Blogs

Blogs provide a space for sharing thoughts and information, working collectively, and giving and receiving feedback. Blogs can be created for all members of the course to use (course blog), or for individuals (individual blog). Course blogs allow all members of the course to contribute entries and post comments to the blog. Individual blogs allow only the individual who ‘owns’ the blog to contribute entries, but everyone can post comments.

For more ideas about how to use blogs in a course, please see the Blogs – Helpful Hints document.

Adding a Blog to a course:

1. Once inside your course, make sure Edit Mode (upper right corner) has been turned ‘On.’

2. Click the ‘plus sign’ at the top of the course menu and select ‘Tool Link.’

3. Give the blog a name and choose ‘Blogs’ for the tool type. Check the box to make it available to users and click Submit.
4. Once added to the course menu, click on the link to set up the blog.

5. Click the ‘Create Blog’ button at the top of the screen.

6. Give the blog a name and provide instructions for students.
   1. **Blog Information**
      
      🆚 Name: Class Blog
      
      Instructions
      
      Please use this blog to post anything interesting that you would like to share with the class.

7. Make the blog available for students and set availability restrictions if desired.
   2. **Blog Availability**
      
      Blog Availability: Yes  No

8. Select the type of blog participation.
   **Note:** ‘Individual to All Students’ will enable each student to have their own blog page. ‘Course’ will create one blog for the entire course to share.
4. **Blog Participation**

   Blog Type
   - Individual to All Students
   - Course
   - [ ] Allow Anonymous Entries and Comments

9. Choose how to index blog entries and whether to allow users to edit and delete entries and comments.

5. **Blog Settings**

   Index Entries
   - Monthly
     *Indexing will organize entries by the chosen time-frame.*
   - Weekly

   [ ] Allow Users to Edit and Delete Entries
   [ ] Allow Users to Delete Comments

10. Select whether or not to grade the blog and enter a point value if needed.

    Optional: Adjust the ‘needs grading’ status, and add an associated rubric if desired. The ‘needs grading’ status will cause the ‘needs grading’ symbol [!] to appear in the grade center after a student posts a set number of entries. For example, if you want to grade the blog after each student has posted three entries, instead of after every entry, adjust the setting to ‘3.’

6. **Grade Settings**

   Grade Blog
   - [ ] No grading
   - [ ] Grade: Points possible: [5]

   [ ] Show participants in “needs grading” status [!] after every [3] Entries

   Associated Rubrics: [ ] Add Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Date Last Edited</th>
<th>Show Rubric to Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

   **Note:** If you decide to grade the blog, keep in mind that it is graded as a ‘whole’ and not by individual entry. Please see the ‘Grading a Blog’ section in this tutorial for more details.

11. Click Submit.

   **Submit**

   *Click Submit to finish. Click Cancel to quit without saving changes.*

   [Cancel] [Submit]
12. The new blog is displayed.

Creating a Blog Entry:

1. Navigate to the list of blogs and click one to open it.

2. Click the ‘Create Blog Entry’ button at the top.

3. Enter a title and the entry message. The html editor can be used to create links, add images, add attachments, etc.

   1. **Blog Entry Information**

      * Title: NY Times Article

      Entry Message:
      
      If you haven't seen it yet, be sure to check out this [New York Times article](#) - I think you'll find it very interesting! Any thoughts?

4. Attach files if desired, and click Post Entry.

   2. **Blog Entry Files**

      Attach File: Browse My Computer | Browse Content Collection

   3. **Submit**

      Click Post to finish. Click Cancel to quit without saving changes.
5. The new entry is added to the blog.

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**Adding a Comment to a Blog:**

Students and instructors can add comments to each other’s blog entries and existing comments.

1. Navigate to the blog entry you want to comment on and click the ‘Comment’ button.

   ![Comment Button](image)

   **NY Times Article**

   Posted by Amy Brusini at Wednesday, October 10, 2012 2:42:19 PM EDT

   I thought you all might be interested in this NY Times article - any thoughts?

   ![Comment Section](image)

   **test1 student said**... New

   Wednesday, October 10, 2012 2:49:36 PM EDT

   Wow - maybe this will replace the Kindle.

2. Type in the comment and click ‘Add’ when finished.

   ![Comment Form](image)

   **Comment:**

   Yes, possibly. The dual screens and color animations are a clear advantage, in my opinion.
3. The comment is displayed.

Grading a Blog

Blackboard blogs can be graded. If you choose to grade a blog, Blackboard will automatically create a column with the blog’s name in the grade center.

**Note:** The grading feature in the blogs tool allows you to add/edit a grade for the blog as a whole – not for each individual entry. (I.e. Blackboard creates one column in the grade center for the blog – not multiple columns for each blog entry.) If you want to enter a separate grade for each blog entry, you will need to manually create your own columns in the grade center.

1. Navigate to the list of blogs and click on the one to be graded.

2. Blog entries will be listed in the center with an index of entries on the right side of the screen. If not already displayed, click on the indexed entry you wish to grade. Next, click the ‘All Course Members’ link above the index to expand the list of students.
3. Once the list of students has been expanded, you’ll notice a yellow exclamation point symbol next to the names of students who have not yet been graded. In the example below, test1_student has not been graded.

4. Click on the student’s name to view only his/her blog entries. Enter the grade, any feedback to the student (optional), and any grading notes for yourself (optional.) Click Submit.
5. The grade will be automatically entered into the Blackboard grade center.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Username</th>
<th>Course Blog</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>student</td>
<td>test1</td>
<td>test1_student</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>student</td>
<td>test2</td>
<td>test2_student</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>student</td>
<td>test3</td>
<td>test3_student</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. From the blogs page, if you would like to go back and view other students’ entries, click the current student’s name to expand the selection. Next, select another student or select ‘All Course Members’ to view all posts by all students.
Grading a Group Blog

Group blogs can be graded in two ways: one grade can be given for all members of the group, or individual grades can be given to each member of the group.

1. To grade a group blog, navigate to the Control Panel > Users and Groups > Groups.

2. Click the name of the group to be graded. In this example, we’ll select Group 2.

4. Blog entries will be listed in the center and the grading pane will be to the right.

To give one grade for the entire group: Make sure the top of the grading pane reads ‘All Group Members.’ Fill in the grade and feedback for students (optional) as well as any grading notes for yourself (optional). Click ‘Submit’ and the grade will be automatically entered into the grade center, filled in for all group members.

To grade each group member individually: Click the ‘All Course Members’ link above the index of entries to expand the list of students. You’ll notice a yellow exclamation point symbol next to the names of students who have not yet been graded. Click on a student’s name to view only his/her blog entries.
In this example, we have selected to view test3_student’s entry. Fill in the grade and feedback for the student (optional) as well as any grading notes for yourself (optional). Click ‘Submit’ and the grade will be automatically entered into the grade center, filled in for only this particular student.

This grade and feedback will go to only this particular student.

To continue grading other students individually, again click the current student’s name at the top of the grading pane to expand the list of students. Select the student you wish to grade.