

## **Blogs and Journals**

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Blogs and Journals provide students and instructors with a social learning tool for expressing their thoughts and reflecting on their learning, either privately (with the instructor) or publicly (with others in the course). These tools empower all course users to create and share ideas, while instructors maintain the ability to edit or remove any inappropriate material.

### **Journals**

Individual Journals allow students to record their course experiences and what they are learning. These thoughts can be a private communication between a student and the instructor or shared with everyone in the course. Journal entries can be commented on by the author and the instructor. Others are able to read public Journals, but they cannot comment on them.

Group Journals allow groups of students to reflect collaboratively on their course work and comment on their fellow group members' findings. To maintain privacy, Journal entries may be added anonymously by group members.

### **Blogs**

Individual Blogs provide each student with his or her own area to publicly share thoughts and work with others in the course and to receive comments and feedback on entries. Avatars added by students will be displayed in their public space to help personalize the page.

Course Blogs allow all users in the course to share their thoughts and work in one common area that everyone can read and comment on. All entries are posted to the same page to help promote collaboration among all course members. Users can add entries and comment on entries anonymously to maintain privacy.

Group Blogs allow groups of students to collaboratively post thoughts and comment on each others' work while all other users in the course can view and comment on their entry.

In each of these cases, users create entries, which are added to their Blog or Journal. The entries can be saved as drafts or published and then edited later. When entries are added to the Blog or Journal, they are added automatically to an index organized by date. A "New" indicator is displayed on entries and comments that the user has not yet displayed. Entries also can be marked as "New" again to create a reminder.

## **Frequently Asked Questions about Blogs and Journals**

### **What is the difference between a Blog and a Journal?**

A Journal is an on-going reflection or record of events by an individual or set of individuals. A Blog is a commentary by an individual or set of individuals that is for public consumption and comment.

### **Can I make Blogs and Journals Public?**

No. The privacy of students' course work needs to be respected. Opening these tools to the outside world may violate privacy laws.