DEPAUW UNIVERSITY
GOOGLE GROUPS POLICY
(01-01-2014)

I.   ABOUT GOOGLE GROUPS

A **Google Group**, a utility available in DePauw's Google Apps for Education domain, is similar to a mailing list as it contains the email addresses of its members, but it also has its own address.

Google Groups make it easy to communicate and collaborate with groups of people - such as project teams, departments, and special-interest groups.

Using just the one email address for the Group, one can:

- Email group members.
- Engage in discussions with group members.
- Invite group members to meetings.
- Share content with group members, including Google docs, sites, videos, and calendars.

Group Formats

> An **Email list group** is one whereby members only use Email to communicate. This group type is common in organizations where a single email alias is desired to communicate to a certain group of people using email.

> A **Web forum or Question and Answer (Q&A) forum group** is one whereby members only use the Google Groups user interface to communicate with other members. This group type is similar to the online web forums found on many websites.

Permissions and Access

A Google Group can be configured by the group administrator with permissions that control which users can (or cannot) view group posts, post messages, and/or join the group.

II. GENERAL GROUP POLICIES

Group Creation and Membership

Any University faculty member, staff member, student, or other authorized DePauw Google Apps account holder may become a Google Group member. Campus-based organizations and departments also may request Groups, but an individual within the Group must be designated as the owner. A student or student group requesting a Group to be set up by Information Services is required to have a faculty or staff sponsor to whom ownership of the Group will be assigned.

Note: Not all requests for Official or Opt-In Groups will be honored. Requesters may be asked to provide additional documentation regarding the granting of a Group so approvers can consider its relevance to University business and the capacity of available information technology resources. In some cases, Information Services may recommend other electronic conferencing technology that would better serve the purpose of the request.

General Policies

1. Google Groups are intended to be used primarily for official University business, including employee and student academic pursuits, and employee administrative, personnel, and/or business matters. Any University Google Apps account holder will be accountable under this policy, the University Electronic Communications and Acceptable Use Policy, the University Mass Email List Policy, and other related IT account usage policies.
2. It is the Group Owner's responsibility to learn the system features necessary to manage the Group settings and membership.

Group Owner

Each Google Group is "owned" by an individual who has 'administrator' permission and manages the Group's behavior. The Group Owner may also authorize other individuals, including students, who can participate as editors or moderators of the Group.

The Owner is responsible for day-to-day monitoring and operation of the Group. This includes, but is not limited to:

1. Providing clear information about the purpose of the Group and guidelines about appropriate use by members.
2. Maintaining the Group settings and configuration.
3. Adding and removing members.
4. Serving as the initial point of contact for subscribers with questions or problems.
5. Dealing with social problems, which may arise on the list.
6. Acting as the primary point of contact to Information Services around activities related to the Group.

Membership to a Group is not a right of the individual. Group Owners have the right and are responsible for removing members who do not abide by the established Group guidelines, misuse or abuse the resource, or are abusive of other Group members.

The Group Owner is responsible for determining what constitutes off-topic or inappropriate mailings and is responsible for determining if a mailing is abusive. Escalation procedures for disagreements regarding the interpretation and application of this policy should be administered through appropriate University channels, i.e., department manager, University Vice President, or the Chief Information Officer.

III. TYPES OF DePAUW GROUPS

A. Official Groups

An **Official Group** is a Google Group that is established and managed by a University department,

program, or similar University representative to distribute official information and/or facilitate communication and/or coordination around a particular topic or theme. Members are typically pre-subscribed by virtue of their position, roles, or responsibilities at the institution.

Examples of Official Groups include, but are not limited to:

- Course-related or major-related lists of students (e.g., chemistrymajors@depauw.edu).
- University or departmental lists of faculty members, staff members, or students (e.g., faculty@depauw.edu, staff@depauw.edu, or informationservices@depauw.edu).
- Lists of living unit residents (e.g., hogatehall@depauw.edu).
- Lists for emergency notification purposes (e.g., publicsafetyalert@depauw.edu or tech-notices@depauw.edu).
- Working groups or project teams (e.g., buildingaccess@depauw.edu or libraryacq@depauw.edu).

Members may be added to an Official Group without their knowledge or consent. By nature of their purpose, some Official Groups have 'required membership' and may not allow members to opt-out of membership. A University Vice President, the Registrar, the Director of Human Resources, the Chief Information Officer, or a designee of any of those aforementioned parties must approve designating a Group as 'required membership' and approve any exceptions to the membership requirement.

Official University Groups are created by Information Services upon request and will be named based on the naming conventions currently in place (and agreed through discussion with the requester).

B. Opt-In Groups

An **Opt-In Group** is a Google Group that is established and managed by a University department, program, or similar University representative to facilitate communication and/or coordination around a particular topic or theme. Membership is generally voluntary. Members are added by self-subscription or by pre-subscription and must be provided the option to unsubscribe.

Examples of Opt-in Groups include, but are not limited to:

- Community-related message boards for exchanging topical information between members (e.g., personals@depauw.edu or macusers@depauw.edu).
- Community-related distribution lists providing information about campus events or activities (e.g., DePauwWeekly@depauw.edu or Arts_at_DePauw@depauw.edu).

Opt-in Groups are created by Information Services upon request and will be named based on the naming conventions currently in place (and agreed through discussion with the requester).

C. Ad-Hoc (User-Created) Groups

An **Ad-Hoc** (User-Created) **Group** can be created by anyone with a DePauw Google Apps account and does not require any approval prior to creation.

Each Ad-Hoc Group is maintained by the person who created it and must abide by the following:

- All Ad-Hoc (User Created) Groups will have a suffix of '-group'
  (e.g., *ISDeptBowlingTeam*-group@depauw.edu).
- The creator acts as the Group Owner who manages the Group's behavior per the guidelines defined elsewhere in this document.
- Members are added by voluntary self-subscription with the option to opt-out.
- Members of the Group must not be subscribed without their permission.
- Group names must not contain obscenities or any offensive language.
- The Group name should reflect the group to which it pertains and should not attempt to represent itself as another body or organization.
- Information Services reserves the right to rename or remove any group deemed to be named inappropriately. This may result in all corresponding mail and data within the Group becoming unavailable.
- The Group Owner is responsible for transferring group ownership to another user prior to his/her planned departure from the University (e.g., upon graduation, retirement, or end of employment). Otherwise, Information Services reserves the right to remove the Group without notice when the Owner's account is removed per the University IT Account Policies.

If there is a requirement that the Group address does not contain the '-group suffix, the Group should be requested through Information Services and will be named based on the naming conventions currently in place (and agreed through discussion with the requester).

IV. DURATION AND REMOVAL OF GROUPS

Google Groups will be periodically reviewed for activity and continued conformance to the current policies.

Groups that are inactive for longer than 12 months or fail to conform to policy will be removed.

Groups associated with courses that are no longer in use will be removed on the same cycle as their corresponding Moodle course.

When a Group is removed, it will result in all corresponding mail and data within the Group being permanently deleted and unavailable. No backups of deleted Groups or group activities are available.

Information Services will contact the Group Owner prior to removing any Group.