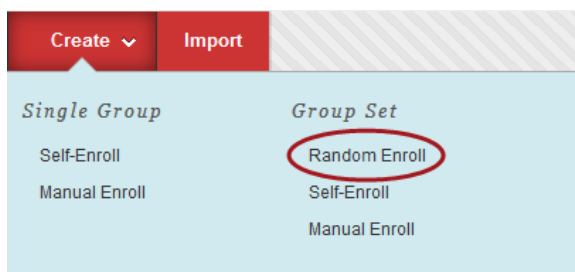


- b. To assign users manually click the **Add Users** button in each group to pick which students will be assigned to this group.
 - If you choose to Add Users at this step a pop-up window will appear that lets you browse the students currently enrolled in the course.
 - Place a checkmark next to the name of each student to be enrolled.
 - Click the Submit button at the bottom of the pop-up window.
 - Repeat these steps for every group in the list.
 - c. To assign users randomly click the **Randomize Enrollments** button.
 - A pop-up box appears.
 - Leave the drop-down on the default *Randomly enroll only student users*.
 - Click the Submit button.
 - d. If you are not ready to assign students to the groups you add them later following the directions in the section [*Adding New Users to Groups after the Group has been Created*].
5. Click the **Submit** button in the lower right-hand corner.

Creating a Group Set - Random Enroll

This option allows the instructor to decide what criteria to use to break students into a set number of groups.

1. Under the **Control Panel** → **Users and Groups** → **Groups**
2. Click the **Create** button and choose **Random Enroll** from the second column titled **Group Set**.



3. Define the group on the **Create Random Enrollment Group Set** screen.

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- a. Provide a Group Name.
 - This name will serve as the base for the number of groups created.
 - Example: The name is assigned → Random Project and you choose to create 3 groups, the groups will be named Random Project 1, Random Project 2, and Random Project 3 respectively.
 - The names can be changed later (on the next screen in step 4).
- b. Determine if the Group will be visible to students.
 - Select **No** if the Group is for your management view only. (Such as monitoring *Move on When Ready* students).
 - Select **Yes** if the Group is for coursework/projects/group submissions.

Group is visible to students No Yes

- c. Determine what tools will be available to the group.
 - Uncheck all the tools if the group is for your management view only. (Such as monitoring *Move on When Ready* students).
 - If the group is for coursework determine which tools will be needed for the students to complete their assessments/projects.

TOOL AVAILABILITY

- Blogs
 - No grading
 - Grade: Points possible:
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 - Allow any group members to create forums.
 - Do not allow student group members to create forums.
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- File Exchange
- Journals
 - No grading
 - Grade: Points possible:
- Academic Materials
- Commercial Content Tools

- d. Recommend **uncheck Allow Personalization** (this keeps a consistent look and feel for students).
- e. Recommend **checking Create smart view** for this group.

Create smart view for this group

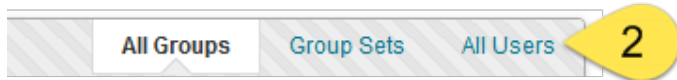
- f. **Define** the criteria to **Determine Number of Groups By**
 - If you specify number of students per group the number cannot be greater than the course enrollment count.
- g. **Define** how the system will **Determine how to enroll any remaining members.**

4. Click the **Submit** button in the lower right-hand corner. This displays the **Group Set Enrollment** screen.

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Adding New Users to Groups after the Group has been Created

1. Under the **Control Panel** → **Users and Groups** → **Groups**
2. In the upper right-hand corner click the **All Users** link.



3. This will list all users in the course and what groups each user is enrolled in. **TIP:** Scroll to the bottom of the screen and click the **Show All** button to see all students on one screen.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Username	First Name	Last Name	Role	Groups
<input type="checkbox"/>	850_faculty_previewuser	Test	Faculty_PreviewUser	Student	Random Project 1 x + Add to Group

4. Locate the user to be added to a group and while pointing to their record hover your mouse in the group column. This will make the **Add to Group** link appear. **Click the link.**
5. A pop-up box will appear letting you pick which group to add the user to. **Select the group** from the drop-down and click the **Submit** button on the pop-up.

Select a Group

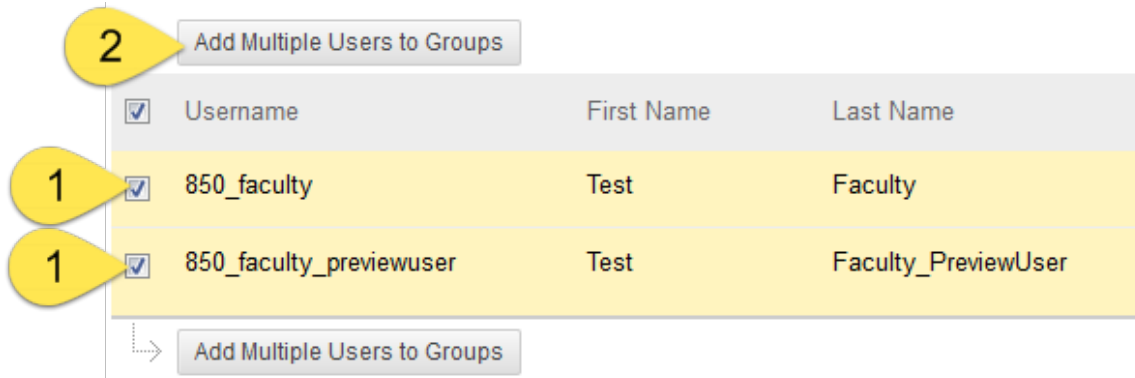
Manual Single Group ▾

Submit

6. Repeat for all users that need to be added to groups.

Alternative for Adding Multiple Users to a Group

1. Check the box next to each users name to be added to the group.
2. Click the **Add Multiple Users to Groups** button to get the group pop-up and assign the marked users to a group.



Self-Enroll Groups

Self-enroll groups can be created using the same methods we have discussed. These types of groups allow students to register (at their discretion) using a sign-up sheet.