UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD

FACULTY CENTER FOR LEARNING DEVELOPMENT

Blackboard Journals

Instructors can cultivate collaborative learning and interaction between students, between students and their instructor, and with the course content through the use of Blackboard's blogs, wikis and journals tools.

Distinction between Blogs, Wikis and Journals

- A *blog* (short for "web log") is a type of website that is maintained by a single author or group of contributors. A blog is a collection of entries (or "posts") of commentary, news or descriptions of events, and may include text, links, photos or video. The entries are most commonly arranged in reverse-chronological order, with the most recent post appearing on top. On the Internet, blogs are generally public to the world, although they may also be geared to smaller, more defined groups. Readers are able to respond to posts by leaving comments. One example of a group blog is Crooked Timber (http://www.crookedtimber.org), a political blog run by a group of academics from around the world. Good ideas for using blogs in teaching and learning include encouraging reactions to class readings, course content or current news events; or for following up on class discussions with relevant links or materials. NOTE: Blogs that are made 'public' in Blackboard are only available to the students registered in the course.

- A *wiki* is a series of linked Web pages collaboratively created by many authors. They are collections of information organized with one topic per page of the wiki, and are available to the world to read and often to write. One of the most well-known wikis on the Internet is Wikipedia (http://wikipedia.org). Wikis can be used in teaching and learning to build a glossary of terms, create a knowledge base, write a collaborative document, create a collection of clarifications or explanations, organize signups for class presentations, or show the steps for working out specific problems in a math or science course. They are extremely flexible.

- A *journal*, like a diary, are personal reflections. By default, journals in Blackboard are private between a student and instructor, but can be shared if the instructor wishes. Ideas for using journals for teaching and learning include student reflections on internships, service learning experiences, field work, or specific course assignments. They can also be a great addition to students' e-portfolios.

Basic steps for using a Journal

- First create the new journal, then open it and add the first entry. Students access the journal through their Tools menu.
- Optional: Add your journal to a content area or add a button for it on your course menu.

- Make sure your syllabus contains instructions, rubrics, models, a schedule of when to contribute, etc.

Creating a Journal

Journals are created in much the same way as Wikis and Blogs.

1. From your Control Panel, go to **Course Tools** and select **Journals** from the dropdown menu. This area will list all journals in your course.
2. Click **Create Journal.**
3. Give your Journal a name. In the text box, add step-by-step instructions, including specific instructions for the Journal assignment and any desired formatting for entries.
4. Set up Journal options as desired, including: availability, date restrictions, indexing options (monthly is recommended), editing privileges and grading. If you elect to grade it, a column will automatically be added to the Grade Center.
5. Click **Submit**. If you like, you can open your Journal and add the first journal entry.

Creating the First Journal Entry

1. Click on the name of your journal to open it.
2. Click on **Create Journal Entry**. Give your journal entry a name and enter your text. Your students will also use the **Create Journal Entry** to add entries.
3. Click **Post Entry**, or **Save Entry as Draft** if you are not ready to publish it yet.
4. View your entry. Finished journal entries will be listed in the right-hand column of the Journal page. Students can only see and comment on their own entries, and instructors can see and comment on all student entries.


Sample Student Journal (Instructor View)

Grading Journals

If you choose 'Grade' when setting up the journal, a column will be added to the Grade Center automatically. Instructors can assign an overall grade for the student's journal, but not for individual entries.

To grade a student's journal entries, you can either enter the grades through the Grade Center or directly from the journal. To grade from the journal, do the following:

- Enter the journal that you wish to grade.
- Click on a student's name to access that student's journal.
- Click on the **Edit Grade** button on the right side of the screen.
- Enter the grade and any feedback, and click **Save Grade**.
- You can go back and edit the grade at any time. The grade will be saved in the Grade Center automatically.
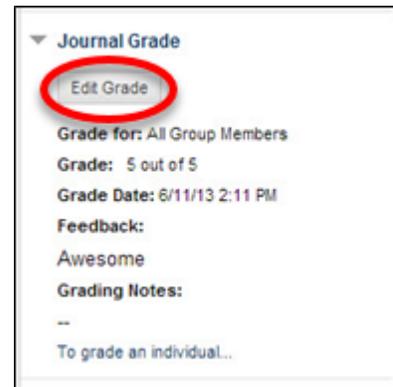
Click the Edit Grade button

Adding a Course Menu Button for a Journal

- Select the 'plus' sign at the top of your course menu.
- Select Create Tool Link.
- Give Button a Name.
- Under Type, select Wikis.
- Select "Available to Users."
- Click Submit. This will link to all course wikis.

It is also possible to add your journal to a specific Content Area (e.g., "Course Information" or "Assignments") using the **Add Interactive Tool** option.
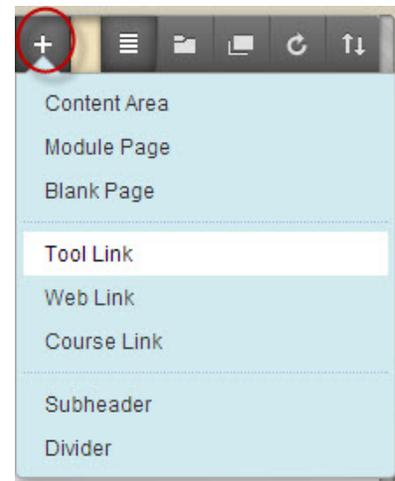
Click the + sign in the upper left corner > Tool Link

Getting Help with Technology at the University of Hartford

Faculty Center for Learning Development (FCLD)
FCLD provides consulting and instructional support to faculty and staff who are using technology in teaching and learning. The FCLD Faculty Lab in Mortensen 203a is available for faculty support and use and is equipped with instructional technology- related equipment including: PCs, Macs, scanners, and projectors as well as support staff. Faculty and Staff needing support with Blackboard or other instructional technologies, should contact FCLD.
Phone: (860) 768-4661   **Email:** fcld@hartford.edu
Website: http://www.hartford.edu/fcld

Student Blackboard Support
The following is student support for Blackboard only. All other support technical support issues need to be addressed to the Office of Technology Services (below).
Phone: (860) 768-4636   **Email:** bbsupport@hartford.edu
FAQ/Submit a Ticket: http://www.hartford.edu/studentbbsupport

Information Technology Services (ITS) Help Desk
For general computer and Internet/network support questions (not directly related to the classroom but rather passwords, Internet/email problems, Banner/Self-Service, campus Facebook).
Phone: (860) 768-4357   **Email:** helpdesk@hartford.edu
Website: http://hartford.edu/ots

Media Technology Services (MTS)
Faculty should contact MTS for assistance scheduling or implementing classroom technology (2-Way interactive video classrooms, Smart Podiums, laptops, etc.), for setting up WebEx accounts, or for scheduling and instruction for a wide variety of media equipment and resources like LCD data projectors, CD/cassette players, TVs and VCRs, digital video, and more.
Phone: (860) 768-4357   **Website:** http://www.hartford.edu/mts