

UMBC: Dipping our Grouper Toe into the Ocean of Role Based Access Control

Before the Campus Success Program, we (UMBC) had previously installed Grouper and created a few sample groups. We have been able to pull data from our various Peoplesoft systems into Grouper, creating reference groups, as a proof of concept. We've created two types of groups. Our first use-case was to create a group to give access to [Lynda.com](#). Our contract stated we could give access anyone that met one of the following criteria: ART majors, a student taking an ART class and faculty teaching an ART class. We created the three groups, based on select statements within Peoplesoft and then combined the three into a group we called [Lynda.com](#) Access. Our web SSO solution checked to make sure, when someone logs into [Lynda.com](#), that they are a member of the [Lynda.com](#) Access group. Our second use-case (still a work on progress) was/is to create a Grouper group that contained part-time faculty members. Our Peoplesoft HR SME gave us a big select statement to pull just that population, based on a number of Peoplesoft tables. We directly loaded that into a single Grouper group. The end goal is to replicate this group into Google apps allowing the Faculty Development Center to target part-time faculty members with emails, calendar notices and file sharing.

So, where does the Campus Success Program come in? We wanted to be part of a cohort of other institutions that were in the same boat - New or mostly new to Grouper and be able to work through issues together. Having access to the Grouper development team will also allow us to have answered for us some of the issues that naturally creep up during a new implementation.

Our Grouper project for Campus Success is to make use of the delivered TIER Docker containers. This will greatly speed up Grouper deployment and upgrades. Down the road, we will look to moving to AWS and make use of Kubernetes for automated resource provisioning. Our second goal is to be able to automatically provision and manage Google groups via membership in Grouper groups. These could be groups provisioned for each class, so BIOL 100 in Spring 2018 would have a corresponding Google group. Also, clubs and organizations would have a Google group provisioned based on membership in one of our campus portal organization groups.

We are early on in the project, but feel we are making decent progress. We've been able to successfully install and run the TIER Docker container. It was rather easy to setup but we had some issues with the Shibboleth integration. Thankfully that was resolved once we realized that our Puppet implementation was regularly clobbering our IP tables. Just this week we were able to use the Grouper to Google connector, written by Unicon, to mirror our first Grouper group to Google. Next we need to figure out what that really means in the way of user management. When a member of the Grouper group is removed, what happens in Google? Who owns the Google group? What sort of user management rights do they have? All good questions that we now need to work through.

Before we get too far along in the project, we will have to better understand group naming and organization within Grouper. At this point we feel that we are randomly throwing groups into Grouper. The [Grouper deployment guide](#) gives guidance for organization and naming. This will be a great resource. We plan on working closely with other Campus Success program participants to see their naming and organization strategies as well.

Stay tuned...