

Canvas Collaboration Tools

When should you use Google Docs vs. EtherPad when collaborating in Canvas? What's the difference between discussions in the group site versus group discussions in a course site? Canvas has several features that enable students to interact and work together on projects and assignments.

	PAGES	ETHERPAD	GOOGLE DOCS	GROUPS
What is it?	Pages can be used like wikis, where contributions can be made by teachers, students or anyone enrolled in the course.	EtherPad lets teachers and students set up shared documents without the needs of passwords, shared permissions or Google accounts.	Canvas leverages Google Docs to set up shared documents with user permissions and Google accounts. (Must register Google Docs in user settings)	Incorporates all features of pages, EtherPad, Google Docs plus areas for file sharing, discussions and conferences.
How do I set it up?	Access the guides on Pages	Access the guides on Collaboration Tools	Access the guides on Collaboration Tools	Access the guides to learn more about setting up groups
What are the advantages?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Page History • Asynchronous • Content housed in course • Easily links course resources • Page transfers during course copy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows anonymity • Not password protected • Anyone with a link can access • No account needed • Access to all features of EtherPad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Google Account needed • Document permissions: "Shared with specific people" • Access to all the features of Google Docs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep all collaborative efforts coordinated • Manage collaboration external to course site • Manage bigger projects and assignments
What are the Considerations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not synchronous (edits may override each other (but are not deleted from page history) • Pages do not allow for attachments • No export feature to pages • Change default settings or override on a page-by-page basis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard to identify student contributions unless student has self-identified • Export (page history is not identifiable) • Content resides independent to the course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permission settings can be changed by owner (impacting privacy and/or limiting contribution) • Deletion "from Canvas" or "Also from Google Docs" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups are separate spaces to course sites, making it challenging for students to distinguish between the features of a group versus those within a course site.