Google Groups

Google Groups allows you to put together a group of people for an email distribution list, a shared inbox, or to use as a permissions group for various Google features such as Drive. Groups is a separate app in G Suite and will not include a typical Gmail inbox, Calendar, or Drive space. Each group is assigned a unique email address that is used for communication and/or permissions. You can learn more about Groups on Google's office Groups support page. You can request the creation of a new Google Group from the ITS service portal (requires login).

Groups are best used when membership to a group may change regularly. All assigned managers in a group will have the ability to update the members list as needed. Check out our page on managing Google Groups.

Groups as an Email List

One popular use of Groups is to create and email distribution list. One example of this at Swarthmore is the FacStaff digest. This will allow you to either directly add or invite members and then use the unique email address for the group to send emails and updates out to all members.

Groups as a Shared Inbox

Groups has a space that allows all members to see messages sent into the group email address that looks a lot like an online forum or message board. This allows all members to manage incoming messages. You can also have the group set to automatically forward incoming messages to all members. This means they will receive an email with that message that they can directly respond to from their own email address. You can also give either some or all members the ability to respond using the group email address.

If you need a shared inbox with a more regular list of members and/or need those members to be able to better coordinate their response to incoming emails, you may want to consider setting up a Delegated Account.

Groups Used for Permissions

You can set up a Google Group to easily grant the same level of permissions to all members for various Google services. This has been mostly used to grant permissions to departmental AODocs libraries and other folders and files in Drive. You can also use it to grant users access to calendars and/or invite the entire group to a calendar event. In any Google application that sets permissions based on email addresses, you can use a Google Group email to grant permissions to all group members.