Journals

Journals provide space for students to reflect privately with the instructor. Instructors can, however, choose to make journal entries public. Group journal entries can be read by all group members and the instructor.

Adding a Journal to a course site:

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 journal link a name and select ‘Journals’ as the tool type from the drop down menu. Check the box to make it available to users and click Submit.
4. Once the tool has been added to the course menu, click on the link to the journal to set it up.

5. Click the ‘Create Journal’ button near the top of the page.

6. Give the journal a name and provide instructions for students.
   1. **Journal Information**
      - Name: My Journal
      - Instructions:
        Use this journal as a place to reflect on your progress in class throughout the semester. Feel free to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of activities and assignments. I will expect one entry every two weeks, 100 words minimum.

7. Make the journal available for students and set availability restrictions if desired.
   2. **Journal Availability**
      - Journal Availability: Yes
   3. **Journal Date and Time Restrictions**
      - Limit Availability: Display After, Display Until
        Enter dates as mmyy/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.
8. Choose how to index journal entries, whether to allow users to edit and delete entries and comments, and whether to permit all users to view the journal.

4. **Journal Settings**

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

   - **Allow Users to Edit and Delete Entries**

   - **Allow Users to Delete Comments**

   - **Permit Course Users to View Journal**

   If selected, students are only ever allowed to edit/delete their own entries or comments.

9. Select whether or not to grade journal entries 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 journal after each student has posted two entries, instead of after every entry, adjust the setting to ‘2.’

5. **Grade Settings**

   - **Grade Journal**
     - No grading
     - Grade Points possible: 2

   - **Show participants in “needs grading” status ![ ] after every 2 Entries**

   **Associated Rubrics**

   - Add Rubric

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

10. Click Submit.

6. **Submit**

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

11. The new journal is displayed.

   - **Delete**
   - **Visibility**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Visibility</th>
<th>Last Modified Date</th>
<th>Entries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My Journal</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>1/2/13/2 1:15 PM</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reading Entries and Adding Comments to a Journal

Once a student has posted a journal entry, instructors can respond by posting comments.

1. Navigate to the journal you want to access. New entries are indicated in the ‘Entries’ column.

2. An index of journal entries for each student appears on the right hand side of the screen. Click the arrow at the top right to expand the index. In this example, test1_student and test2_student have posted entries. Click on a student’s name to read their entry.

3. Click the ‘Comment’ button next to the entry to enter a comment.
4. Type in the comment and click ‘Add’ when finished.

5. The comment is displayed.

Grading a Journal

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

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

1. Navigate to the list of journals and click on the one to be graded.
2. Click the small arrow at the top of the right panel to expand the list of students with journal entries. You will notice a yellow exclamation point symbol next to the names of students with entries that have not yet been graded. In the example below, test3_student has not been graded.

3. Click on the student’s name to view his/her journal entries. Enter the grade, any feedback to the student (optional), and any grading notes for yourself (optional.) Click Submit.
4. 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>Reflective Journal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>student</td>
<td>test1</td>
<td>test1_student</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>student</td>
<td>test2</td>
<td>test2_student</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>student</td>
<td>test3</td>
<td>test3_student</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grading a Group Journal**

Group journals 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 journal, 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 I.

4. Journal 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 journal entries.
In this example, we have selected to view test2_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.