

Blackboard **Blogs and Journals** Quick Guide

What is a Blog?

A **Blog** is a collaborative tool that allows students to post their personal reflection about the course or discuss and analyze course related materials. There are three types of blogs in a Blackboard course: **individual**, **group** or **course** blogs. An individual blog belongs only to one student and only that student can contribute to it. A group blog can be added whenever a group is created. Only members of that particular group have access to it. In a course blog all students can participate and contribute to the discussion.

Creating a Blog

1. From the *Control Panel*, click **Course Tools**
2. Click **Blogs**
3. Click **Create Blog**
4. On the *Create Blog* page, provide the blog **Name** and **Instructions**
5. Set **Blog Availability** to 'Yes'
6. If the blog is going to be restricted to a certain time period, select **Blog Date and Time Restrictions**; otherwise, leave the fields empty
7. Select what type of blog it is: an individual or a course blog under **Blog Participation**
8. Specify **Blog Settings** by selecting either monthly or weekly indexing and customizing editing options for students. If the blog is going to be graded, select **Grade** and specify **Points possible**
9. Click the **Submit** button

Creating a Blog Entry

1. From the Course menu, click **Tools**
2. Click **Blogs**
3. Click on the blog name
4. Click **Create Blog Entry**
5. Enter the **Title** of the entry
6. In the **Entry Message** area, type the blog entry. Using the Visual Textbox Editor, faculty and students can add multimedia files or embed mashups
7. Attach any files, if needed, under **Blog Entry Files** by clicking *Browse My Computer* or *Browse Content Collection*
8. Click the **Submit** button




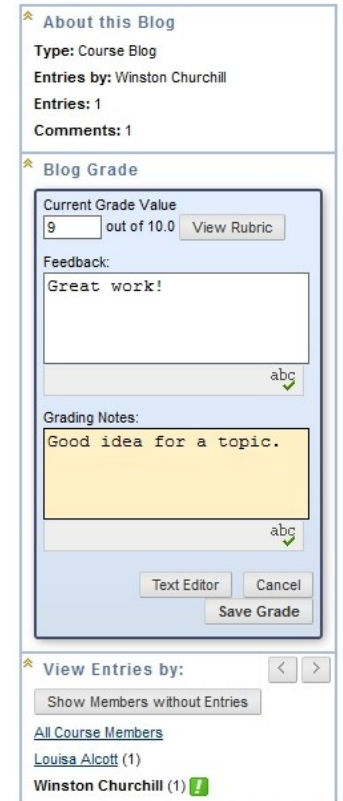
Remember!

- Blogs and journals can only be viewed from Blackboard; they are not publicly accessible
- Blogs do not support RSS
- If grading is enabled, a column will be automatically added to the Grade Center
- If a course is copied or archived, blog and journal entries are not copied or archived, but blog and journal definitions are
- Links to course blogs, wikis or journals can be added to the course menu or to any content area

The screenshot shows a Blackboard interface for a class blog. At the top, it says "Class Blog: Technology You Can't Live Without". Below this, there are buttons for "Create Blog Entry" and "View Drafts". The main content area is titled "Instructions" and shows a post from Thursday, March 17, 2011. The post is titled "Skype" and is posted by Louisa Alcott. The text of the post discusses the benefits of Skype for staying in touch with friends and family. Below the post, there is a "Comments: 1" section with a "Comment" button. A comment from Winston Churchill is visible, dated Thursday, March 17, 2011 10:55 PM CDT. On the right side of the page, there is a sidebar with "About this Blog" information, including the type (Course Blog), entries by Louisa Alcott, and a list of members (Louisa Alcott and Winston Churchill). There is also an "Index" section with a link to "March 2011(1) Skype".

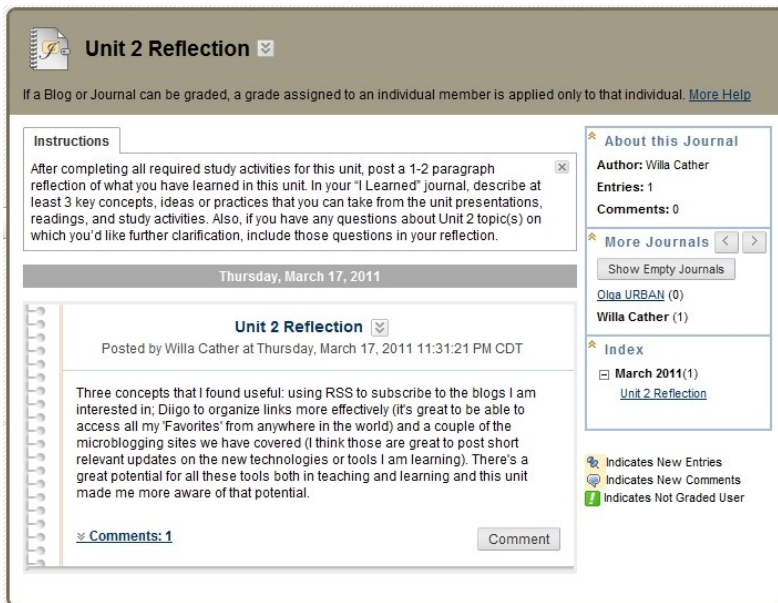
Grading a Blog

1. If grading for the blog has been enabled, from the Course menu, click **Tools**
2. Click **Blogs**
3. Click on the blog name
4. In the right-hand box, under **View Entries by**, click on the student you would like to grade (Note: all students who haven't been graded will have an exclamation point icon  displayed next to their name)
5. After reading the entries displayed on the page, click on **Edit Grade** in the box on the right under **Blog Grade**
6. Enter the grade under **Current Grade Value**
7. Enter comments to students under **Feedback**
8. Enter notes under **Grading Notes** (those can only be seen by course instructors)
9. Click the **Save Grade** button



What is a Journal?

A journal is self-reflective tool for students. Only the student and the instructor are able to add comments to journal entries. However, journals can be made public by the instructor so all enrolled users can read all entries made to the journal topic. Group journal entries can be read by all group members and the course instructor.



Creating a Journal Entry

1. From the Course menu, click **Tools**
2. Click on the journal name
3. Click **Create Journal Entry**
4. Enter the **Title** of the entry
5. In the **Entry Message** area, type the journal entry. Using the Visual Textbox Editor, faculty and students can embed multimedia files or mashups
6. Attach any files, if needed, under **Journal Entry Files** by clicking **Browse My Computer** or **Browse Content Collection**
7. Click the **Submit** button

Creating a Journal

1. From the *Control Panel*, click **Course Tools**
2. Click **Journals**
3. Click **Create Journal**
4. On the *Create Journal* page, provide the journal **Name** and **Instructions**
5. Set **Journal Availability** to 'Yes'
6. If the journal is going to be restricted to a certain time period, select **Journal Date and Time Restrictions**; otherwise, leave the fields empty
7. Specify **Journal Settings** by selecting either monthly or weekly indexing and customizing editing options for students. If you would like, students to see each others journals, then select to **Permit Course Users to View Journal**. If the journal is going to be graded, select **Grade** and specify **Points possible**
8. Click the **Submit** button



Remember!

- Grading a Journal is similar to grading a Blog