

SacCT

Group Discussion Board

HOW TO GUIDE

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO

WHAT IS A GROUP DISCUSSION BOARD

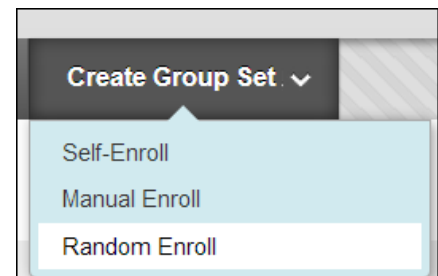
A Group Discussion Board is a space for group members to share ideas, resources or reflect about a topic or concept. You can setup a forum(s) in a group discussion board that students can post to; these posts are only visible to group members, thus making it an ideal tool for groups to gather and share information as they develop a project or presentation.

The first step is to setup the groups in your course.

Create the Groups

There are three options for setting up a Group:

- **Self Enroll** – using a sign up sheet, students select the group that they want to join
- **Random Enroll** – system distributes students into a group based on the number of students per group or the number of groups you need.
- **Manual Enroll** – instructor creates a group set (i.e. 5 groups) and adds students into each group manually by selecting the students.



The following section will describe setting up a group using the Random Enroll option.

Random Enroll

- step 1.* Locate the **Control Panel** on left hand side of the course, click **Users and Groups**
- step 2.* Click the **Groups link** to display the Groups page
- step 3.* Point to the **Create Group Set** option and select **Random Enroll**
- step 4.* Enter a **Name** for the group set. The system will automatically add a digit after the name for each group (i.e. Group 1, Group 2, Group 3, etc.)
- step 5.* Optionally, use the **Description box** to include information about the purpose of the Group area

- step 6.* **Group Available** option should be set to **Yes** by default; meaning groups are available to students
- step 7.* In **Tool Availability** section select the Tools available to all groups (i.e. Discussion Board, Email, Wikis, etc.)
- step 8.* In **Membership** section select whether you want groups formed by Number of Students or Number of Groups and how to Distribute remaining students
- step 9.* Click Submit to save Groups. The Groups page will list your newly created Groups.

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. Groups can be created one at a time or in sets. Groups can be designated as Self-Enroll, allowing students to add themselves to a Group, or Manual Enroll, having the Instructor assign students to a Group. [More Help](#)

Create Single Group ▾ Create Group Set ▾ Group Settings

<input type="checkbox"/>	Name	GroupSet	Self-Enroll	Available
<input type="checkbox"/>	Project Team 1	Project Team	No	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Project Team 2	Project Team	No	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Project Team 3	Project Team	No	Yes

Edit a Group

At some point you may need to **make changes to a group**, such as adding or removing a student, adding or hiding a tool and changing the group name and description.

To Edit a Group:

- step 1.* From the Groups page, click the **grey drop down arrow** to the right of a group's name. Select the **Edit option**.
- step 2.* The **Edit Group Page** will display
- step 3.* **Make the changes** needed
- Enter a new name and/or description
 - Select checkbox next to Tool or deselect checkbox to remove Tool
 - In Membership section, to add a new group member, select student name from Items to Select box and use the arrow pointing to right to move to Selected Items box.
- step 4.* Click **Submit** to save changes.

Access a Group Discussion Board

Each group you created will contain the Group Discussion Board tool (this tool is added during the Group creation process, refer to step 7 for creating Random Enroll groups).

To access the Group Discussion Board for a group:

- step 1.* From the **Groups** page, click the **Group name** to open the corresponding group page (my example shows Project Team 3)
- step 2.* Each **Group page** will have three boxes/modules displaying:
 - a.* Group Properties – displays the group description and lists group members
 - b.* Group Tools – lists the tools you have made available for the group (i.e. Group Discussion Board)
 - c.* Group Assignments – displays any assignments you have assigned to the group.
- step 3.* From the **Group Tools** module/box, click the **Group Discussion Board link**
- step 4.* The group Discussion Board page will display.
- step 5.* By default, each group discussion board will contain a Forum titled as the group (i.e. Project Team 3).

The screenshot shows the 'Project Team 3' group page. At the top, there are two buttons: 'Add Course Module' and 'Add Group Module'. Below these are three main sections: 'Group Properties', 'Group Tools', and 'Group Assignments'. The 'Group Properties' section includes a 'Group Description' (text about using tools for project development) and a 'Group Members' list (Dog, Pluto; Duck, Donald; Sam, Yosemite; Smith, J; Solo, Han; Student, Test). The 'Group Tools' section lists links for Collaboration, File Exchange, Group Discussion Board, Group Tasks, Group Wiki, and Send Email. The 'Group Assignments' section shows a link for 'Group Project Paper'.

The screenshot shows the 'Create Forum' interface. At the top, there is a 'Create Forum' button, a search bar, and a refresh icon. Below is a table with a 'Delete' button and a table of forums.

Forum	Description	Total Posts	Unread Posts	Total Participants
<input type="checkbox"/> Project Team 3		0	0	0

Create Discussion Forum(s)

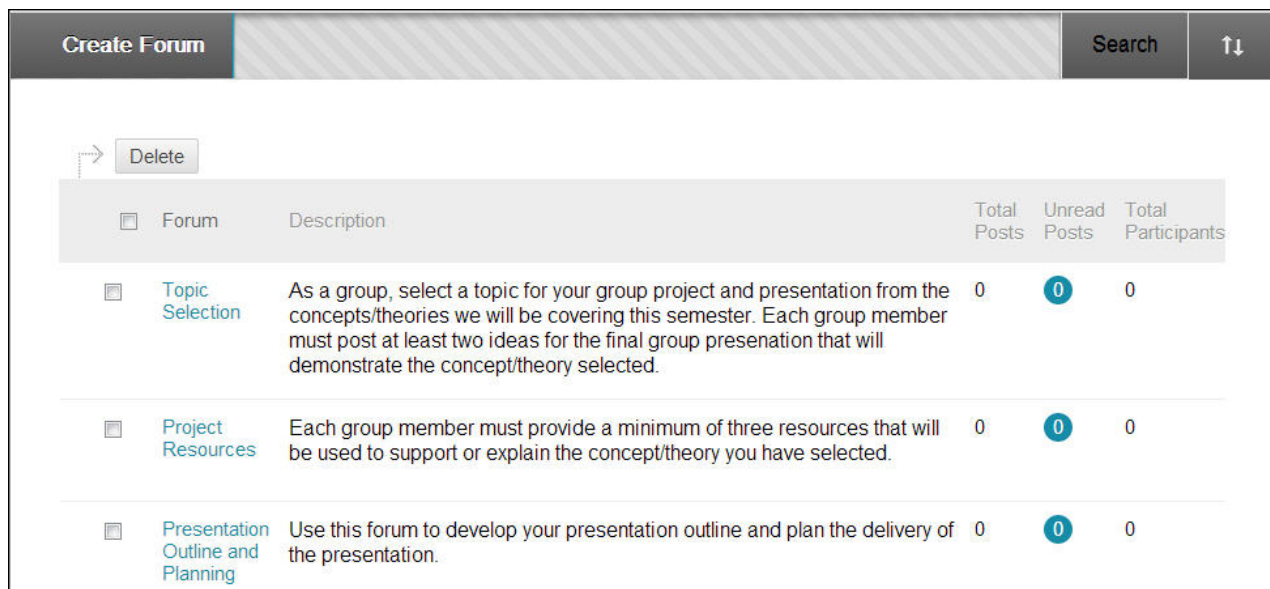
Each group discussion board area will already contain a discussion forum, titled as the group. This is the default forum built into each group discussion board area.

You can edit this existing Forum; to change the forum name and add a description and/or create new forums for the group to post to.

In the example below, I have setup three forums for the group to use as they work on developing their group project. Each forum covers some aspect of the project development process: Topic Selection, Project Resources, Presentation Outline and Planning.

Each forum will provide group members a space to communicate and contribute to the project assigned. It is also a way for you to keep track of the group's progress and each members' contributions.

Please note: If you plan to grade the group forums, consider adding the group number to the forum title, to help identify the columns in the grade center and the group they correspond to. For example: PT1 – Topic Selection, PT2 – Topic Selection, PT3 – Topic Selection.



Create Forum		Search	↑↓		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Forum	Description	Total Posts	Unread Posts	Total Participants
<input type="checkbox"/>	Topic Selection	As a group, select a topic for your group project and presentation from the concepts/theories we will be covering this semester. Each group member must post at least two ideas for the final group presentation that will demonstrate the concept/theory selected.	0	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/>	Project Resources	Each group member must provide a minimum of three resources that will be used to support or explain the concept/theory you have selected.	0	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/>	Presentation Outline and Planning	Use this forum to develop your presentation outline and plan the delivery of the presentation.	0	0	0

step 1. From the group discussion board page click **Create Forum**

step 2. In the **Name** field, type in the **question(s) and/or topic** to be discussed.

step 3. In the **Description box**, type in the **instructions/details**, add links or other content that students will use to complete their posts

step 4. Under **Forum Availability**, select **Yes** to make forum visible to students

step 5. Select **Forum Settings**

a. **Allow File Attachments** – default setting allows students to attach a file to post

b. **Allow Members to Create New Threads** - default setting allows students to create a post to the forum.

c. **Grade** – select whether you want the forum to be gradable. A gradecenter column will be created when you make a group forum gradable.

step 6. Click **Submit**

step 7. Repeat steps for each Group Discussion Board area