

## G Suite Groups Policy

This policy is subordinate to all other Union College Information Technology Services policies.

### G Suite Groups Definitions

*Group owner* – Groups are "owned" by an individual user who manages the list's behavior.

*Group Moderator* – The group moderator is a designated by the group owner.

*Group Manager* – The group manager is a member of ITS who is responsible for ,creating and deleting groups, and other tasks related to the running of the infrastructure of the group.

### G Suite Groups Description

Groups is a service that provides the ability to have discussions with people with common interests. Groups can be used as an easy way to reach a large audience quickly, by automating the distribution of e-mail to all those who are members of the group. These types of discussion services have become a critical component of scholarly collaboration. Many colleges and universities are also using them to facilitate and enhance classroom education as well as conducting the day-to-day administration of the College.

An **official group** is one that is established by academic and administrative offices to which members are pre-subscribed by virtue of their positions and responsibilities at the institution, e.g. [union-faculty@union.edu](mailto:union-faculty@union.edu). Members of official group lists cannot voluntarily unsubscribe. These lists are

- union-admin
- union-staff
- union-faculty
- union-students
- union-emeritus
- union-firstyears
- union-sophomore
- union-junior
- union-senior
- union-notify

There is a subset of official groups that have been established for supporting communications where members are pre-subscribed based on their positions and/or responsibilities, but have the ability to voluntarily unsubscribe. These lists include

- [campus-events@union.edu](mailto:campus-events@union.edu)
- [academics@union.edu](mailto:academics@union.edu)

**Unofficial** groups are subsets of the campus community in which members are not pre-subscribed and maintained by the requestor.

Any faculty, staff, or student member of the Union College community is entitled to become a group owner. Campus-based organizations and departments are also entitled to own groups, but an *individual* within the group must be designated as the group owner. Students must be in good standing with the Dean of Students office and student organizations must be registered with the Office of Student Activities.

Group owners are responsible for properly managing their group. The responsibilities of the group owner include:

- Advising individuals who will be pre-subscribed to the group of the group's purpose and how to unsubscribe themselves.
- Responding to subscribers' requests for removal from the group.
- Assisting subscribers with subscribing or unsubscribing to the group.
- Correcting subscriptions that are made incorrectly or in error.
- Working with the group manager as needed to configure their lists to change list attributes such as ownership, open/closed list status, moderated/un-moderated status, etc.
- If needed, creating and managing moderators of their group.
- Working with the group moderator(s) in managing activity on the list.
- Working with the group manager in creating and maintaining current and relevant files such as the subscribers, aliases, news, peers, ignored, info, or welcome files.
- Responding to errors related to their list such as delivery and remove errors.
- Responding to requests made by the group manager.
- Staying informed about current group policy.
- Attending group owner training or otherwise staying informed about group management.

Membership to a group is not a right of the individual. Group owners have the right and are responsible for unsubscribing group members who abuse a group by sending off-topic mail to the group, misuse or abuse the resource or are abusive of other group members. The group owner is responsible for determining what constitutes off-topic or abusive mailings. The group manager and ITS are responsible for determining if a mailing is abusive. Escalation procedures for disagreements regarding the interpretation and application of this policy should be escalated through appropriate College channels, i.e., Student Affairs or department chair. Abuse of a group should be brought to the attention of the group manager and/or other College authorities.

A group can have multiple moderators. The group moderator is responsible for reviewing posts and editing if necessary before releasing the post to the list. The group moderator also has the ability to reject a post and return it to the sender.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of group services at Union College is to facilitate and disseminate information to eligible members and affiliates of the College. Group services are available to current faculty, administrators, staff and student organizations. The person responsible for managing a group is

known as the "group owner." If the group owner leaves the College, then the current group owner must find a new group owner and identify that new person to the group manager. If no new group owner can be identified, Information Technology Services reserves the right to disable the group or to request that the group be moved to a non-Union College server.

Requests for groups that include non-Union College participants will be considered as long as the group owner is a member of Union College and has adequate justification for hosting the group at Union College. These types of groups must be moderated and will be limited to 900 subscribers. The group owner is expected to review and maintain the subscriptions to the group.

### **Requesting a Group**

To request a group, send a request to [helpdesk@union.edu](mailto:helpdesk@union.edu).

**Note:** Not all requests will be honored with a group. The group manager may ask for additional documentation regarding the granting of a group. The group manager may recommend other electronic conferencing technology that would better serve the purpose of the request. Other considerations that will determine the status of a group request include the relevance of the group to the education, research, or the administration of the College.

### **Policies**

If there is reason to believe that the group will be used for illegal purposes, that group will not be established. If it is operational, it will be disabled after consultation with College administrators. Groups are subject to all College e-mail policies. Other than certain predefined Union College Groups (e.g. Faculty, Administrators, Student class lists, etc.), group members should not be pre-subscribed to a group without their knowledge or permission. Subscribers who request to be unsubscribed from a group should be removed.

Group members who are affiliated with Union College (i.e. students, faculty members, administrators, staff members, emerti) **must** use their Union College email addresses and usernames when subscribing to a group that is hosted at Union College.

Group members must adhere to Union College's Acceptable Use Policy.

In general, the group owner(s) are responsible for subscribing or unsubscribing members to the group. Written requests for special groups to be created from College databases will be handled on a case-by-case basis with priority given to course-related groups.

Based on the information provided within the request for a group and Union College naming conventions, ITS will develop a group name through discussions with the group owner.

Sending attachments via the group is discouraged. It is strongly recommended that group members post links to items that they might have considered sending as an attachment.

Groups will be periodically reviewed for activity and continued conformance to the current group policies. Groups that are inactive or fail to conform to policy will be removed. Groups will be reviewed for activity on an annual basis. Groups with no activity for an extended period of time will be removed. Groups associated with courses will be removed at the end of each term, or at the conclusion of the course. Group owners will be contacted by the Group manager prior to removing the group. If an owner is unable to be contacted, the group will be removed.

To assist the group owner in performing these tasks, the group manager will maintain on-line documentation for these and other functions.