# Google Groups and Generic Accounts

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What is a Google Group?

You can think of a Google Group as a combination of a distribution list, a web-based forum, and an email account. Each Google Group has an email address that email is sent to, and that email is distributed to the members of the group.

Members of the group can reply to the sender of the email, or to the sender of the email and everyone. We can also setup the group so that members cannot reply.

Each group has a web-based "bulletin board" where emails to the group appear. If enabled, members of the group can post new messages using this web based board. Replies to emails also appear on this board.
Advantages of Google Groups

Privacy
Google Groups can be closed to the public, meaning only members can participate in discussion. Generic accounts are always available to the public.

Message delivery options
Using Google Groups, members can choose how they receive messages, if at all. The options include no email (view on web only), abridged email, digest email, or as they are received. Generic accounts do not have these options.

Nickname
You can choose a different nickname to use on the group.

Management
Anyone can be a manager or owner of a group. Managers and owners have rights to make changes and add and remove other members. There is no need to contact IT and wait for assistance.
Changes to generic accounts must be made by IT.

What's the difference?
There are a couple of key differences between Google Groups and generic accounts.

Initiating email
The primary difference between a Google Group and a generic email account is that the Google Group cannot initiate email using the generic email address. The Google Group can reply to email sent to the group using the group email address.
For example, if jim@bob.com sends an email to the Google Group security@everettcc.edu, any member of the group can reply as security@everettcc.edu (if the group is setup to allow this). However, members of the group cannot send an email to jane@bob.com using the group's email address, unless jane@bob.com sends an email first.

Limit on number of proxy users for generic accounts
Generic accounts in Google have a limit of 10 proxy users. Google Groups doesn't have this limitation.

Lack of granular controls for proxy users of generic accounts
When a user is given proxy access to an account, including generic accounts, that user has full access to the mailbox. The user can send, read, and delete any email. The user can also create and delete filters and labels, as well as control forwarding and pop/imap.
In the past, we have had the ability to give read only access to mailboxes. This is not the case with Google.
However, proxy users cannot grant proxy access to other users.
**Accessing a generic account**

**Gaining access**
A request for proxy access to the generic account must be sent to the help desk.

**How to proxy**

**Setup for proxy**
To setup your account for proxy access, once you are logged in to Gmail, you have to click your email address in the right hand corner of the browser, then click account settings.

Click **on** next to **multiple sign-in** on the page that comes up. You will need to read and understand everything on that page prior to agreeing to multiple sign in capability. **It may take quite some time for this change to appear in your account.**

**Signing into a different account**
Once you are signed in to your Gmail account, and your account is setup for proxy, click your email address in the upper right-hand corner of the browser, and click switch account.

You will be presented with a list of accounts to which you have been given access. Clicking on the email address of the account will open a new window.
**Using Google Groups**

**Becoming a member**

To become a member, you will need to make a request to the manager or owner of the group. IT can also grant membership to a group.

**Accessing the group**

To access Google Groups, use the menu across the top of the Gmail page. It may be under more. Clicking Groups will bring you to the landing page which should list every group you are a member of.

Clicking on the name of the group will take you to that group's page where you will find any posts for that group along with a menu on the right side.

**Posting to the group**

You can post to the group using the new post button on the group's page, if posting from the web is enabled, and if you have permission. You can also post by emailing the group's email address.

**Changing email delivery**

To change how you get email from the group, click on the edit my membership link on the right-hand side menu from the group's landing page. The options and descriptions are listed on the following screen.

**Google Group administrative tasks**

Below are some common administrative tasks. Feel free to contact IT with any other questions.

**Manage membership**

Membership can be managed, including access and rights, using the management tasks on the right hand side menu of the group's page. To add a member, click invite members located towards the right hand side of the page above the list of members.

To make a member a manager, find the member using the search at the bottom of the list of members, check the checkbox to the left of the member's name, and use the drop down labeled set membership type to select the appropriate membership type. The same drop down can be used to unsubscribe or ban a member.

**Group settings**

Most group settings do not need to be adjusted. IT has set the following defaults:

- Only members can view content.
- The group is not listed in the groups directory.
- Only managers can view members list.
- People have to be invited to the group (no open membership).
- No external email addresses (addresses outside of everettcc.edu).
• Anyone can post.
• Posting from the web is not allowed.
• Only managers can invite new members.
• No moderation for messages.
• Members cannot post using the group's email address.

These settings can be changed using the **group settings** menu on the right-hand side menu under the **access** tab. Feel free to contact IT if you aren't sure which settings, if any, you want to change.