



Advanced Groups

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What are groups?

Groups provide excellent communication tools within myCuesta, allowing people of like minds, interests or goals to efficiently share information.

The groups tool in myCuesta is called Group Studio, though throughout this documentation it will be simply referred to as “Groups”.

Advantages of groups

There are several advantages in using groups instead of conveying information via other means:

- **Specific information sharing**
Groups in myCuesta permit sharing information with only those of interest. No more being bombarded by e-mail, broadcast across campus when only a select few are interested.
- **Personal Announcements**
With Groups important announcements appear in the Personal Announcements channel of group members.
- **Specific file sharing**
Files, photos, links and important news are easily shared among group members. Non-group members do not have access to these files.
- **Group Calendars**
A group calendar with important dates can be viewed independently or combined with a personal calendar and/or other calendars.

Types of Groups

There are three types of groups: public, restricted, and hidden

Public groups

Public groups are open for anyone to join. Public group homepages are meant to bring people together who have shared interests or to introduce others to new interests. Typically public groups revolve around hobbies such as computer programming or golf, or clubs on your campus that support open enrollment.

Restricted groups

Membership in restricted groups is subject to certain conditions or requirements. Restricted groups are typically meant to provide resources for individuals who are involved in clubs that support limited enrollment.

For example, your school may have a public golf group that anyone who is interested in the sport may join, and a restricted golf group that only members of your school's golf team can join.

Some restricted groups may first require application for membership outside of the group homepage. For example, to access a group homepage for an academic or social fraternity you must first be accepted as a member of that organization before requesting membership in the group. Groups for specific academic courses are also restricted and require you to be registered for the course before you can join the group.

Hidden groups


Hidden groups are typically used to publish and discuss sensitive information that should not be available a public or restricted group. For example, your institution's administration may create hidden groups to discuss departmental budget and staffing issues.

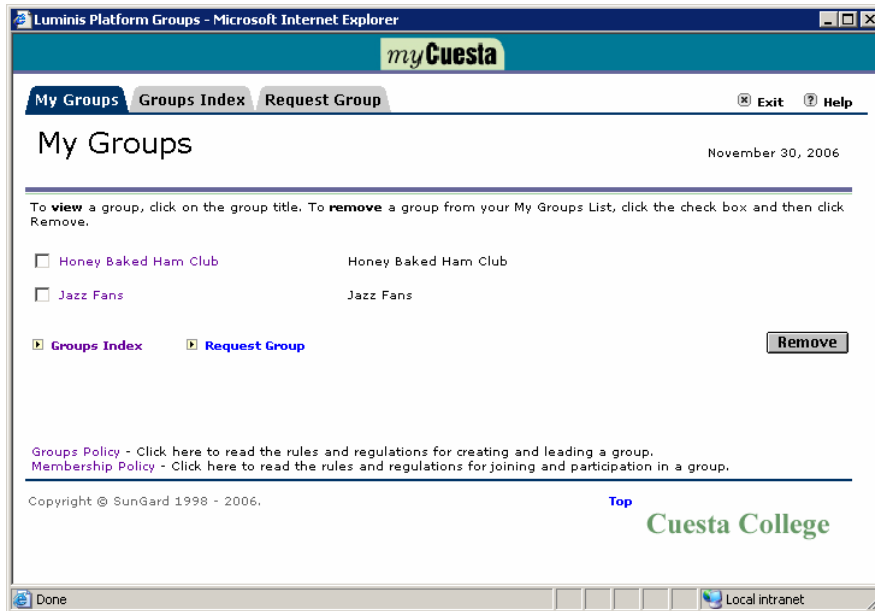
Hidden groups are not displayed in the group category index and do not have a guest view page. Users cannot join hidden groups online. Instead, the system administrator adds users to hidden groups.

Accessing Groups



To access Groups

- In myCuesta, click the “Groups” icon  groups
The Groups window will open, displaying any groups of which you are currently a member.



Navigating the Groups Window

There are three tabs at the top of the group window: My Groups, Groups Index, Request Group.

My Groups

The first tab, My Groups, provides access to the My Groups page, which lists the clubs or other groups to which you belong. You use this index to access a group's homepage. In addition, the My Groups page provides a link that lets you remove your membership in a group.

Groups Index

The second tab, Groups Index, provides access to a listing of all categories of groups at your institution. You can use this index to access group homepages within each category where you can read about and request to join the group.

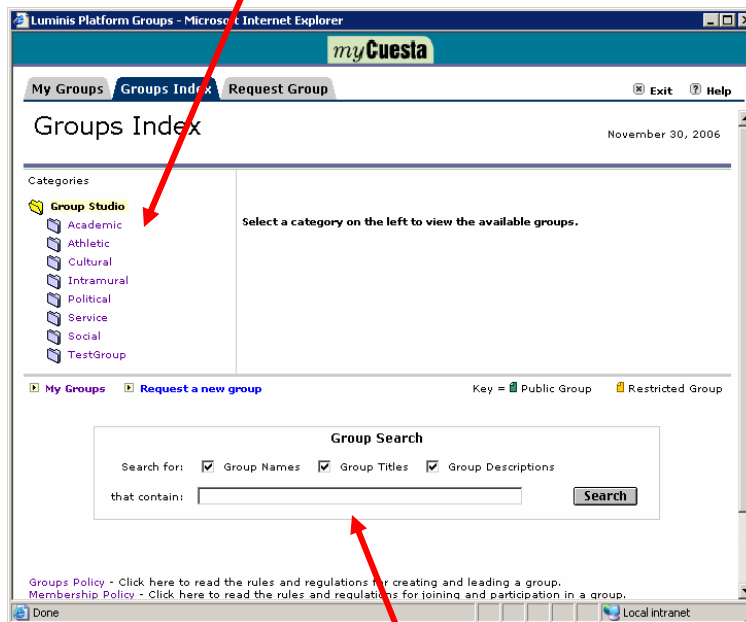
Request Group

The last tab, Request Group, provides the form necessary to request the creation of a new group. If you request the creation of a new group, you become the group leader and have initial responsibility for creating and managing the group homepage and guest view.

How to find a group

To find a group by perusing categories

1. In the Groups window, click the **Groups Index** tab. **Groups Index**
The Groups Index tab will display. The listing of Categories by which the groups are organized appears on the left.
2. Click a category.
The list of available groups in the selected category will be displayed on the right.



To find a group by searching

1. In the Groups window, click the **Groups Index** tab. **Groups Index**
The Groups Index tab will display.
2. Under “Group Search”, select one or more checkboxes for each field you want to search (Group Names, Group Titles, Group Descriptions).
3. In the “that contains” field, type the text you want to use in your search.
4. Click the **Search** button.
The system will search for groups that match your search criteria and display the search results on the Group Search Results page.
5. Optional: To access a group's guest view page, click the group name.

How to join a group

Once you've located a group, how (and whether) you can become a member depends upon the type of group it is.

To join a public group

1. Once you've located the group under the Groups Index tab, click on the group name.
The Guest View screen for that group will display.
2. Click **Join Group** on the Guest View screen.
You see the Join a Group page.
3. Read the membership policy, and click the checkboxes showing you have read and understand your institution's group membership policy and agree to share your username and e-mail address with other group members.
4. Click **Join** to join the group.
(NOTE: You can click Cancel to exit without joining.)
You will see a member confirmation message. The group will now appear in your My Groups index and you will be able to access its member page.

To join a restricted group

1. Once you've locate the group under the Groups Index tab, click on the group name.
The Guest View screen for that group will display.
2. Click **Join Group** on the Guest View screen.
You see the Join a Group page.
3. Read the membership criteria and verify you meet the criteria.
4. Click the checkboxes showing you have read and understand your institution's group membership policy and agree to share your username and e-mail address with other group members.
5. In the appropriate text entry field, enter the reasons you want to join the group.
6. Click **Join** to join the group.
(NOTE: You can click Cancel to exit without joining.)
You will see a message stating your membership request has been submitted. Once accepted, the group will appear in your My Groups index and you will be able to access its member page.

To join a hidden group

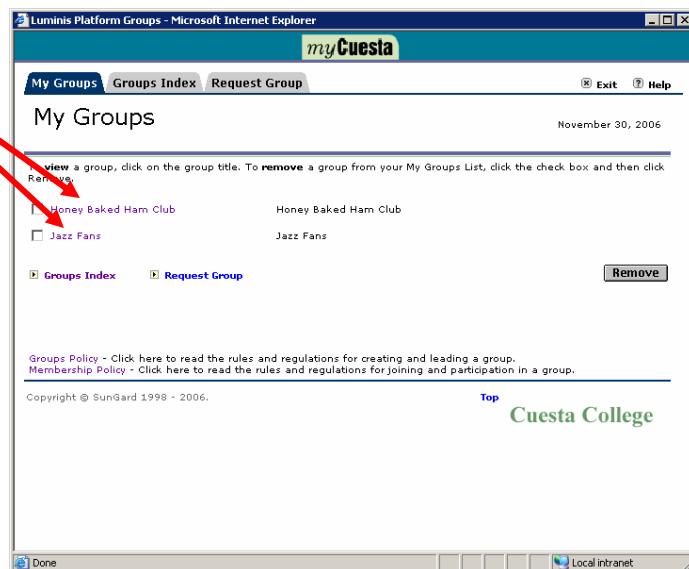
Since hidden groups do not have a guest view page, you cannot join a hidden group online. If you are invited to join a hidden group, the system administrator will add your user account to the hidden group and then notify you of your new group membership.

Viewing a group homepage

Once you are a member of a group, you can view the homepage by selecting the group from My Groups.

To view a group homepage

1. In myCuesta, click the **My Groups tab**. **My Groups**
The My Groups tab will open, displaying any groups of which you are currently a member.
2. Click on the name of the group.
The group's homepage will be displayed.



Using Group Tools

Announcements

Announcements let you access and view the latest messages posted by the group administrator. Individual group members do not post announcements, unless granted permission from the group administrator.

To go to the View Announcement page

1. Go to your group homepage.
2. In the left-hand column of the homepage, click **Announcements**.
3. Click on the title of the desired announcement.
Announcement information will be displayed.

To navigate announcements on the View Announcement page

If there is more than one announcement, the appropriate navigation buttons, located below the message box, will be active.

- To view the next announcement, click the **Next Announcement** link.

- To view the previous announcement, click the **Previous Announcement** link.

To delete an announcement

- Click the trashcan icon to the right of the announcement.

News

The View Article screen lets you read an individual article posted on a group or course homepage. The screen displays the article's title, the date the article was posted, the name of the person who submitted the article, and the full text of the article.

To access a group news article

1. Click the **My Groups** tab
2. Click the group name whose homepage you want to view.
3. From the Group Tools menu, click **News**.
The Group News screen will display.
4. Click either the article's title or the article's "read more..." link.
The article information will be displayed.

To navigate articles on the View Article page

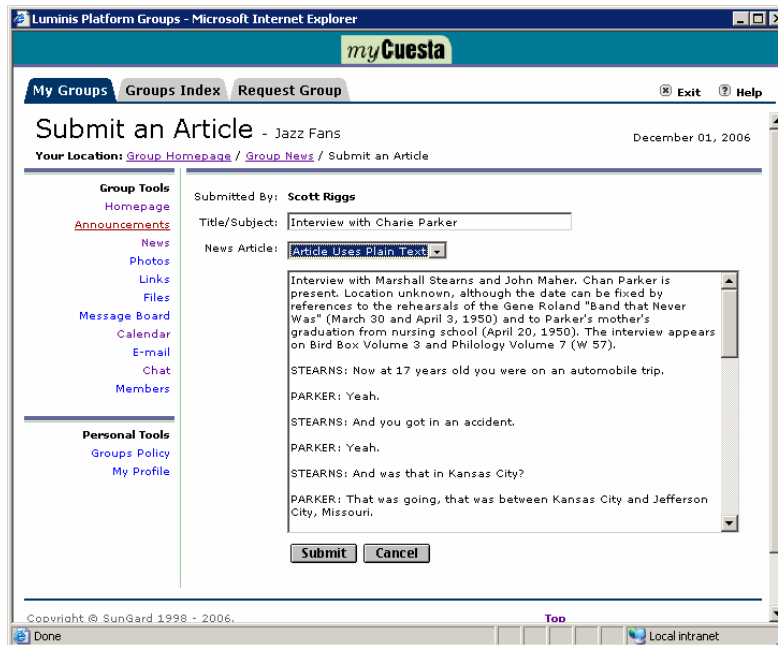
If there is more than one article, the appropriate navigation buttons, located below the message box, will be active.

- To view the next announcement, click the **Next** link.
- To view the previous announcement, click the **Previous** link.

To submit a new article for possible inclusion

1. Click on the **Submit an Article** link.
The Submit an Article will display with your name automatically entered in the Submitted By field. (This lets the group or course leader know who has submitted the photo and to whom to direct any questions.)
2. In the Title/Subject field, enter a title for your article.
3. From the News Article drop-down box, select an option that specifies how the news article will be formatted.
*If your article is in HTML, change the News Article drop-down field to "Article uses HTML".
Otherwise, leave the News Article drop-down field at "Article uses Plain Text".*
4. Type or paste the text of the article in the Article field.

5. Click the **Submit** button.
Your article will be sent to the group administrator for review.



Photos

The Group Photos screen lets you view all the photographs posted on a group or course homepage. These pages display small previews of each of the active photos, a photo title, and the first few lines of each photo's description.

To view photos at the Group Photos screen

1. Click the **My Groups** tab.
2. Click the group name whose homepage you want to view.
3. From the Group Tools menu, click **Photos**.
The Group Photos screen will display.
4. To view an individual photo, either click on the photo's preview image, the photo's title, or the photo's View Photo link.
The photo appears in the View Photo screen.

To submit a photo

1. Click the **My Groups** tab.
2. Click the group name whose homepage you want to view.
3. From the Group Tools menu, click **Photos**.
The Group Photos screen will display.
4. Click **Submit a Photo**.
The Submit a Photo screen will be displayed, with your name

automatically entered in the Submitted By field. (This lets the group or course leader know who has submitted the photo and to whom to direct any questions.)

5. In the Photo File Name field, enter the full directory path and filename for the file containing the photograph you want to submit.
You can also click the Browse button to display a dialog box that lets you navigate to the correct directory and specify the file you want to submit. You can submit .jpg/.jpeg or .gif images only.
6. In the Photo Title field, enter the title of the photograph as you would like it displayed on the group or course homepage.
7. From the Photo Caption drop-down box, select an option that specifies how the photo caption will be formatted.
If you want to format the caption using bold, italic or colored text, you can use standard HTML tags to format the caption.
8. Type or paste the text of the caption in the Caption field.
9. Click the **Submit** button.
*To exit without submitting the photo, click Cancel.
The submitted photo will be reviewed by the group leader.*

Links

The Group Links screen lets you access a list of Internet links posted on a group or course homepage. The screen displays each link's title, the date the link was posted, and the name of the person who submitted the link.

To access links

1. Access the Group Studio application.
2. Click the **My Groups** tab.
3. Click the group name whose homepage you want to view.
4. From the Group Tools menu, click **Links**.
The Group Links screen will display.
5. To access a link, click on its title.
A new browser window will appear displaying the link's content.

To submit a link

1. Click the **My Groups** tab.
2. Click the group name whose homepage you want to view.
3. From the Group Tools menu, click **Links**.
The Group Photos screen will display.
4. Click **Submit a Link**.
The Submit a Link screen will be displayed, with your name automatically

- entered in the Submitted By field. (This lets the group or course leader know who has submitted the link and to whom to direct any questions.)*
5. In the Photo File Name field, enter the full directory path and filename for the file containing the photograph you want to submit.
You can also click the Browse button to display a dialog box that lets you navigate to the correct directory and specify the file you want to submit. You can submit .jpg/.jpeg or .gif images only.
 6. In the Title/Subject field, enter a title for the link.
 7. In the URL field, enter the uniform resource locator (URL) for the link.
For example, <http://www.nasa.gov>
 8. From the Link Description drop-down box, select an option to specify the link description format.
If you want to format the text using bold, italic, or colored text, or if you want to add images and tables, you can use standard HTML tags to format the link description.
 9. Type or paste the text of the link in the Link field.
 10. Click the **Submit** button.
*To exit without submitting the article, click Cancel.
The submitted link will be reviewed by the group leader.*

Files

The Files page lets you access the files posted for sharing on a group homepage. This page lets you navigate through the folders created to store shared files, displays a list of the files stored in each folder, and lets you search for files.

To access files

1. Access the Group Studio application.
2. Click the **My Groups** tab.
3. Click the group name whose homepage you want to view.
4. From the Group Tools menu, click **Files**.
The Group Files screen will display.
5. Click on a folder name to display the list of files stored in the folder in the Files list.
6. Click the filename.
The system will open a new browser window to display the file's contents, or will prompt you to enter a filename and path to save the file.

To find a file by searching

1. Access the Group Studio application.
2. Click the **My Groups** tab.
3. Click the group name whose homepage you want to view.

4. From the Group Tools menu, click **Files**.
The Group Files screen will display.
5. Under “File and Folder Search”, select one or more checkboxes for each field you want to search (File Names, Folder Names, File Content).
6. In the “that contain” field, type the text you want to use in your search.
7. Click the **Search** button.
The system will search for files and/or folders that match your search criteria and display the search results on the Group Search Results page.

To submit a file

1. Click the **My Groups** tab.
2. Click the group name whose homepage you want to view.
3. From the Group Tools menu, click **Files**.
The Group Files screen will display.
4. Click on the folder name where you wish to have your file saved.
5. Click “**Submit a new file for xxx**”, where “xxx” is name of the selected folder.
The Submit a File screen will be displayed, with your name automatically entered in the Added By field, and the folder name is automatically entered in the Folder name field.
6. In the File Name field, enter the full directory path and filename for the file you want to submit.
You can also click the Browse button to display a dialog box that lets you navigate to the correct directory and specify the file you want to submit.
7. Click the **Submit** button.
To exit without submitting a file, click Cancel.
The submitted file will be reviewed by the group leader.

Message Board

The contents of a message board are divided into topics, messages, and replies. Topics initiate discussions. When members respond directly to a topic they create a message. When they respond to a message they post a reply.

To view message board content

1. Click the **My Groups** tab.
2. Click the group name whose homepage you want to view.
3. Click on the topic that interests you.
A new page appears that lists the messages associated with the topic.
4. Select what you want to view:
 - To view the contents of a message, click on the message.

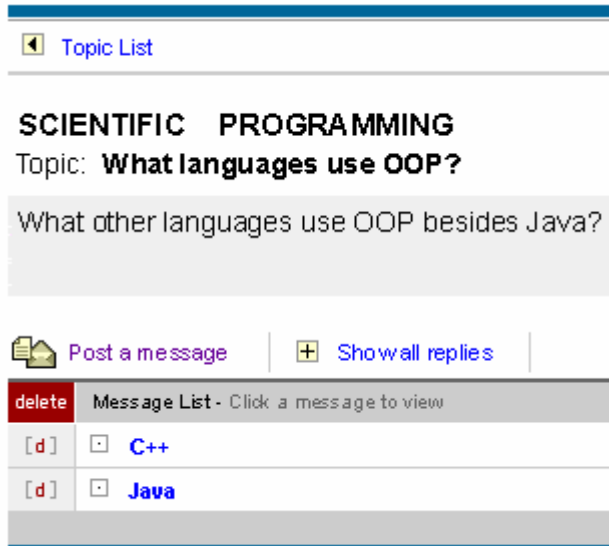
- To view a list of all the replies, click on the plus button, that is labeled "Show all Replies".
An indented list of all the replies appears.
- To view an individual reply, click on the reply.


To post a topic

1. Click the **My Groups** tab.
2. Click the group name whose homepage you want to view.
The group home page appears.
3. In the Group Tools menu section, click on the **Message board** link.
A page appears that lists all of the topics that have been posted to the course or group.
4. Click on the folder that is labeled "**Post a Topic**".
A page appears with a field labeled "Title" and a field labeled "Description."
5. In the title field type the topic.
6. In the description field type in a more elaborate description.
Note: The Description field will not support the following characters if they are preceded by a forward slash: l, n, r, or t. If you receive an error stating that the Description contains unsupported characters, look for any of these.
7. Click on **Post**.
Your topic will be posted to the message board.
Note: You can click Cancel to return to the Message Board Topics page.

To post a message

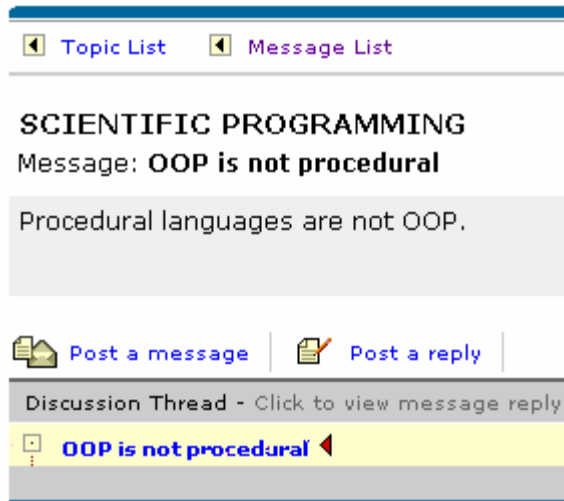
1. Click the **My Groups** tab.
2. Click the group name whose homepage you want to view.
The group home page appears.
3. In the Group Tools menu section, click on the **Message board** link.
A page appears that lists all of the topics that have been posted to the course or group.
4. Click on a topic that you are interested in posting a message to.
You see a screen very similar to the following:




5. Click on the **Post a Message** icon.  *A screen appears with a Subject and Message field.*
6. In the Subject field type the subject.
7. In the Message field type the message.
8. Click the **Post** button.
Your message will be posted under the topic.
Note: You can click Cancel to return to the Message Board Topics page.

To reply to a message

1. Click the **My Groups** tab.
2. Click the group name whose homepage you want to view.
The group home page appears.
3. In the Group Tools menu section, click on the **Message board** link.
A page appears that lists all of the topics that have been posted to the course or group.
4. Click on a topic whose messages you want to view.
A message list appears.
5. Click on the desired message.
You see a screen much like the following:



6. Click the **Post a Reply** icon.  [Post a Reply](#)
A screen appears with a Subject and Reply field.
7. In the Subject field type the subject.
8. In the Reply field type the message.
9. Click the **Post** button.
Your message will be posted under the topic.
Note: You can click Cancel to return to the Message Board Topics page.

Calendar

If you are a member of an online group, you have access to a dedicated calendar for that group.

To access a group calendar

1. Click the My Groups tab.
2. Click the group name whose homepage you want to view.
3. From the Group Tools menu, click Calendar.
The calendar will display.

For more information about using the Calendar application, refer to the Advanced Calendar manual, or click on the Help icon provided within the Calendar window.

E-mail

The E-mail Members page lets you specify which members of a group you want to receive an e-mail message. You can select to send a message either to every member of a group or course, or to select certain members only.

To e-mail members of a group

1. Click the **My Groups** tab.
2. Click the group name whose homepage you want to view.
3. From the Group Tools menu, click **E-mail**.
The E-mail Members page will display.
4. Click the checkbox next to the name of the members you want to receive the e-mail message.
If you want to send the e-mail message to all of the group or course members, click the Select All button.
5. Click the **Send E-mail** button.
The system will open the Compose E-mail page, but the names of the recipients will not be displayed.
6. If you wish to send to additional people, enter their e-mail addresses in the To, CC, or BCC fields.
7. Enter a subject in the Enter Subject field.
8. Type your message in the Enter Message field.
9. Select additional options (attachments, spell check, save copy to Sent folder, etc.) as appropriate.
10. When ready, click the **Send** button.
The e-mail will be sent to the selected members/addressees.

For more information on using the e-mail application, refer to the Advanced E-mail manual, or click on the Help icon provided in the Compose E-mail page.

Chat

If you are a member of a myCuesta group, you have access to a dedicated chat room for that group.


A “chat room” is an area online where you can communicate with other members in real-time. In order for a chat to take place, participants must be using Chat at the same time.

In addition to being able to “chat” with all participants currently signed into Chat, you can use the Whisper feature to send a private message to just one or more participants in a chat session. Only the participants whose screen names you select will receive the message. The other chat room participants cannot view the message in their chat screens.

To participate in a chat session

1. Click the **My Groups** tab.
2. Click the group name whose homepage you want to view.
3. From the Group Tools menu, click **Chat**.
The Group Chat page will display.
4. Type your message in the lower window and press the [Enter] key on your keyboard.
The message will be sent to others in the chat session.

To whisper to one or more people

1. In a chat room you have joined, select the names of the users who should receive your private message.
You can select one or more names in the list of participants.
2. With one or more user names in the participants list selected, type the message you want to send in the lower window, and then click the **Whisper** button .
Only the chat room participant(s) whose name(s) you selected will receive the message.

To exit the chat room

- Click the **Exit** button at the top of the page.
You can also simply close the main Chat window.

For more information about using the Chat application, click the Help icon provided within the Group Chat page.

Members

The Group Members screen lists the members of a group.

To view group members

1. Click the **My Groups** tab.
2. Click the group name whose homepage you want to view.
3. From the Group Tools menu, click **Members**.
The Group Members screen will display, listing the following information:
 - *The member's name*
 - *The Course member type (Leader, Member, or TA) or the Group member type (Leader, Member, or Guest)*
 - *Any homepage link provided by the member*

- *The date of the member's last visit to the group or course homepage*

To view the member's profile

- Click the member's name.

Remove group membership

The My Groups screen lists the groups you currently belong to and the courses in which you are currently registered or teaching. The My Groups screen provides a link you can use to remove your membership from groups. The My Courses screen provides a link you can use to remove your membership from a course if you are a guest member of the course.

To remove your membership in a group

1. Click the **My Groups** tab.
2. Click the checkbox next to the appropriate group you want to quit.
3. Click the **Remove** button.
Note that you cannot remove your membership in a group where you act as the group leader.

Request a group

The Request New Group screen lets you request an online group for a campus club or other affiliation or interest.

You can request the creation of three types of groups:

- **Public groups.** Public groups that are open for anyone to join
- **Restricted groups** Membership in restricted groups is subject to certain restrictions. For example, to access a group home page for an academic or social fraternity, an individual must first be accepted as a member of that organization.
- **Hidden groups.** Hidden groups are not displayed in the group category index and do not have a guest view page. Hidden groups are typically used to publish and discuss sensitive information that should not be available even as a restricted group.

To request creation of a group, you must determine whether it will be public, restricted, or hidden.

NOTE: All groups must have a Cuesta College faculty or staff member as the group leader. Students cannot serve as a group leader.

To request a new group

1. Access the **Group Studio** application
2. Click the **Request Group** tab.
3. In the **Group Name** field, enter the name of the group as you want it to appear in the groups index.
4. In the **Group Title** field, enter a title for the group.
This title will appear next to the group name in the Groups Index.
5. From the **Guest Page Description** drop-down box, select whether the group's description will be formatted as plain text or as HTML formatted text.
6. In the text entry field below the drop-down box, enter a detailed description of the group.
This description can be up to 10,000 characters in length and can include a purpose or a mission statement. This description is initially posted to the group's guest view screen and can be changed at any time by the group leader.
7. From the **Group Category** drop-down box, select the category under which you would like to put the group.
8. Use the **Group Type** radio buttons to specify whether the group will be a public, restricted, or hidden.
If you are requesting creation of a restricted group, enter the group's access criteria in the text entry field below the radio buttons.
9. Optionally, you can specify that the group's content be blocked from being viewed by the Groups Administrator by checking the Admin Blocked checkbox.
10. From the fields in the **Browse Control** section, specify the user roles that will be allowed to see the group's listing on the Group Index.
11. From the **Group Applications** checkboxes, specify the applications and tools you want provided to the group through the homepage.
12. Click the appropriate checkbox if you want to be able to delegate management of group application and tools to other group members.
Unless you plan to maintain the group's homepage entirely yourself, you should check this box.
13. In the **Request Comment** field, enter any optional comments your institution should know as it evaluates whether to accept the request and create the group.
14. From the **Groups Policies** field, read your institution's policy governing online groups.

15. Check the box showing you have read and understand the policy.
You cannot submit the application until you have checked this box.
16. Click **Submit Request** to submit the application.
To exit without requesting group creation, click Cancel.
If you chose to submit the request, you will see a window stating your request has been submitted.
17. Click **OK**.
You are returned to the My Groups page.

NOTE: It is important to note that by requesting the creation of a group, you will become the group leader if it is approved.