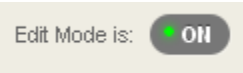
Blogs

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.

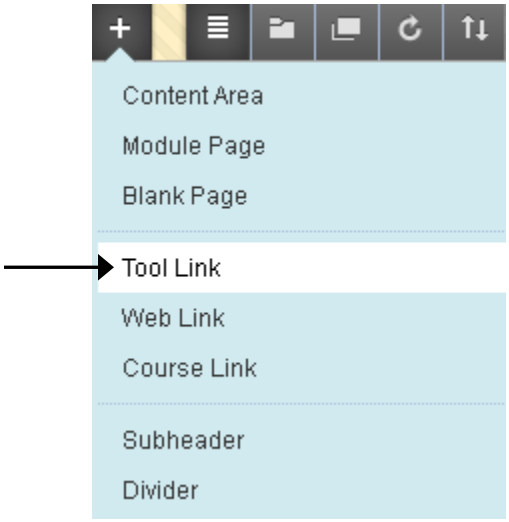
For more ideas about how to use blogs in a course, please see the Blogs – Helpful Hints document.

Adding a Blog to a course:

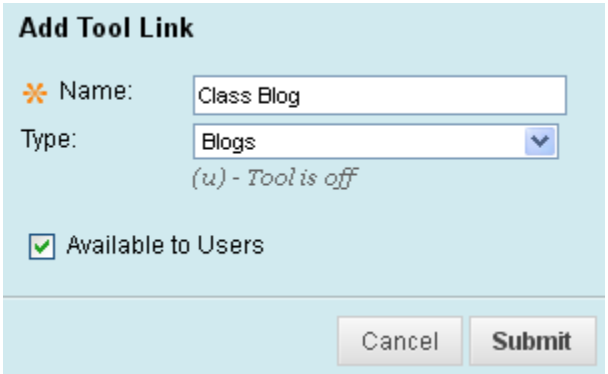
1. Once inside your course, make sure Edit Mode (upper right corner) has been turned 'On.'



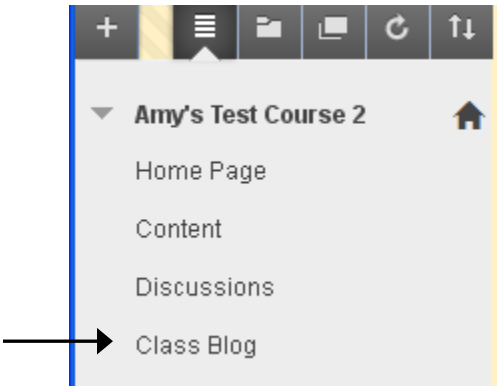
2. Click the 'plus sign' at the top of the course menu and select 'Tool Link.'



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.

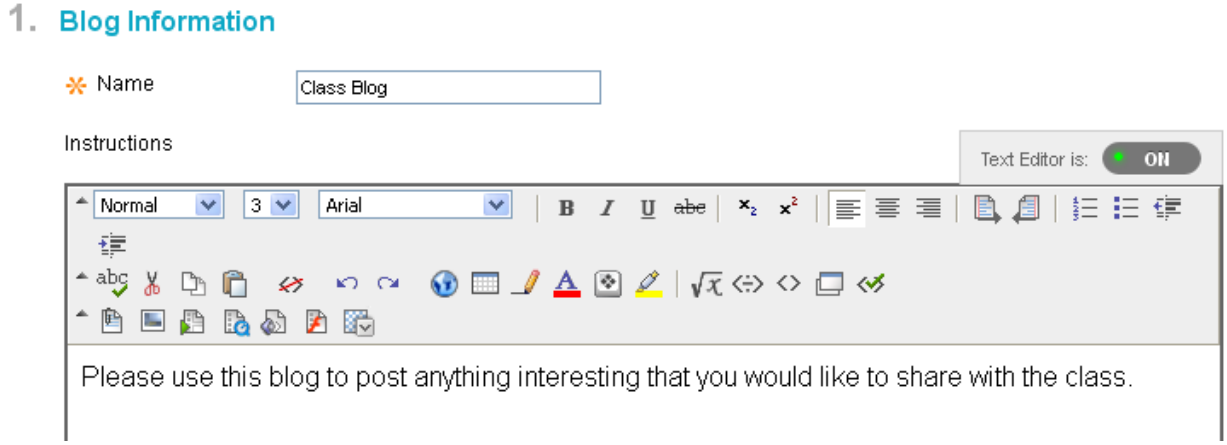


4. Once added to the course menu, click on the link to set up the blog.

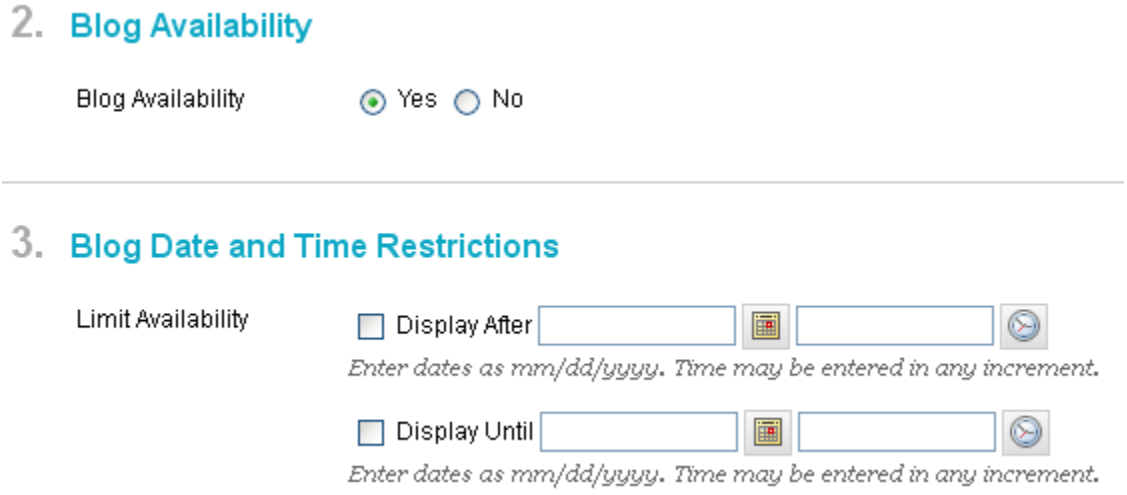


5. Click the 'Create Blog' button at the top of the screen.

6. Give the blog a name and provide instructions for students.

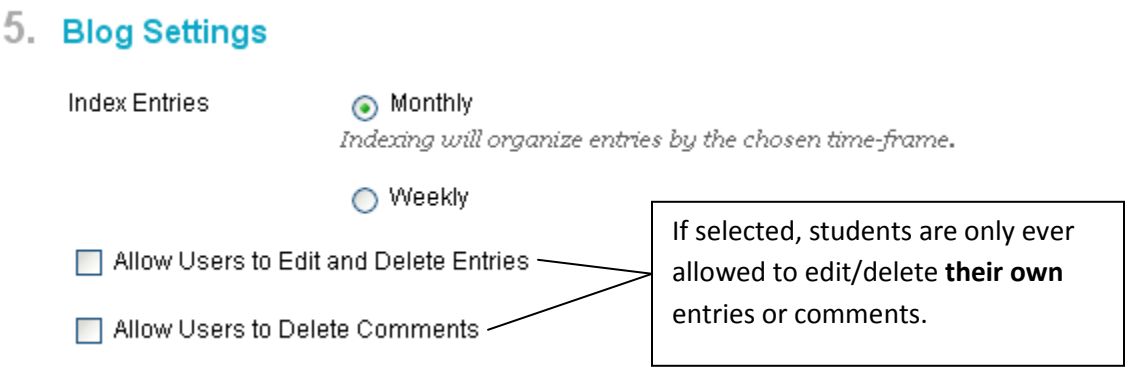


7. Make the blog available for students and set availability restrictions if desired.



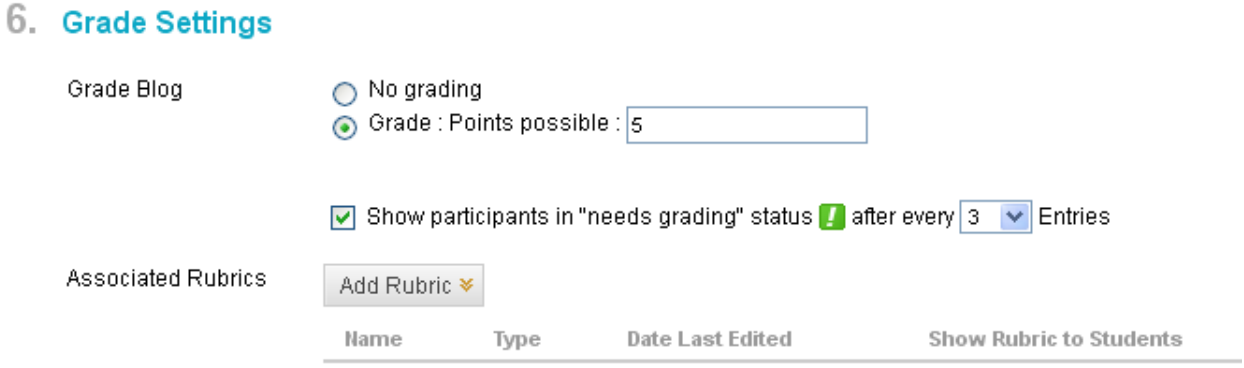
8. Select the type of blog participation.
Note: 'Individual to All Students' will enable each student to have their own blog page. 'Course' will create one blog for the entire course to share.

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



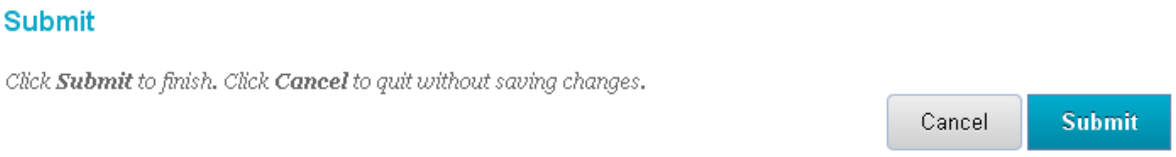
10. Select whether or not to grade the blog and enter a point value if needed.

    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.'

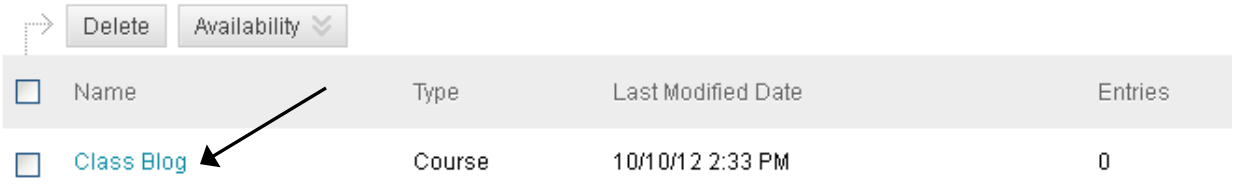


Note: If you decide to grade the blog, keep in mind that it is graded as a 'whole' and not by individual entry. Please see the 'Grading a Blog' section in this tutorial for more details.

11. Click Submit.

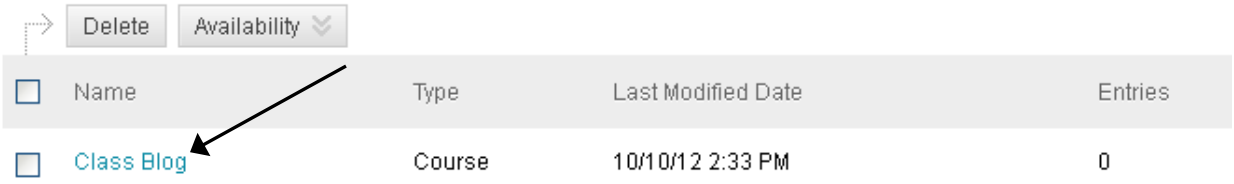


12. The new blog is displayed.



Creating a Blog Entry:

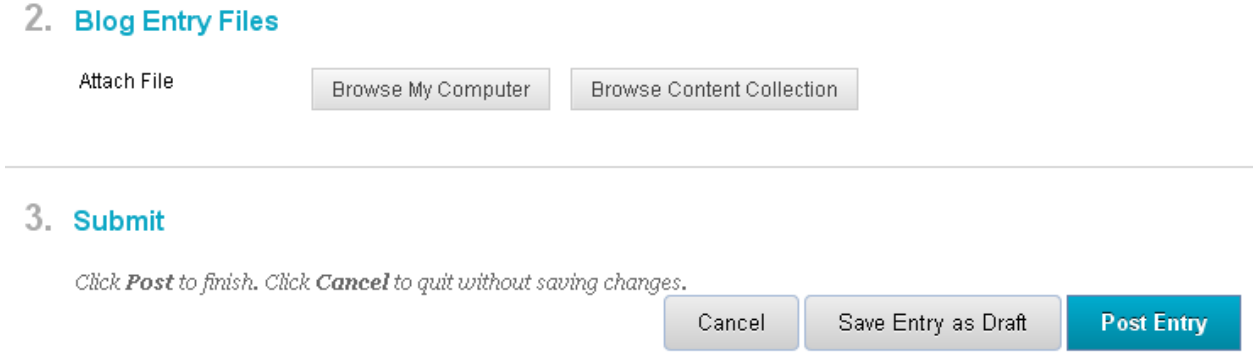
1. Navigate to the list of blogs and click one to open it.



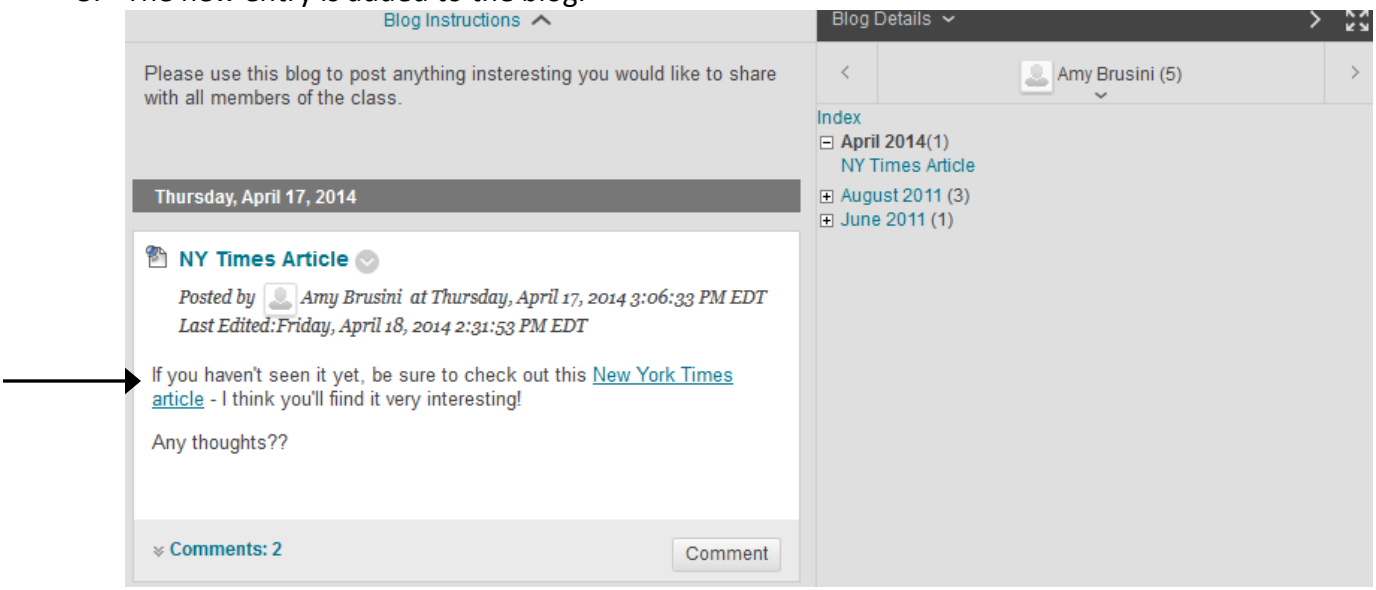
2. Click the 'Create Blog Entry' button at the top.

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

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



5. The new entry is added to the blog.

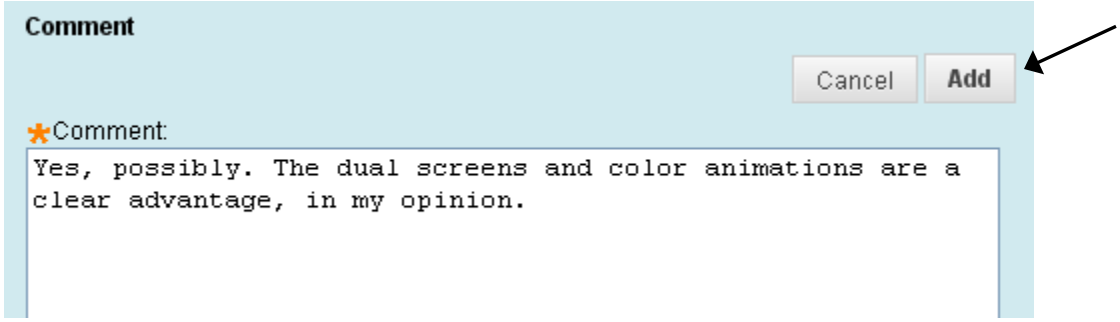


Adding a Comment to a Blog:

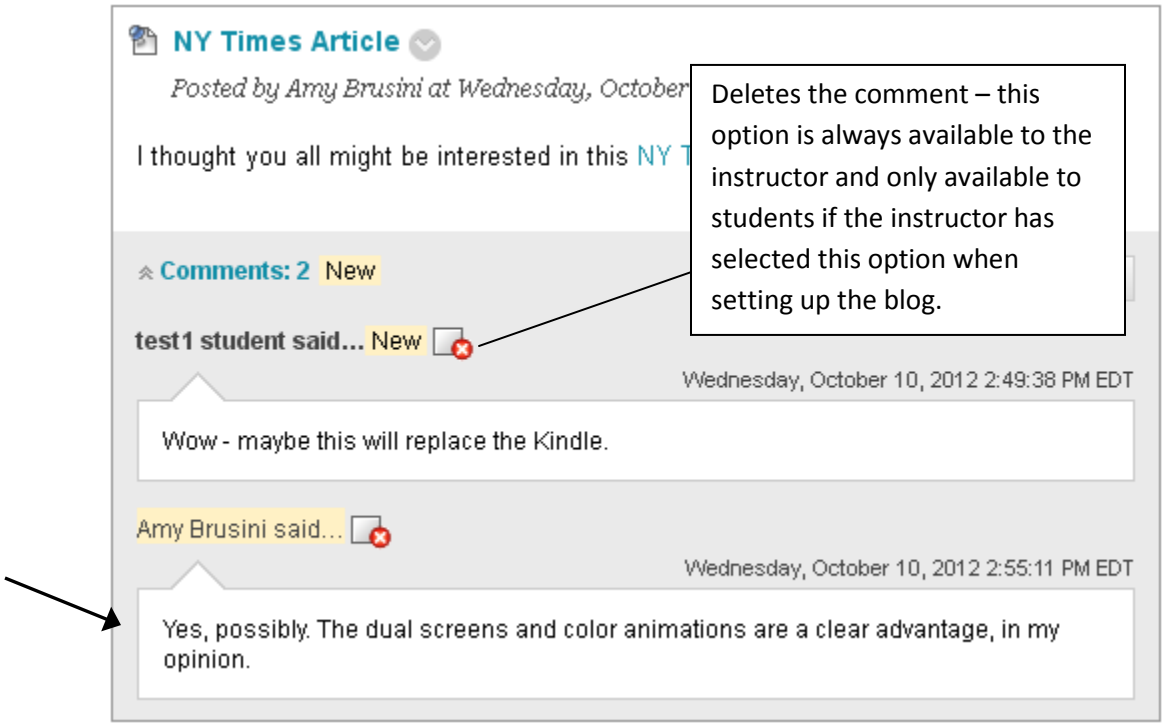
Students and instructors can add comments to each other's blog entries and existing comments.

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

2. Type in the comment and click 'Add' when finished.



3. The comment is displayed.

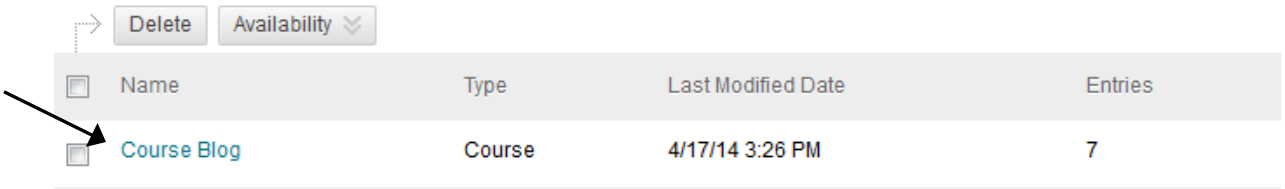


Grading a Blog

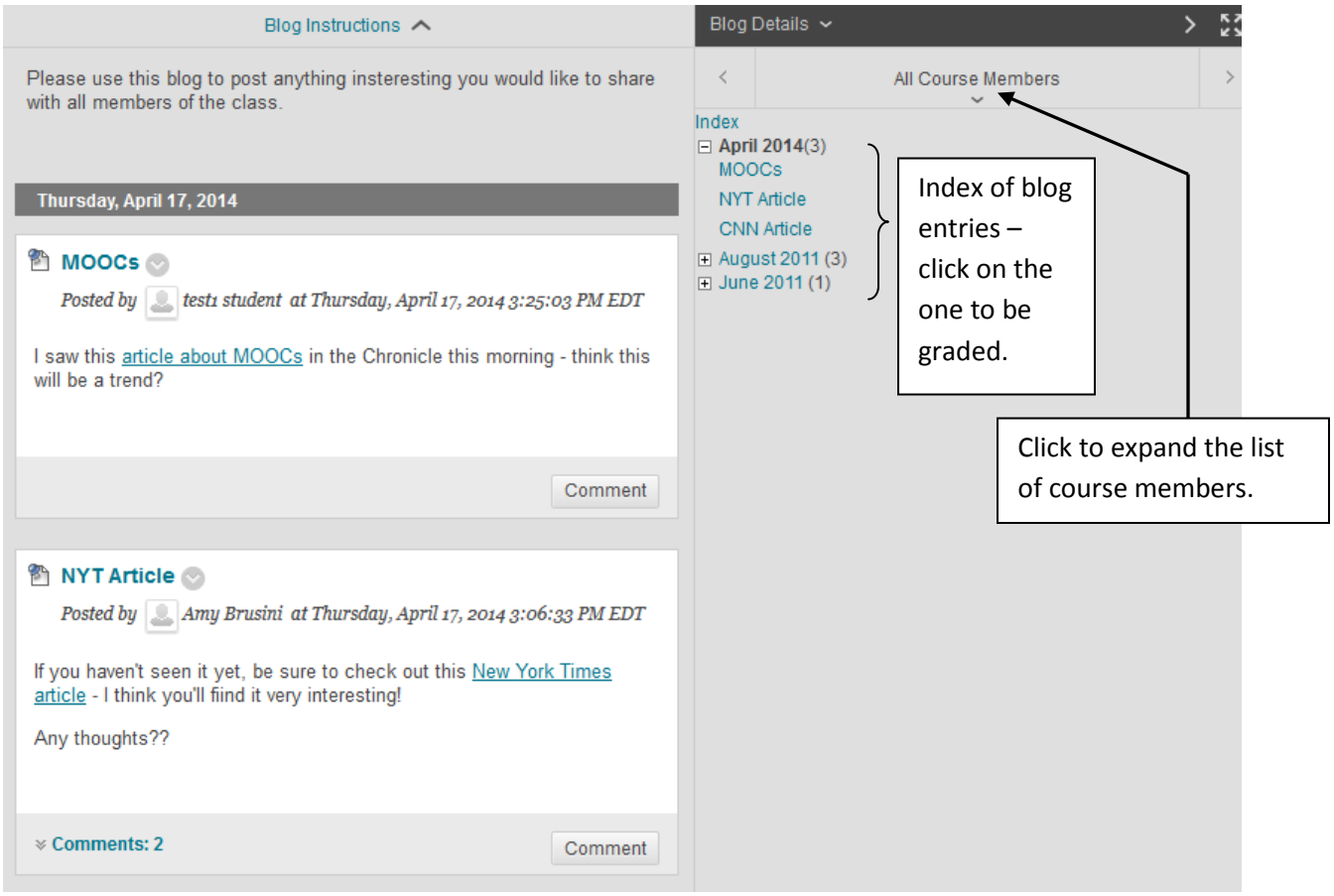
Blackboard blogs can be graded. If you choose to grade a blog, Blackboard will automatically create a column with the blog's name in the grade center.

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.

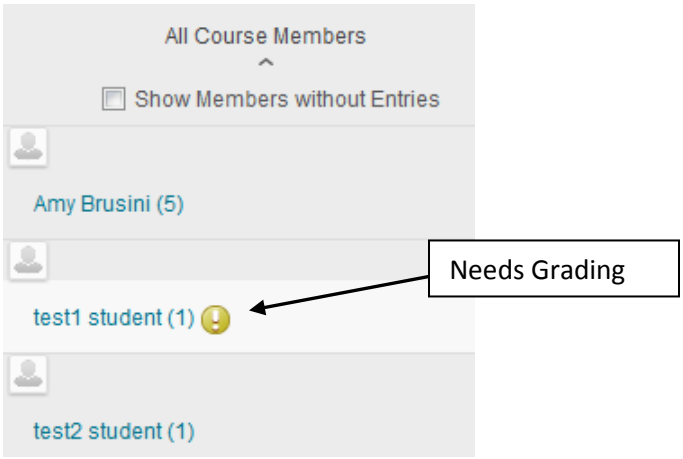
1. Navigate to the list of blogs and click on the one to be graded.



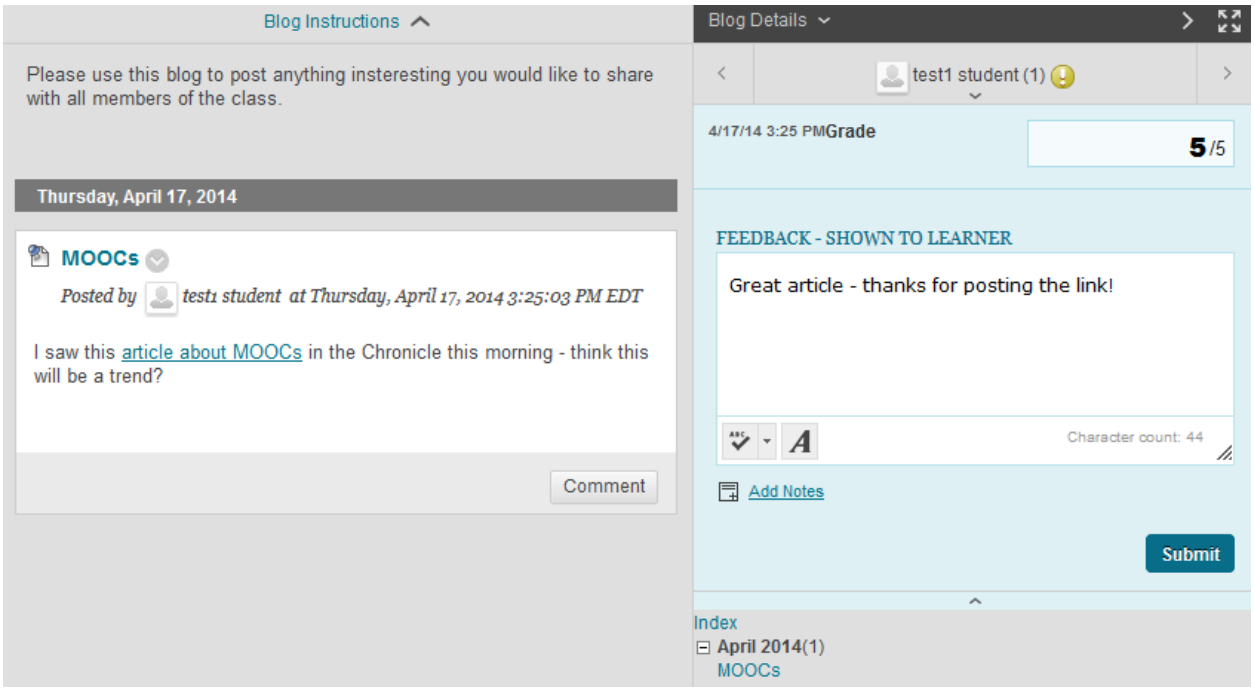
2. Blog entries will be listed in the center with an index of entries on the right side of the screen.
   If not already displayed, click on the indexed entry you wish to grade. Next, click the 'All Course Members' link above the index to expand the list of students.



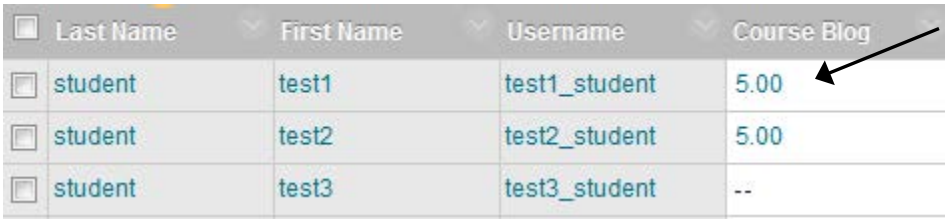
3. Once the list of students has been expanded, you'll notice a yellow exclamation point symbol next to the names of students who have not yet been graded. In the example below, test1_student has not been graded.



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.

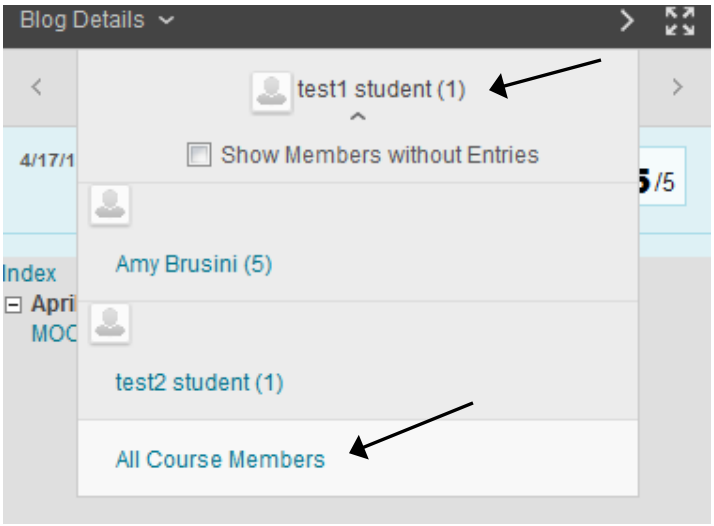


5. The grade will be automatically entered into the Blackboard grade center.



Last Name	First Name	Username	Course Blog
student	test1	test1_student	5.00
student	test2	test2_student	5.00
student	test3	test3_student	--

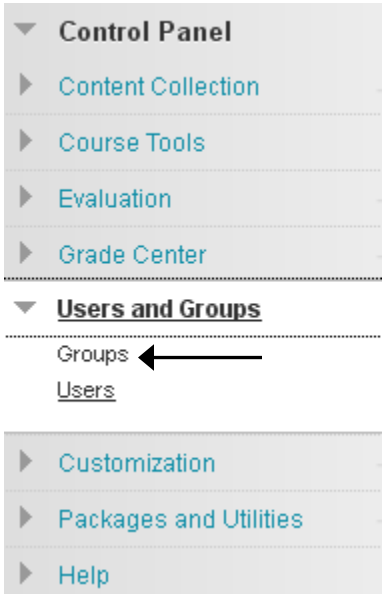
6. From the blogs page, if you would like to go back and view other students' entries, click the current student's name to expand the selection. Next, select another student or select 'All Course Members' to view all posts by all students.



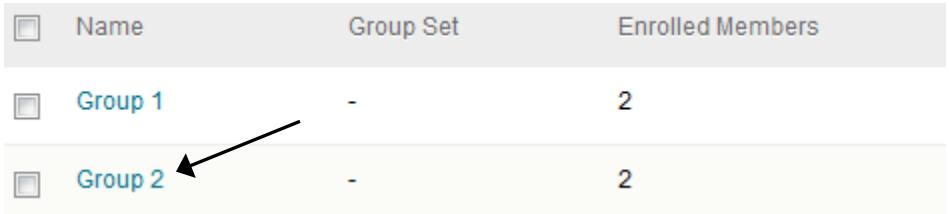
Grading a Group Blog

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.

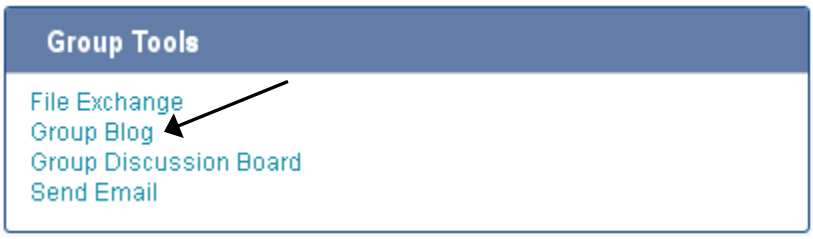
1. To grade a group blog, navigate to the Control Panel > Users and Groups > Groups.



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

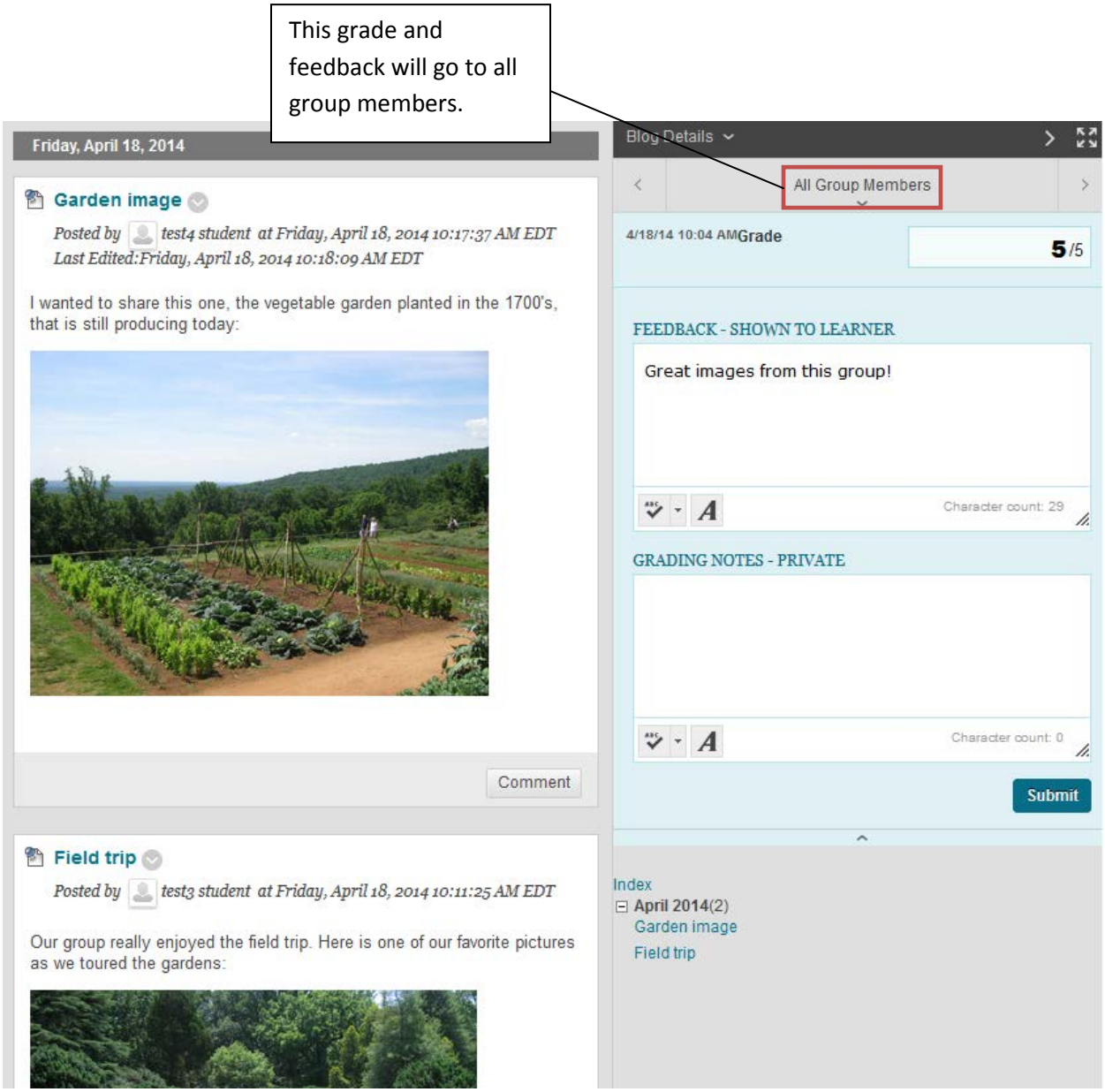


3. Select 'Group Blog' from the Group Tools box.

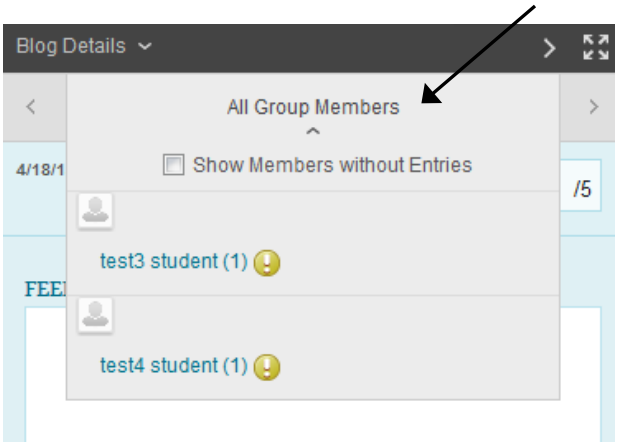


4. Blog entries will be listed in the center and the grading pane will be to the right.

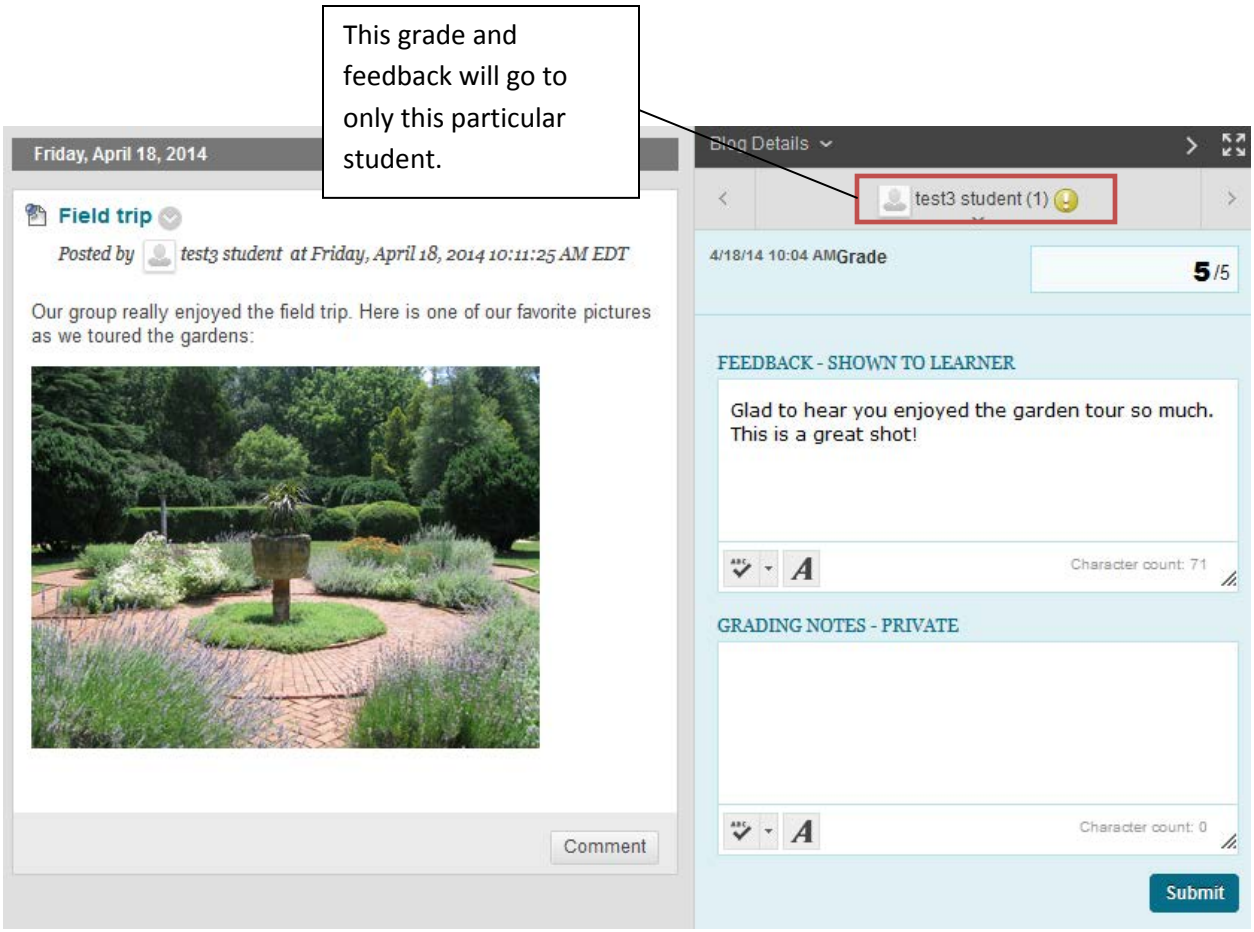
To give one grade for the entire group: Make sure the top of the grading pane reads 'All Group Members.' Fill in the grade and feedback for students (optional) as well as any grading notes for yourself (optional). Click 'Submit and the grade will be automatically entered into the grade center, filled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



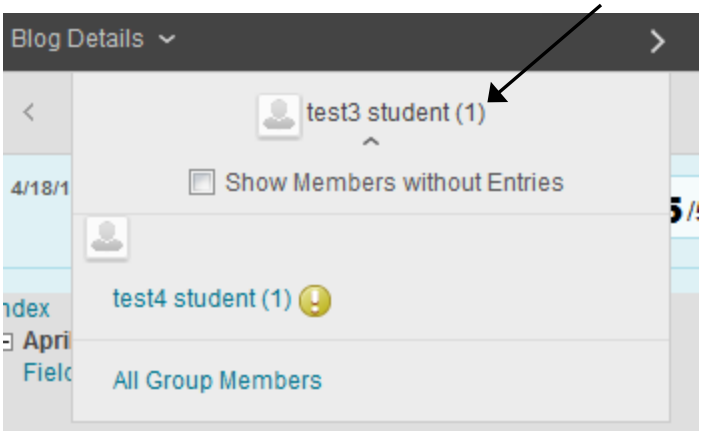
To grade each group member individually: Click the 'All Course Members' link above the index of entries to expand the list of students. You'll notice a yellow exclamation point symbol next to the names of students who have not yet been graded. Click on a student's name to view only his/her blog entries.



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.



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.


Blog Details
test3 student (1)
Show Members without Entries
test4 student (1)
All Group Members