

Blackboard Learn Blogs & Journals

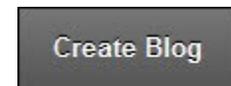
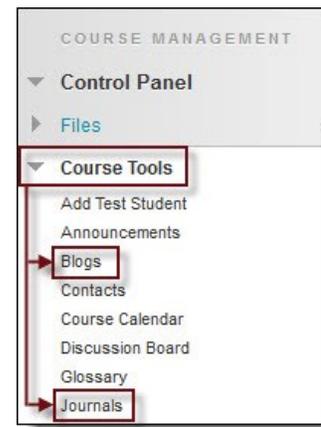
Blackboard Learn includes Blog and Journal tools that allow you to facilitate interaction between students and instructors. There are lots of ways to utilize blogs and journals, whether it is for specific discussion topics, group work, self-reflection, etc. Blogs and journals function very similarly. The difference between the two is that blogs are meant to be public and provide student-student interaction, student-instructor interaction, or both. Journals, on the other hand, are meant to be private between a single student and the instructor, making them great for reflective writing assignments or providing feedback directly to the instructor.

This guide will assist you in setting up blogs and journals in your course.

Setting Up a Blog or Journal

Note: The steps for setting up blogs and journals are almost identical with the exception of the Blog Participation step, which only applies to blogs.

1. Log into Blackboard Learn at <https://learn.kent.edu> (or through Flashline) and enter your course.
2. In the **Control Panel** on the left side of the page (below the course navigation menu), click the **Course Tools** link.
3. Click the **Blogs or Journals** link from the expanded menu.
4. On the Blogs/Journals page, click the **Create Blog/Create Journal** button to set up a new blog in your course.
5. In **Section 1: Blog/Journal Information**, type in the **name** of your blog and a **description**. The description may include instructions or a writing prompt.



1. Blog Information

✱ Name

Instructions

T T T Arial 3 (12pt) **T** **☰** **☰** **REC** **🔗** **🔄**

Choose 3 famous American writers. Research their bodies of work and post one blog entry on each. Be sure to include the following information: [Continue Prompt Here].

Path: p Words:27

6. In the **Blog/Journal Availability** section, choose whether to make the blog/journal **available** to students (Yes = available to students, No = hidden from students).

2. **Blog Availability**

Blog Availability Yes No

7. In the **Blog/Journal Date and Time Restrictions**, set any applicable **date/time restrictions**. The blog/journal will only be available for students to post between the dates/times you set here. If you want the blog/journal available the whole semester, leave the dates/times blank.

Note: If you do set date/time restrictions, make sure to set the Available setting to Yes — if it is set to No, it will override your dates/times and the forum will not become available until you manually change the Available setting to Yes.

3. **Blog Date and Time Restrictions**

Limit Availability

Display After  

Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.

Display Until  

Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.

8. In the **Blog Participation** section, select your **blog type**. This step applies only to Blogs — if you are creating a journal, skip to Step 9.

4. **Blog Participation**

Blog Type Individual to All Students Course

Allow Anonymous Comments

Individual to All Students will create separate blogs for each student. This means that students' entries are separated by their names and don't all appear on the same blog page. Don't worry — it won't create multiple grade columns or any other clutter in your course.

Course blogs, on the other hand, are not separated by individual students, so all entries appear on one blog page, regardless who posted.

You can also choose whether to **Allow Anonymous Comments/Entries** — it is recommended that you **deselect this option**. This allows for greater student accountability and should cut down on the possibility of rude or inappropriate comments/entries.

9. In the **Blog/Journal Settings section**, you can modify the options if desired; however, the defaults are generally recommended.

5. Blog Settings

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

Weekly

Allow Users to Edit and Delete Entries

Allow Users to Delete Comments

10. In the **Grade Settings section**, you can choose whether or not to grade the blog. If you plan to grade this blog, select **Grade** and enter the **points possible**. You can also choose how frequently participants show up on the Needs Grading page in the Grade Center. You can also associate grading rubrics if desired.

Note: The points possible is for the Blog/Journal overall — not each individual entry. If you require multiple entries, you may want to assign partial points as they go. Example: If you require 4 entries at 5 points each, the Blog/Journal should be out of a possible 20 points. You can edit the grade to add points as they post each entry or wait until the end to award points.

6. Grade Settings

Grade Blog No grading
 Grade : Points possible :

Show participants in "needs grading" status after every Entries

Associated Rubrics

Name	Type	Date Last Edited	Show Rubric to Students
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11. When you are finished setting your blog/journal options, click the **Submit** button. Your Blog has now been created.



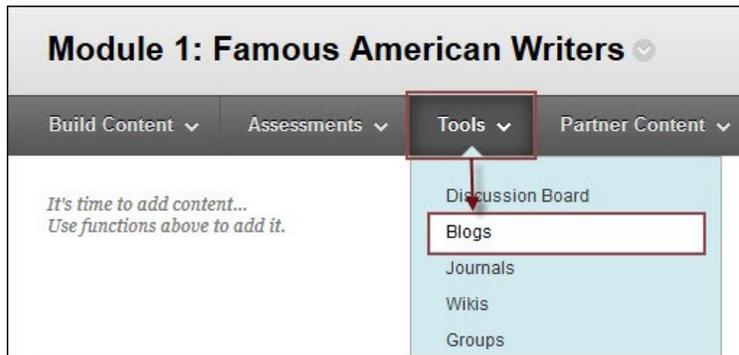
Link to the Blog/Journal in a Content Area or Folder

Once you have created the blog/journal, you should create a link to it in a content area or folder for easy student access. If you have one folder for each unit/module of course content, create the link in the unit/module folder.

To link to a blog/journal:

1. Navigate to the content area or folder in which you want to place the link.

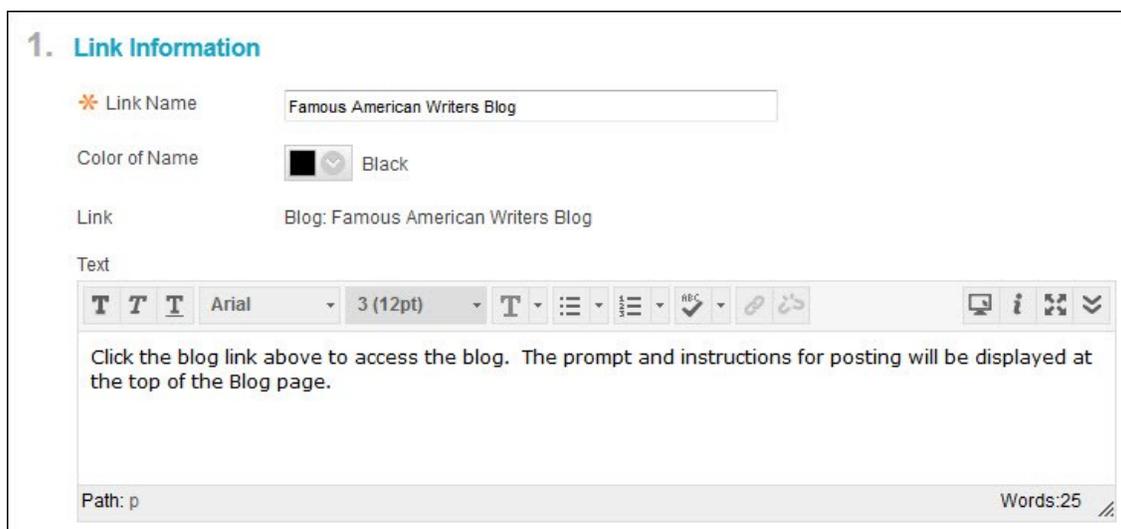
2. From the **Tools** menu at the top of the page, select **Blogs** or **Journals**.



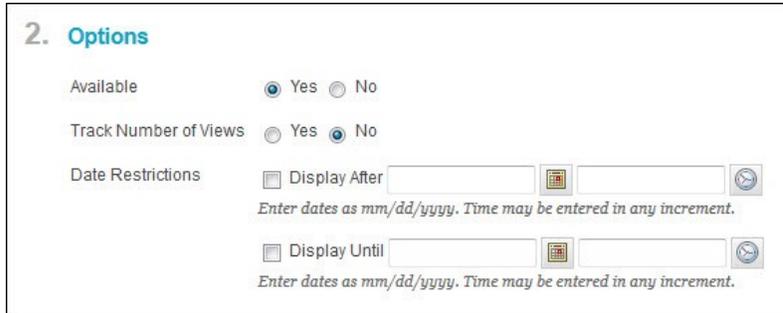
3. Under Create Link: Blog/Journal, select the **Link to a Blog/ Journal** option, then **select the name of the blog/journal** to which you want to link. Then click the **Next** button.



4. **Fill in the name of the link** and **a description or instructions**. This is the text that students will see right before they click the link to access the Blog/Journal.



5. In the **Blog/Journal Options** section, choose whether to make the blog/journal link **available** to students (Yes = available to students, No = hidden from students). Set any applicable link **date/time restrictions**. The blog/journal link will only be available for students to access between the dates/times you set here. If you want the blog/journal link available the whole semester, leave the dates/times blank.



2. Options

Available Yes No

Track Number of Views Yes No

Date Restrictions Display After  
Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.

Display Until  
Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.

6. When you are finished setting your link options, click the **Submit** button.

You have now created a link to your blog/journal in a content area/folder. The link will look like the image below.

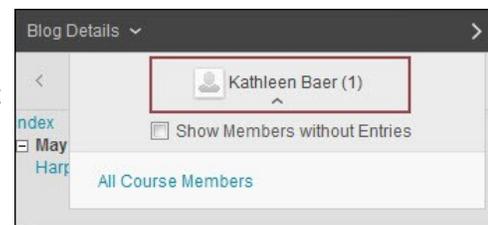


Viewing and Grading Blog/Journal Entries

Once your students have posted their entries in the blog or journal, you are ready to read and, if desired, grade their entries.

To view and grade blogs/journals:

1. Navigate to the content area or folder in which you created the blog/journal link, then **click on the link to view the blog/journal**. An alternative way to access blogs/journals is via the Control Panel > Course Tools > Blogs or Journals, then click on the name of the blog/journal.
2. Use the **blog/journals details sidebar** on the right to select which students' blog/journal entries to view. You can expand this section and select the name of a student and all entries for that student will be displayed on the page.



Note: If you have set up a graded blog/journal, you can also view posts from the **Needs Grading** page in your Grade Center.

- To grade a student's entries, click the **Edit Grade** button in the Blog/Journal Details Grade section on the right and enter their points and any overall feedback for all entries. Click Submit to save the grade, which will automatically be added to the corresponding column in your Grade Center.

You can also comment on individual entries using the **Comment** button below each entry, but please note that if the blog/journal entries are available to other students, the comments will be as well.

- Repeat Steps 3-4 until all students' entries are graded.

Remember: The grade is for the blog/journal overall — not each individual entry. If you require multiple entries, you may want to assign partial points as they go. Example: If you require 4 entries at 5 points each, the Blog/Journal should be out of a possible 20 points. You can edit the grade to add points as they post each entry or wait until the end to award points.

The screenshot shows the 'Blog Details' interface. At the top, it says 'Blog Details' with a dropdown arrow. Below that, there's a user profile for 'Demo User (1)' with a warning icon. The main content area shows a date and time '5/8/14 10:44 AM' followed by the word 'Grade'. To the right of 'Grade' is a text input field containing '18/20', which is highlighted with a red box. Below this is a section titled 'FEEDBACK - SHOWN TO LEARNER' containing a text area with the text: 'Feedback in this box is private to the student and is for the overall blog/journal rather than for specific entries.' Below the text area is a character count 'Character count: 118' and a 'Submit' button.