

Blogs

Blogs are an open communications tool for students to share their thoughts. (The term “blog” is a contraction of “web log.”)

A Blog consists of:

- **Blog Entries:** Text, images, links and attachments posted by students and open for comments.
- **Comments:** Remarks or responses to Blog Entries made by others.

There are three different types of Blogs:

- **Course Blogs:** All enrolled users are able to post Blog Entries. All enrolled users can post Comments to Blog Entries. The Instructor can edit and delete Blog Entries. The Instructor can delete Comments.
- **Individual Blogs:** Only the owner of the Blog is able to post Blog Entries. All other users enrolled in the Course are able to view and add Comments. When you create an individual blog, a blog with the name you assign it will be created for each student in the class.
- **Group Blogs:** All members enrolled in the Group are able to post Blog Entries or make Comments on Blog Entries.

Users removed from the course will not have access to any Blogs. If users are removed from the course after Individual Blogs have been created, all their posts and comments will be deleted. If users are removed from a Course after Course Blogs have been created, all their posts and comments will be retained, but the name of the poster or commenter will be changed to "Anonymous."

Creating Course and Individual Blogs

There are two different ways to create Course and Individual Blogs:

- **On the Blogs page.** Go to the Blogs page by selecting **Blogs** from the **Course Tools** menu in the **Control Panel** (or by clicking **Tools** menu on the main course menu and clicking **Blogs**).
- **From a content area.** Select **Blog** from the **Add Interactive Tool** drop-down menu. Click **Blog**.

Setting up the blogs:

- Enter a name and instructions for using the Blog.
- Click **Yes** for **Blog Availability** to make the Blog available. You can **Display After** and **Display Until** dates and times.

- Select the **Blog Type** and whether or not to allow Anonymous posts.
 - **Individual to All Students**
 - **Course**
- Determine how to index the blog entries (Monthly or Weekly)
- Set the edit and delete options.
 - **Allow Users to Edit and Delete Entries** allows individual students to edit and delete entries in their own blogs and to edit and delete only their own entries in course and group blogs.
 - **Allow Users to Delete Comments** allows individual students to delete only their own comments in any blog.
- Click **Submit**.

Creating Group Blogs

When creating a group, if you select **Blogs** under **Tool Availability**, a group blog will automatically be created with the Group name as the Blog name.

Getting to a Blog

You can access blogs in more than one way:

- **From a content area** in which you created the blog.
- **From the main course menu (Tools / Blogs / click on the blog name)**
- **From the Control Panel (Course Tools / Blogs / click on the blog name)**
- **From a Group** (access to that group's blog only). Click **Groups** in main course menu, click the group name, and select **Group Blog** in the **Group Tools** area.

Posting to a Blog

- Click **Create Blog Entry** to compose your entry.
- Click **Post Entry** to add your entry to the blog.
- To post a blog entry comment, click **Comment** on the bottom right-hand side of the entry, compose your comment, then click **Add**.

Finding Blogs or Blog Entries

- In Individual Blogs, use the **More Blogs** option on the right to select Blogs by a particular person. In Course and Group Blogs, use **View Entries by:** to select entries by All or particular individuals / group members.
- Use the **Index** to select entries by date posted (either week or month, depending on how the blog was set up).

Managing the Blogs Page

The **Blogs page** is the central place where you can access all three types of blogs and edit settings of and delete Individual and Course Blogs.

Click the **Tools** link in the main course menu, then click **Blogs**. (Or select **Blogs** from the **Tools** menu in the **Control Panel** or, if you have set up a link to a Blog in a content area.)

The **Blogs** page lists all Blogs, their types, last date modified, and the number of entries. Adjust the number of entries on a page with either **Show All** or **Edit Paging...**

- You can select which types of Blogs are displayed with the **Display Blogs** menu: **All Blogs, My Blogs, Course Blogs, Blogs Permitting Comments Only**.
- You can control the availability of a **Course** or **Individual Blog** by checking the box to the left of the name and selecting either **Make Available** or **Make Unavailable** from the **Availability** drop-down menu.
- To edit or delete a **Course** or **Individual Blog**, use the drop-down menu to the right of the Blog's name.