Scholar Collaboration Tools: Getting Your Participants to Work Together

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Introduction

Scholar is not just for handing out homework and displaying grades. It can be used to facilitate collaboration between instructors and students. A few of Scholar’s tools are designed for collaboration, like Resources, Groups, Forums, and Wiki, but students can be given access to them, increasing their ownership of a course site. This short course will go over how to use each tool, how to edit permissions, and thus how to promote student-student, student-teacher, and user-user collaboration.

Resources Area

The Resources area is more than a file repository. It can be opened up to give students read and write access so they can share documents with the entire class. It can be used for:

• group collaborative papers,
• individual learning / progress report sharing, and
• work can be monitored by instructors.

Folder permissions must be changed to grant students access.

Setting Folder Permissions

You can change the permissions for a site's Resources folder, or set permissions for Resources subfolders. That way, students can use the Resources area as a file-swap. You can make it so that students can add, but not delete, items from Resources and monitor their activity.

To change the permissions for a site's Resources area (top level folder)

1. Log in to Scholar and go to the site where you want to change Resources permissions.
2. On the left hand menu bar, click Resources. You will go to the Resources tool.
3. At the top of the Resources page, click Permissions. You will go to the Permissions page, shown below, where you can set permissions for your Resources tool. There is a chart with user roles across the top, and different actions listed on the left.
4. For each user role, check a box for the action you would like that role to be able to perform.
5. Click the Save button.

To change the permissions for a subfolder in Resources

1. Create the subfolder
   1. Log in to Scholar and go to the site where you want to change Resources permissions.
   2. On the left hand menu bar, click Resources. You will go to the Resources tool.
   3. To create a subfolder, next to the top-level Resources folder, click the Add drop-down menu and select Create Folder. You will go to the Create Folders page.
4. Enter a name for the folder and click the **Create Folders Now** button. You will go back to the main page of the Resources tool.

2. **Set the permissions**

1. To set permissions for this folder, click the **Actions** drop-down menu next to the folder title. Select **Edit Folder Permissions**. You will go to the **Permissions** page for this folder.
2. For each user role, check a box for the action you would like that role to be able to perform.
3. Click the **Save** button.

### Groups

#### Creating Groups

You can make groups of students within a Scholar site. Groups can be based on group projects or for students with accommodations. If you have more than one section and roster in a course site, Scholar automatically makes groups for each section. You can choose which students go into which groups, or you can have Scholar randomly assign students to groups. Once groups are made, you can select them in the Announcements, Messages, Forums, Resources, Assignments, Tests & Quizzes, and Gradebook tools to target those groups. That is covered in the **Groups and Tools** section of this lesson. Group creation is described here.

#### Creating Groups and Assigning Participants

1. Go to Scholar site where you want to make groups.
2. Click **Site Info** on the left-hand menu bar.
3. At the top of the page, click **Manage Groups**. You will go to the **Group List** page. Here you can add and remove groups, and the site's groups are listed.
4. Click **Create New Group**. You will go to the **Create New Group** page.
5. Enter a title and description for your group.
6. Under **Membership** are two boxes.
   - The **Site Member List** box shows all of your site's members.
   - The **Group Member List** box shows members of a particular group.
7. Select the members you would like to add to the new group from the **Site Member List** box, and click the > arrow to move their names to the **Group Member List** box.
8. Click the **Add** button. The group will be added and you will go back to the **Group List** page.

- In the sample site for this tutorial, **Group A** and **Group B** have been added.

#### Creating Groups and Randomly Assigning Participants

Scholar can assign participants randomly to groups. Assignment is done by site role; if all
members were randomly assigned to groups, TAs and co-instructors would also wind up being grouped.

To create groups with randomly-assigned members:

1. At the top of the Group List page, click Auto Groups. You will go to the Create New Group(s) page.
2. Choose the roles of the participants whom you would like to assign to groups. For random group assignment, you can only select one role. A box will appear under the role-select area.
3. From the box, choose Create random groups from members with selected role(s). A sub-menu will appear.
4. Divide the site members in the selected role by:
   5. how many groups you need, or by
   6. how many members you need in each group.
5. Enter the group title.
6. Click the Update button. Your groups will be created. Scholar will bring you back to the Group List page where the new groups will appear.

Groups and Tools
You can target specific groups from the Announcements, Messages, Forums, Resources, Assignments, Tests & Quizzes, and Gradebook tools.

Announcements and Groups

1. To send an announcement to a group, enter the Announcement tool and click Add.
2. Type in your announcement text.
3. Under Access, select the radio button next to Displays this announcement to selected groups only. A chart with your group names will appear.
4. Select the group to whom you want to post the announcement.
5. Add the announcement. See the Announcements lesson for more information on the Announcements tool.

Messages and Groups

1. To send messages to groups, go to the Messages tool main page and click Compose Message.
2. In the To box, your groups are listed with Group after the group title.
3. Select the group or groups to whom you would like to send the message.
4. Continue creating and sending the message like you normally would. See the Messages lesson for more information on the Messages tool.
Resources and Groups

1. To make a folder or item in Resources available to a selected group, go to the Resources tool main page. Then, from the Actions drop-down menu next to that folder or item, select Edit Details.
2. Under Availability and Access, click the radio button next to Display this folder and its contents to selected groups only. A chart with your group names will appear.
3. Select the group with whom you would like to share the item or folder and save. See the Resources lesson for more information on the Resources area.

Assignments and Groups

• To set an assignment for a specific group, go to the Assignments tool main page and click Add.

   IMPORTANT: if you are proceeding through this tutorial's lessons in numerical order, you have not gotten to the Assignments lesson yet. See the Assignments lesson for more information on the Assignments tool, or skip this portion of the Groups lesson until after you have read about assignments.

• Enter your assignment information as you would normally do.
• Under Access, click the radio button next to Display to selected groups. A chart with your groups will appear.

1. Select the group to whom you would like to give the assignment.
2. Complete and post the assignment as normal. See the Assignments lesson for more information on the Assignments tool.

Forums and Groups

1. On the Forums tool main page, click Forum Settings or Topic Settings next to the forum or topic title. You will go to the Settings page for that forum or topic.

   IMPORTANT: if you are proceeding through this tutorial's lessons in numerical order, you have not gotten to the Forums lesson yet. See the Forums lesson for more information on the Forums tool, or

2. Place checks in the boxes corresponding to the tasks you would like that group to be able to do.
3. Then, select the group to whom you would like to NOT grant access to the forum or topic. Group B was chosen below.
4. Clear the check boxes.
5. Save your settings.
6. Group A can read and post to the forum or topic, and Group B cannot.
7. See the **Forums** lesson for more information on the Forums tool.

**Tests & Quizzes and Groups**

1. To give an assessment to a specific group, go to the Assessment tool main page.

   IMPORTANT: if you are proceeding through this tutorial's lessons in numerical order, you have not gotten to the **Tests & Quizzes** lessons yet. See the **Tests & Quizzes** lessons for more information on the Tests & Quizzes tool, or skip this portion of the Groups lesson until after you have read about assessments.

2. Locate the assessment. From its **Select Action** drop-down menu, select **Settings**. You will go to the **Settings** page for that assessment.
3. Under **Assessment Released To**, click the radio button next to **Selected Groups**. A chart with your group names will appear.
   - Choose the group to whom you would like to give the assessment and place a check in that group's box. Proceed as normally would to publish or edit the assessment settings and/or content.

**Gradebook and Groups**

1. You can display grades for one group or another in the Gradebook.

   IMPORTANT: if you are proceeding through this tutorial's lessons in numerical order, you have not gotten to the **Gradebook** lessons yet. See the **Gradebook** lessons for more information on the Gradebook tool, or skip this portion of the Groups lesson until after you have read about the Gradebook.

2. At the top of the Gradebook page, above the Spreadsheet pane, click the **All Sections** drop-down menu.
3. If you do not see this menu, expand your browser's window.
4. Select the group whose grades you would like to display.

**Forums Tool**

- The Forums tool is designed to let site participants to communicate with each other.
- One user can post a question or statement, and others can reply to that statement.
• Related discussions are grouped together in threads, and threads are grouped by topic.

How Forums Work

![Diagram of forums and threads]

• At the top level is the forum. The Forums tool can contain multiple forums, but adding too many forums to a site can be problematic.
• Below the forum level is a topic. You can add as many topics as you would like to the Forums tool.
• Threads can be started within a topic
• Messages respond to threads, or to other messages.

What Forums Look Like

When you first enter the Forums tool

• Forums will shaded and enclosed in a box.
• Topics will be below the forum, indented, and with a vertical orange bar to the left of the title.

When you click on a forum

• A bread-crumb trail is at the top, telling you which forum and topic you are in.
• Threads are listed on the left, with blue bars to the left of the title.
• Messages responding to the thread are indented from the thread.
• Messages responding to messages are indented from the message responded to.
Creating Forums, Managing Settings and Permissions

- Because Forums are designed for collaboration from the get-go, you only need to set them up for students to use them to work together.
- You need to add a forum and topic to the Forums tool before students can start posting.
- You can select forum postings student-by-student, grade them, and send grades to the Gradebook.

Adding a Forum

1. Click Forums on the left-hand menu. You will go to the Forums tool main page.

2. At the top of the page, click New Forum. You will go to the Forum Settings page. The top of the Forum Settings page has forum settings, and the bottom has permissions settings.

3. In the settings section:
   - Enter a title in the Forum Title box.
   - Text entered in the Short Description box will appear under the forum title in the Forum tool main page.
   - Text entered in the Description box will appear when users click View Full Description in the Forum tool main page.
   - Use the Add attachments button to add an attachment to the new forum.
   - Under Forum Posting,
     - use the upper radio button to lock/unlock the forum, and
     - use the lower radio button to moderate/not moderate the forum topics. If you moderate topics, you will have to approve of topics others post before they are posted to the forum.
   - Under Availability choose to either show the forum or to show it between specified dates.

4. Scroll down to the Permissions section.

5. In the Permissions section:
   - Use the This site role drop-down menu to select a site role whose permissions you wish to modify.
   - Use the gets this permission level drop-down menu to select default permission levels. When you do so, the checked boxes in the which you can customize below area will update to the selected permission level.
   - Use the check boxes to customize the permission level as desired.

6. At the bottom of the Forum Settings page:
   - Click the Save button to save your new forum. It will be visible on the Forum tool main page.
• Click the **Save Draft** button to save the forum as a draft. Site users will not be able to access it and it will be labeled **Draft** on the Forum tool main page.

**Changing Forum Tool Settings and Permissions**

1. Click **Forums** on the left-hand menu. You will go to the Forums tool main page. Your forums will be listed.

2. To the right of the forum title, click **Forum Settings**. You will go to the **Forum Settings** page.
3. Change **Forum settings and permissions** as described above.
4. Save or save a draft as described above.

**Posting Threads**

• Threads and replies threads are where the discussion takes place.
• Often a user only has to start a thread for it to spark a discussion and take on a life of its own.
• On the Forums tool main page, your forums and topics will be listed. If they are not, you must create both a forum and topic before you can post a thread.

**Posting a Thread**

1. Click the title of the topic to which you would like to post a thread. You will go to that topic's page.

   • On the topic page:
     - click **Thread** to sort the threads alphabetically, and
     - click a thread title to read the messages in that thread.

2. Next to the topic title, click **Post New Thread**. You will go to the **Compose New Forum Message** page. Note that you can also go to the **Topic Settings** page by clicking **Topic Settings**.

   • Enter a title for your thread in the **Title** box.
   • Enter the thread text in the **Message** text box. There is no draft option, so you may want to compose your messages in a word processor and paste the text into the **Message** box.
   • Use the **Add attachments** button to add an attachment.
   • Click the **Post Message** button to post your thread.

**Replying to a Thread or Message**

1. Go to the topic under which the thread is posted. Click on the thread title. You will go to that thread's page.
2. Next to the thread, and any messages posted under that thread, is the option to **Reply**.
3. Click **Reply** next to the item to which you would like to respond. You will go to the **Reply to Forum Thread** page. This page is similar to the **Compose New Forum Message** page, described above.
4. Enter your title, message, and any attachments.
5. Post your reply.

**Organizing your Forum**

- You can change the order of forums and topics housed within the Forum tool.
- You cannot change the order of threads and messages because they are posted and replied to depending on context.

1. On the Forums tool main page, at the top, click **Organize**. You will go to the **Organize Forums and Topics** page, which lists all your forums and topics.
2. Use the drop-down number lists to reorder forums and the topics within them.
3. Click the **Save** button to save your changes.

**Viewing User Statistics**

- If you are giving grades based on forum postings, the Forum tool has a way for you to track who's posted and read what.
- You can see how many times a user has posted, and the titles and locations of his or her messages.
- You can see what percent of forum postings a user has read.

1. On the Forums tool main page, at the top, click **Statistics**. You will go to the **Statistics** page, where each site member’s name is listed, along with number of posts authored, read, and unread. The percent read column is helpful if you are grading on forum participation.
2. Click a user's name. You will go to that user's statistics. Here, the forum and topic under which he or she has posted are listed, as well as the subject of the message.
3. Click the **Next Participant** button to scroll through the site's participants.

**Grading Forum Postings**

- You can have grades sent from the Forums tool to the Gradebook.
- You cannot add a Gradebook column from within the Forums tool.
  - You need to create the Gradebook column in the Gradebook first, then link to it from the Forums tool.
  - Once you have made a Gradebook column, follow the directions below.

**Setting up Forum Grading**

1. Go to the **Topic Settings** page of the topic you would like to grade.
2. At the bottom of the settings page next to **Gradebook Item**, use the drop-down list to select the **Gradebook** column to which you would like to link.
That way, when you enter a grade in the Forums tool, it will be forwarded to the Gradebook.

**Entering Grades**

1. Click on the title of the topic you would like to grade. You will go to that topic’s page, which lists the topic’s threads.
2. Click on a thread. The starting message and replies to that message are listed.
3. Choose which message you would like to grade. Under its title, click **Grade**. You will go to the **Grade Forum Message** page which shows the message, its Gradebook item, and has an area for grating and commenting.
4. Enter in a grade. You can also comment.
5. Click the **Submit Grade** button.

**Changing Notification Options**

You can tell Scholar whether or not to email you when someone's posted to the forum.

1. On the Forums tool main page, at the top, click **Options**. You will go to the **Watch Forums Options** page.
2. Use radio buttons to select how you would like to be notified of new postings, and save.

**Wiki Tool**

**What is a Wiki?**

- Wiki means "quick" in Hawaiian. A wiki is a collaborative web document, like Wikipedia.
- In Scholar, you and your site participants can create and edit documents using the Wiki tool.
  - Older versions are saved, and you can revert to them at any time.
  - You can set editing permissions.
- You can use a wiki for collaborative class projects and meeting agendas.
- Wikis can be exported into MS Word for further editing.

**Using Scholar's Wiki Tool**

**Starting your Wiki**

1. When you click **Wiki** in the left-hand menu, you enter the Wiki tool.
   - You are automatically in view mode, and are looking at the Wiki tool main page.
   - The home page has text to help new users get started.
2. To edit this page, which is also your wiki home page, click **Edit** at the top. You will go to the Edit page.
3. Delete the starter text and type your text in the Edit page content box. Include any formatting features. For example:

- **Changing colors** - The default color for text is black. To produce "This is red text" use the formatting code: \{color:red\} This is red text \{color\}
- **Making a subpage** - If you want to create a new wiki page and link to it from the home page, place the new page's name in [square brackets]. When you save it and go to view mode, the page name will have a "?" after it until you add content to the subpage.
- **Linking to existing pages** - Link to existing pages in a wiki by putting the name of the page within square brackets: [Iguana]. When you have done that and saved your edits, it will look like: Iguana. The "?" should not appear if the page already exists.

4. Use the Preview tab to preview your content.
5. When finished, click the Save button. You will go back to view mode, and be on the home page.
6. To edit a new page, click its link in the home page. You will go to the new page, still in view mode. Click Edit at the top, you will go to edit mode. Make your changes and save.

### Reverting to Older Versions of Wiki Pages

1. On any wiki page, at the top, click History. You will go to the History page, where the page version, user who modified that version, and date modified are tabulated.
2. Under Revert? and next to the version you would like to revert to, click Revert to this version and confirm your decision. The Wiki tool will revert to that page.

### Notifications on Wikis

You can set the Wiki tool to notify you when a wiki page has been modified.

1. On a wiki page, at the top, click Watch. You will go to the Watch page.
2. Use the radio buttons to select whether to be notified:

   - whenever this page (or something in the wiki) is changed,
   - once a day, or
   - not at all.

3. If you were in the home page when you clicked "Watch", the settings will propagate to all subpages unless you go to the Watch page for each subpage and change the watch settings.
Wiki Permissions and Information

You can set permissions for each page in your wiki. That way, you can prevent students from editing main or index pages.

1. At the top of the page you want to set permissions for, click Info. You will go to the Info page. The table at the top of the Info page determines permissions.

2. Place a check in the box next to Enable/Disable on this page? and in the appropriate column to allow users to perform an action. Remove the check to not grant permission for that action.

3. Under Additional Page Permissions, place checks in the boxes to allow the wiki owner or public (site members) to read, edit and perform admin activity on the page.

4. Save permissions.

5. Below the permissions tables, site information is posted.

- Next to Incoming? pages linking to the current page are listed.
- Next to Outgoing? links in the current page are listed.

You can also:
- see who's commented on the site,
- look at your notification preferences,
- determine page owner,
- page url (next to global name), and
- when the page was last edited.
Scholar: Communication and Collaboration Tools

Workshop Checklist

☐ Introduction to student-teacher joint ownership of Scholar sites

☐ Resources – for peer editing and collaboration
  o Granting students access to folders in Resources

☐ Groups – setting up groups for more specific interaction
  o Creating Groups
  o Assigning Participants
  o Linking to Other Tools

☐ Forums – setting up forums for student interaction
  o Adding forums, topics and threads
  o Forum permissions and access
  o Grading forums

☐ Wiki for collaborative document and database creation
  o Creating a wiki
  o Adding pages
  o Example wikis