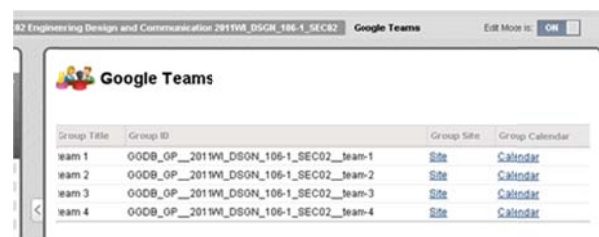Google Teams

To the Faculty

Using Google Teams (GT) is easy, though there are a few things that you need to understand and do in order to help your students get the most out of it. Our vision for the GT pilot is that students in teams, on their own, will use GT as a means of inter-team communication and to document their project's process. We hope also that working with their own team sites, modifying them to meet the specific needs of the projects they undertake, will give them a sense of "ownership" of their communications work and motivate them to learn more about creating Web-delivered documents and messages, a skillset of increasing importance in our modern world.

GT creates team permission groups in Google Apps for Education through use of the Blackboard database and provides links to Google Calendars and Google Sites that are set up exclusively for each team. Features it presents to students offer the following functions:

- Students can overlay the Google calendar each team is being given with their already-existing personal Google calendars. Each team member can write to the calendar, communicating immediately to other team members, you the instructor (and potentially to team clients) any event information that needs to be shared -- upcoming team meetings, client contacts, deadlines, etc.. Entries can automatically generate email messages to anyone with access to the calendar wishes to receive.
- Team members have the ability to *modify* their GT sites in many ways, including sharing documents among themselves and with the instructors, conducting quick polls or creating other forms and spreadsheets for collecting and sharing data. Teams can use the blog function to easily create and maintain meeting minutes, use the embedded dictionary, Google, image, and other search functions, call up news stories about McCormick from the School's news feed, use the graphing calculator, etc..
- Teams which build their documents in Google Apps and store them in the GT sites will have those documents *automatically versioned*, reducing the proliferation of variant versions of shared documents.

Your students will *NOT* see GT until you take the steps below.

1. Check that your Web browser is configured to accept popups from courses.northwestern.edu (the Blackboard server). To do so, log in to the main Blackboard page at http://courses.northwestern.edu and click "@u Google Apps Docs" in the "Tools" menu in the upper left. If you are brought to Google Docs or receive a message displaying a large red horizontal stripe saying "Only users appropriately registered can use this tool," your browser is configured correctly.
2. *Before* making the GT icon available to your students, click on it yourself and display the team list with links. It should look like this:
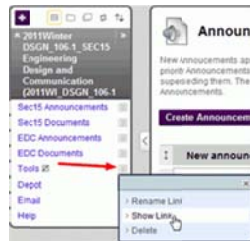

3. Click one of the "site" links. When you first open a site, you will receive the following message:"Due to Google Apps latency issues, you must wait a few seconds before accessing this document. To load the document after a brief delay, click on the 'OK' button." This is expected and you should follow the instruction.

4. The site for one of your teams will open in a second window or tab of your browser

5. Return to the GT window (Blackboard) or tab and click one of the "calendar" links, where you will again get the "Google Apps Integration Delay" message
6. Click OK in the lower right
7. Another window or tab will open and you will get a popup prompt, "Do you want to add this calendar?"
8. Click "No, do not add this calendar"
9. If both the site and the calendar screens do not appear as described above, *immediately* contact Academic & Research Technologies (b-nielsen@northwestern.edu, or altman@northwestern.edu)
10. Assuming the two links have worked, you should enable GT for your students in your Blackboard course site by clicking the small double down arrow to the right of the "Tools" menu item in and selecting "Show Link."

We would like you to talk, at least briefly, to the students in your class about the GT pilot *soon*, whether before or after you complete the steps above. You may wish to ask that the students switch their document sharing from Depot to GT.

As an instructor for the class, you have full read-and-write permissions in all the GT sites and calendars. Things you can do:

- "Subscribe" to the sites and/or calendars, which will automatically generate email messages to you when your students update their team sites or calendar
- Use the Google Docs, Calendar, and Sites apps yourself, as you now have an "@u" Google account through Blackboard
- Suggest (or require) your teams move the documents they've already placed on Depot to the new team sites and ask that they inform you as soon as they do, including telling you in which area of the sites they've put them

One advantage in using the team sites and Google docs you may point out to your students is that the Google docs, once placed into the sites and configured properly, are versioned, so that team members can more efficiently manage their working files.

1/17/11 bn