

The Journals tool offers students the opportunity to reflect on course content and communicate privately with the instructor. Instructors can use the tool to gauge understanding and guide students in their knowledge acquisition. Instructor comments can help students refine their writing and ideas.

As the journal topic is created, the instructor determines if the journal entries will be graded. Students are allowed to create multiple entries for an individual journal topic, whether it is graded or not.

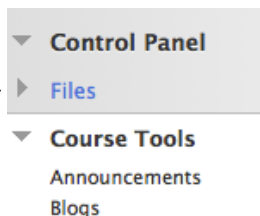
The instructor can choose to make journal entries public, allowing all course members to view all entries. For example, an instructor may choose to make a journal public when asking for opinions on how to improve the evaluation process. Students can read what other students wrote and build upon those ideas. Students cannot comment on other students' entries; only the instructor can add comments.

The Group Journal tool functions differently, as it allows all members of a group to view all group journal entries. A group journal has no journal topics; it is created by the journal entries submitted by group members. A group journal can be edited to add instructions for the members. Group members and the instructor can add comments.

Creating Journals

Instructors can create one or more Journals for use by students in their courses. Journal topics must be created before students can add their entries.

1. In the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section.
2. Select Journals.
3. On the Journal listing page, click Create Journal on the Action Bar.



4. On the Create Journal page, type a name for the Journal.
5. Type optional instructions for the Journal. Format the text and add images, links, multimedia, Mashups, and attachments using the functions in the Text Editor, if needed.

Attachments added using the Text Editor can be launched in a new window and have alternate text added to describe the attachment.

6. Under Journal Availability, select the Yes option to make it available to users.
7. Use the Display After and Display Until date and time fields to limit the availability of the blog. Select the Display After and Display Until check boxes in order to enable the date and time selections.
8. Under Journal Settings, select Monthly or Weekly Index Entries. This indicates how long that the blogs are visible.
9. Optionally, select the check box to Allow Users to Edit and Delete Entries.
10. Optionally, select the check box to Allow Users to Delete Comments.
11. Optionally, select the check box to Permit Course Users to View Journal. If selected, the Journal becomes public. All users can view all Journal entries made to the Journal topic.
12. Select No grading or the Grade option and type the number of Points possible. Points possible will apply to one or more entries made by the user to the blog topic. Once a blog is set to be graded, a column is created for it in the Grade Center. It is permanently gradable and cannot be set to No grading.

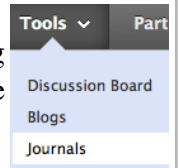
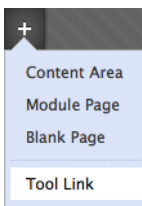
13. Click Submit.

The journal topics appear in alphabetical order on the Journal listing page. Columns can be sorted by clicking the column title or caret.

Making Journals Available

Journal topics can be made available in several areas of the course. Journals are automatically available in the Tools -> Journals. However you can create more direct routes to access Journals.

Create a menu link/button by selecting the plus icon at the top of the menu, and then selecting Create Tool Link. Title the link. Choose Journals from the drop-down list and make available to students.



It is also possible to insert journals within content areas, folders, and modules. In any content area, choose Add Interactive Tool, then select Journals. From this view you can create a new journal topic or link to one that is already created.

Comparing Blogs, Journals, Wikis, and Discussion Boards

	BLOG	JOURNAL	WIKI	DISCUSSION BOARD
Common Uses:	A shared online diary for use in class.	Personal writing space for self-reflection and private communication with the instructor.	A collaborative space where all students can view, contribute and edit content.	Online discussions that are organized hierarchically with forums, threads and replies.
Potential Uses:	"What we did / will do in class" saves instructor having to answer individual inquiries; online discussions about related topics; a place to hand in evidence of class participation.	Reflect on personal growth throughout semester; record things learned on field trip; express oneself; document clinical experiences; all are private.	Creative writing; group research projects; student-filled study guide for test (Instructor provides the outline and students collaboratively fill it in.)	Since we've had the discussion board in Blackboard since the beginning, this is a tool you might be comfortable with for online discussions.
Notes:	Blogs are less structured than the Discussion Board, and they're chronological. The format is more open and conversational in style.	If you set Permit course users to view journal, the journal will not be private, making it more like a blog with commenting turned off.	When a student is updating a wiki page, the rest of the students are locked out of it until it is released. This is the only Bb tool that allows multiple students to collaborate within the same text entry area.	Discussion boards are easily collapsed, expanded and searched. Users can Subscribe to a forum or thread and receive an email update every time someone adds to it.