SUMMIT UNIVERSITY® ONLINE

SU Self-Study Courses Department
Online Course Group Policy

Occasionally Summit University receives requests from groups of people who would like to take an online course offered through our Self-Study Courses Department together, as opposed to individually. This may especially be the case for groups in other countries where the majority of the members do not speak English fluently (the only language in which our online courses are currently offered) or several members of the group do not have a computer. This is possible and very easy to do by following the steps below.

Steps for Taking and Completing a Course as a Group

1. Select a facilitator for your group. This person will be responsible for:
   a. Collecting group member information and money and registering the group through the Summit University Registrar,
   b. Working with the group to establish meeting times and places (either in-person or online)
   c. Accessing the online course content and sharing it with the group,
   d. Organizing the translation of worksheets (if necessary) and
   e. Communicating with the course instructor on behalf of the group if questions come up.
2. The group facilitator needs to sign and submit the Group Facilitator Agreement to the SU Registrar (registrar@summituniversity.org).
3. Work with your facilitator to register and pay for the course as a group using the Group Registration Form. Submit this form to the SU Registrar (registrar@summituniversity.org) who will then provide instructions on how to pay.
   a. Group Course Fee: $50 per person
4. Once your group has registered and the group members have paid for the course, your facilitator will be provided with a group course user account that anyone in the group can use to access course material.
5. Begin moving through the course together. You will have three months to complete the course as a group.

Ideas for Group Study

Each course is 6-7 units long and each unit can be completed in approximately 2-4 hours. If a group chose to meet once a month for about two hours at a time to study the material, they would be able to complete the course easily within the one-year group enrollment period.

Here are a few ideas for ways to study the material together in a group setting:

- Listen to the lecture excerpts together and then discuss the Forum Discussion questions as a group.
- Practice the suggested spiritual exercises and meditations together.
- Assign readings or lecture excerpts as homework, or work through all of the online material together.
- Where applicable, try putting the spiritual techniques that you learn into practice in between meetings and then share success stories and learning experiences with the group in subsequent meetings.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Why does everyone who participates in the group have to pay $50 if the group is only given one online course username/password combination?**
An SU online course is similar to a SU seminar. It is designed to be a transformative learning experience that each individual in the group is purchasing. Like a book group where each individual would be asked to purchase the books being read, we are asking each participant to pay a fee, which will grant them access to the course content and the SU experience.

2. **How do group participants get access to course materials and handouts?**
It is the responsibility of the group facilitator to make sure that every participant receives the required course materials and handouts for study. The group facilitator is welcome to share this information physically or digitally. The Group Facilitator Agreement gives specific guidelines for how the group facilitator may do this.

3. **Do groups get access to the online forums in the course?**
Yes. All groups will have access to the online forum discussions in the course. However, we encourage groups to use the forum questions for group discussion during your sessions and not actually post in the forums online, as any forum posts will appear as being from the group instead of an individual.

4. **Can someone join the group part way through the course?**
Yes! Individuals are welcome to join the group at a later point, however it is up to the group facilitator to help these individuals catch up on the course work that they missed. This can be done simply by sharing the group username/password with the new group member so that he or she can access the previously covered online material. Students joining the group should work with the group facilitator to register and pay for the course through SU Registrar using a new copy of the Group Registration Form.

5. **If I drop out part way through the course, can I get my money back?**
No. The $50 fee is a non-refundable purchase.

6. **What if I can't complete the course with the group? Can I get an individual extension?**
No, you cannot receive an individual extension under the group course login. Each group will be given six months to complete their course. If you are unable to complete the course with your group, we suggest that you purchase a three-month online course extension for yourself as an individual. For $75, you will receive access to the online course for three months from date of purchase. (Contact the SU Registrar (registrar@summituniversity.org) to add this three-month extension for the extension course to your individual student account.)

7. **What if the group can't complete the course in six months? Can the group get an extension?**
Yes, the group can request an extension for $10/person/month. For example, a group of 10 people that would like a two-month extension would pay $100/month, or $200 total, for the extension. To request a group extension, contact the SU Registrar (registrar@summituniversity.org).

8. **Can our group meet virtually instead of in-person?**
Yes, absolutely! How you meet as a group is entirely up to you. We have had past groups complete courses both in-person and virtually.

9. How can we conduct a meeting virtually?

SU recommends that you review the video training "Using Zoom for SU Extension Courses" posted on the SU Zoom Training Library. You can access the FREE Zoom Training Library from Summit University by following the instructions here: http://SummitUniversity.org/ZoomTrainingLibrary.

In the library you will find:

- Links to helpful Zoom resources
- A Facilitator Guide to get started
- A Participants Guide
- A library of recorded trainings from TSL members on how to use Zoom for Community Building, Spiritual Study and SU Online Self-Study Courses!

Need help to access the library? Contact SU Tech Support at support@SummitUniversity.org. Please keep in mind that SU is not available assist with groups with virtual meeting setup or technical support related to the group's chosen meeting platform.

Meeting Option Suggestions

Groups sometimes ask SU for recommendations on meeting options for their group self-study courses. We don't recommend a specific option, because we have had past groups complete courses both in-person and online. We encourage you to work with the setups and systems that you already have in place with your group instead of trying to learn a new system for your group self-study course. That said, following are some suggestions for meeting options. SU cannot assist with tech problems or setup related to group meetings.

In-Person Meetings or Hybrid Meetings with In-Person and Zoom

The easiest group meeting option is in-person with a computer. The group can watch or listen to course media together and then participate in group discussions. However, you may also want to meet in person and have other participants join via a Zoom meeting. For suggestions, please listen to the Video Training "Tips and Techniques for a Smooth Outreach Presentation Using Zoom" posted on the Zoom Training Library at Summit University at http://SummitUniversity.org/ZoomTrainingLibrary.

Webinar Service

Webinar services come in all shapes and sizes, including free, paid, small group, large group, and phone call options, etc. Additionally, some webinar services are easier to use than others. We recommend that you do your research and have a test session before settling on this option if it is new to you and your group.

Which Communication Tool Is Right for Me?

After reading these suggestions, you may be wondering which communication tool which is right for your group. Ultimately, this comes down to your level of comfort with the tool and the needs of the group participants. Do your best to take into account your group members' physical location and tech-savviness before selecting any tool. Talk with your group members and see if they have any suggestions before selecting an option. For virtual meetings, we recommend that you hold a test session to work out any technical problems before the first official meeting.