

Collaborative Creation

You may be developing a new syllabus with the other faculty of a team taught course, writing a joint paper or proposal with several colleagues, devising a new process with others in your department, or pursuing any other project that requires multiple people to work together on a single result. Whatever your specific need, a host of online creation tools brings many advantages to the process of collaborative creation:

- work together whether you're across the room, across the campus, or across the continent from your collaborators
- fluidly shift between working simultaneously and asynchronously
- easily manage and incorporate contributions by more people than could usefully work together in person
- maintain a single, platform-independent body of work, and track all the revisions that lead to the current state
- if desired, easily publish or share the work with others via the wide variety of communication channels available on the internet

Google Docs	http://docs.google.com	an extensive selection of basic office productivity applications online, all of which support simultaneous work and revision history
Microsoft Office Live	http://officelive.com	a greatly enhanced file sharing system (like a super network drive) with work done in full powered Microsoft applications, which you must have installed
Zoho	http://zoho.com	an extensive selection of fairly advanced office productivity applications online; premium options available, but the free, basic functionality is very, very good
Zoho Project	http://projects.zoho.com	the project management tool for Zoho gets a special mention; this is the best fully free project management suite we've found
Wikis	http://wiki.williams.edu http://wiki.zoho.com	ancient in internet years, but still the premiere tool for massively parallel content creation and management
Twiddla	http://twiddla.com	whiteboard and co-browsing; the fully functional 30 day trial could easily convince one to buy a subscription; a specialized tool, but excellent within that realm
Mindmeister	http://mindmeister.com	mind mapping and spatial data organization; another specialized tool, again with a trial/pay system
Flickr	http://flickr.com	pretty much everything you could want to do with annotating, organizing, and managing images; a premium (a.k.a. pro) upgrade is available, but the free functionality is plenty rich on its own
Wordpress	http://wordpress.com http://people.williams.edu	one of the best lightweight content management systems; supports multiple users with a variety of authoring and editing access controls

You need to create	You can use
text / word processing	Google Docs Document - word processing documents Microsoft Office Live - Word Zoho Writer - word processing Wikis (Confluence, Zoho) - primarily plain text oriented, with a bit of formatting and some support for images and links Wordpress - easy to publish on completion
presentation / slide show	Google Docs Presentation - slide show tool; create basic slides (text and images), no special transitions Microsoft Office Live - Powerpoint Zoho Show - slide show tool Twiddla - replay a series of steps, including visiting web pages and annotating them
drawing, chart, or diagram	Google Docs Drawing - wide variety of shapes and drawing; flow charts and other diagrams fairly well supported Twiddla - annotation of images and web pages, and free drawing
ideas / brain storming	Mindmeister - idea mapping; spatially and visually related text, images, and hyperlinks Twiddla - annotation of images and web pages, and free drawing
support and reference materials	Wikis (Confluence, Zoho) - primarily plain text oriented, with a bit of formatting and some support for images and links Mindmeister - collections of related ideas, text, and images Flickr - excellent image annotation and good meta-data, collections of images
data set	Google Docs Spreadsheet - basic spread sheet capabilities, can export to many formats Zoho Sheet - more advanced spreadsheet capabilities, can export to many formats
project plan	Zoho Project - milestones, tasks, scheduling, planning docs, and all those other fun project management toys
a web site	Wordpress - one of the best lightweight content management systems Google Sites - quickly create functional websites, with easy integration of all Google's toys Wikis - use when content is more important than a pretty presentation

If you find these kinds of tools interesting and/or useful you may also want to explore:

http://glow.williams.edu	the Williams learning management system has a number of collaboration tools designed to be used by students in a course
http://lovelycharts.com	a great tool for creating charts and diagrams; collaboration functions are a for-pay feature, but useful even without that
http://bubbl.us	another take on mind-mapping; great for a single user, but a bit clunky for collaboration
http://gliffy.com	quick and easy charts and diagrams for a single user, but the collaboration aspects aren't very good; easy to integrate with wordpress
http://wave.google.com	a new approach to online communication; blends chat, email, and forums; take a lot of getting used to, but a powerful tool