Hi everyone, my name is Kyra Bruce and I'm a third year Bachelor of Arts psychology student. I am part of the College of Social and Applied Human Sciences Super Seven support team, and today I will be talking about CourseLink collaborative tools, such as groups and discussions.

The groups tool allows students to interact in smaller work environments where they can discuss and collaborate with their peers. Students are often more inclined to participate in these smaller groups than in a lecture, which is a huge benefit of the tool.

Groups can contain up to 200 users and there is no limit to the number of groups in one course. Categories can be created under which certain groups can be classified. Discussion forums and locker areas can be set up to allow for further communication among students, and Dropbox folders can be set up for assignment submission.

Subgroups can be created to divide bigger groups into smaller ones if need be. Students can be graded individually or as a group. Groups are assigned based on different criteria and enrolment types. As seen on the slide, there are seven enrolment types to choose from when creating a group [Enrolment type tab: # of Groups – No Auto Enrolments; Groups of #; # of Groups; Groups of # - Self Enrolment; # of Groups, Capacity of # - Self Enrolment; Single user, member-specific groups].

Here's what we can do for you in terms of groups. We can create categories and groups in CourseLink and help determine appropriate enrolment types. We can attach new or existing discussion topics to groups, as well as rubrics in order to assess students. We can delete a group or category after one is made. We can move students to and from groups. And we can set up additional options, such as discussion areas, locker areas, and Dropbox folders.

The discussions tool encourages students to share their ideas amongst themselves, while comparing and commenting on each other's thoughts. Forums and related topics can be created where students can post their work and respond to others' work. Rubrics and grade items can be attached to discussions in the gradebook to help assess students. Students' posts can also be assessed directly within the thread. There is an option for private, single user groups with restricted discussion areas for students to journal, if that is something that would be beneficial for your course.

Faculty and students can subscribe to a forum or topic to stay up to date with posts. Availability for discussion timeframes can be set. Locking options for topics to be released can also be set;
the first option being to unlock the topic, the second to lock it, and the third to set an availability time frame so it is unlocked between certain dates. This can be seen on the slide.

Forums can also be restricted to certain groups so that only that group can see it.

Here's what we can do for you in terms of discussions. We can integrate and create discussion forums and topics. We can set availability options to allow for forums and topics to be open during a certain time frame. We can lock and unlock forums. We can assess discussion posts in the gradebook and in a thread. And we can associate a discussion forum with a group.

For more information or additional resources, feel free to contact me at the email on the slide [kbruce03@uoguelph.ca] or visit our open ed support websites [CourseLink Groups Tool; CourseLink Discussions Tool]. Thank you so much.