Blackboard Journals

Instructors can create a web-based writing journal for students to submit weekly or monthly responses or reflections to topics posed by the instructor through the Journal Tool. Instructors can review students’ journal entries directly through Blackboard and leave comments or feedback. It is possible to allow students to view and comment on each other’s journal entries.

Creating a Journal

1. Roll over the blue plus-button and from the pop-up menu, select TOOL LINK.

2. The ADD TOOL LINK box will appear. Give your tool a logical name and select JOURNALS from the type drop-down menu.

   Be sure to checkmark the AVAILABLE TO USERS check-box to allow students enrolled in the course to see and access the Journal Tool.

   Click SUBMIT.

3. Your Journal Tool link will be added as a button in your course navigation. Clicking on it will take you to the Journals Page. Notice that by default, the Journals page is empty. Use the CREATE JOURNAL button to make a new journal.
4. This will take you to the Create Journal page. Fill out the following parts of the form....

**Journal Information** - Give your journal a logical name and set of instructions for the students to follow when writing a journal entry.

![Journal Information Form](image)

**Journal Availability** – Make the journal available to students by selecting the YES radio button.

![Journal Availability Form](image)

**Journal Date and Time Restrictions** – If you want to restrict the accessibility of the journal, checkmark the “Display After” and “Display Until” checkboxes and use the scheduling tools to set the time and dates.

![Journal Date and Time Restrictions Form](image)

**Journal Settings** – Indicate whether you want weekly or monthly entries in the journal as well as the actions you want students to be able to perform in the journal (i.e. edit/delete entries, delete comments).

![Journal Settings Form](image)

If you want students to be able to read and comment on the journal entries of other students (making the journal a PUBLIC journal), checkmark the **PERMIT COURSE USERS TO VIEW JOURNAL** checkbox.
**Grade Settings** – If you would like to include the journal as an assessment, select the **GRADE** radio button.

- Here, you have options for assigning the points possible or attaching an interactive grading rubric.
- You also have options for indicating when journal entries will be flagged with “Needs Grading” status.

When you are done indicating your settings, click **SUBMIT**.

5. The Journals page will be updated and contain a link to this new journal.

Once the journal is available to students, they will be able to access it to contribute their entries and comments.

**STUDENT VIEW**

Students add their journal posts by visiting the journal’s page and clicking the “Create Journal Entry” button.

The student must then complete a simple form, where they can add their text. In addition to text, students can add hyperlinks to websites, attach documents, and embed images, sounds, and movies within their journal entries.
On the side of the Journal page, the student can review his or her grade and see a log of all the posts they have added to the journal.

### How to Grade a Journal

A student’s journal work will be flagged with “Needs Grading” status according to the Grading settings you enabled when creating the journal. When a student’s work is flagged with “Needs Grading” status, you will be able to use the Needs Grading smartview to do your grading using the following process:

1. In your course control panel, click “Grade Center”. From the Grade Center menu, click “Needs Grading”.

2. The “Needs Grading” page will appear. Click the gray arrow next to the journal entry that needs grading and select “Grade All Users” from the menu that appears.
3. You will be taken to the student’s journal entry page. You can read the student’s entries, view or add comments, and grade the student’s work.

- To add a comment: Click the “Comment” button. Add your comments to the simple form that appears and click “Submit”.

- To view a comment: Click the “Comments:” link. Any comments that have been added to the page by you or students will appear at the bottom of the page.

4. To add a grade - Click the “Edit Grade” button and complete the grading form that appears.

   You can assign points earned and leave feedback for the student. If you have attached an interactive grading rubric, you can use it to grade by clicking the Rubric icon.

   When you are done, click “Save Grade” to post the grade to the Grade Center.

   If a rubric was attached, click this icon to grade student work. A simple form will appear where you can choose the points and achievement level earned. The points selected on the rubric will be added to the Grade Value field on this page.