## Blackboard Journal Tool

Journals are a personal space for students to communicate privately with the instructor. Students can also use Journals as a self-reflective tool to post their opinions, ideas, and concerns about the course, or discuss and analyze course related materials.
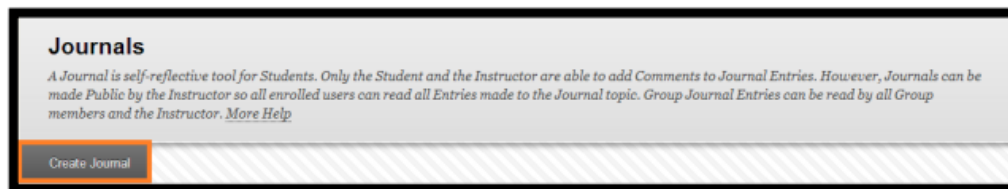
How to Create a Journal

1-Access the Course. Ensure Edit Mode is ON.

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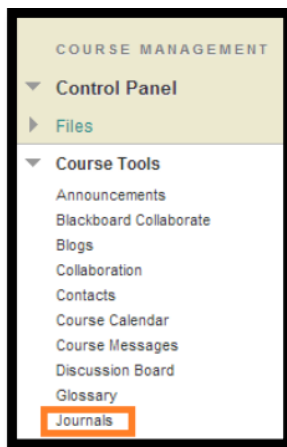
3-On the Journals listing page, click Create Journal on the Action Bar.

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 have alternate text added to describe the attachment.
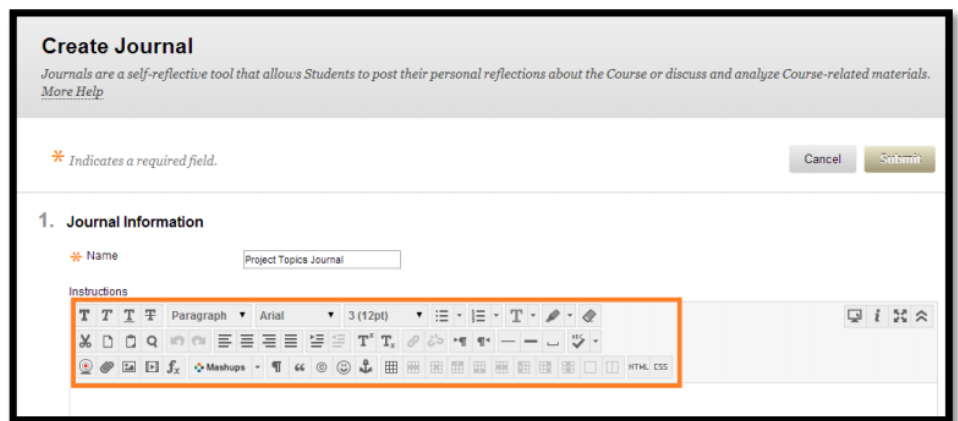
6-Under Journal Availability, select the Yes option to make it available to users. Use the Display After and Display Until date and time fields to limit the availability of the Journal. Select the Display After and Display Until check boxes in order to enable the date and time selections.

7-Under Journal Settings, select Monthly or Weekly Index Entries.

8-Optionally, select the check box to Allow Users to Edit and Delete Entries.

9-Optionally, select the check box to Allow Users to Delete Comments.

10-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.

11- 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 Journal topic. Once a Journal 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.

12-Click Submit.

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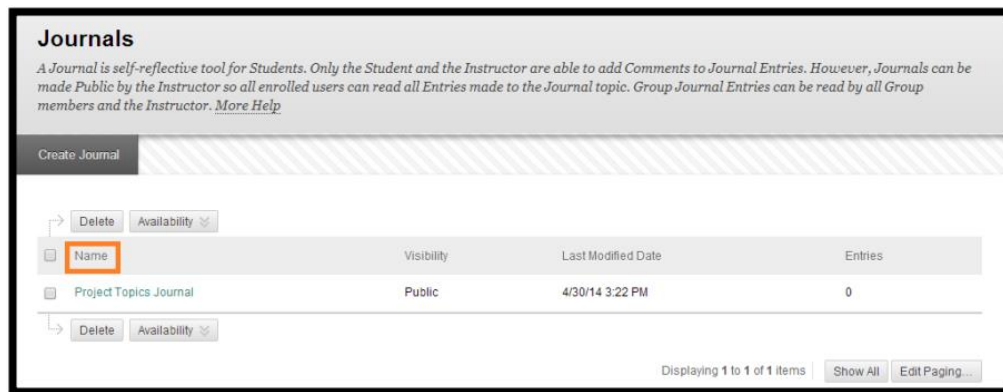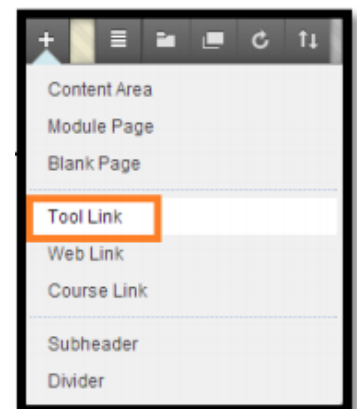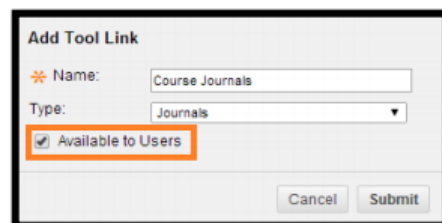

Adding a Course Menu Button for a Journal

To make the Journals you have created easily accessible to your students you can add a Course Menu button or link named "Reflective Journal" or something similar.

1- Select the plus sign at the top of your course menu and select Create Tool Link.

2-Give Button a Name.

3-Under Type, select Journals

4- Select "Available to Users." Click Submit. This will link to all course blogs.

It is also possible to add a link to a specific Journal from within a course Content Area

(e.g. "Course Documents" or "Course Information") by using the Add Interactive Tool.

How to Create a Journal Entry

Instructors and Students can create Journal entries. Only Instructors can comment on Students' private entries. On the Journals listing page, information is provided about each Journal. Students can see if their entries will be Private—between the Student and the Instructor—or Public.

1- On the Journals listing page, select a Journal title.

2- On the Journal's topic page, click Create Journal Entry on the Action Bar.

3- On the Create Journal Entry page, type a Title for the Journal entry.

4-Type text in the Entry Message text box. 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 have alternate text added to describe the attachment.
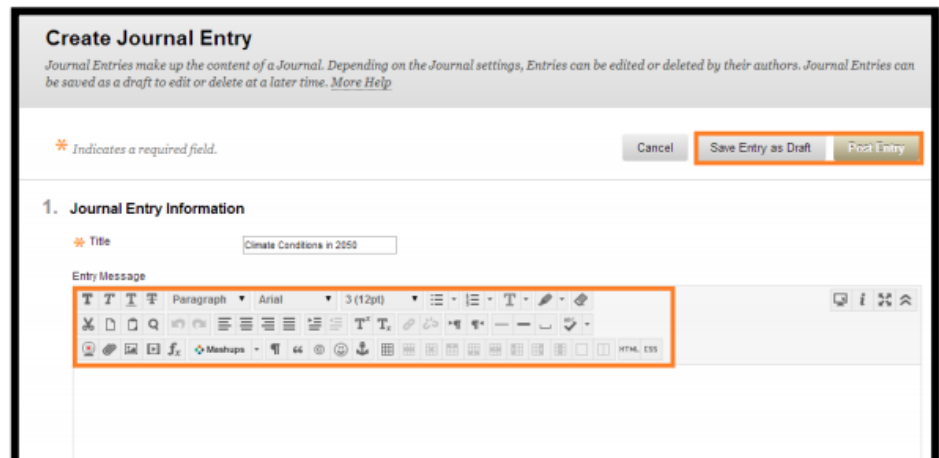
5-Alternatively, under Journal Entry Files, browse for a file to attach to the Journal entry.

6-Click Post Entry to submit the Journal entry or click Save Entry as Draft to add the entry later.

NOTE: To view or add saved drafts, click View Drafts on the Action Bar on the Journals topic page.

How to Comment on a Journal Entry

Journaling can be essential for interaction between the Student and the Instructor, especially in a Web-based course. Student entries and Instructor comments can help build rapport and can create a healthy intellectual exchange.

A Student can make a comment after an Instructor comments on an entry to continue the conversation. Students cannot make comments on another Student's Journal entry, even if the Journal has been made public. Students can only comment on another Student's entry when they are members of a Group. For Group Journals, all Group members and the Instructor are allowed to make comments on individual entries.

1- On the Journals listing page, select a Journal title.

2- On the Journal's topic page, select a journal to view by selecting the user's name in the side panel. The user's journal entries open in the content frame.

3- Click Comment following the user's entry. The Comment text box appears.

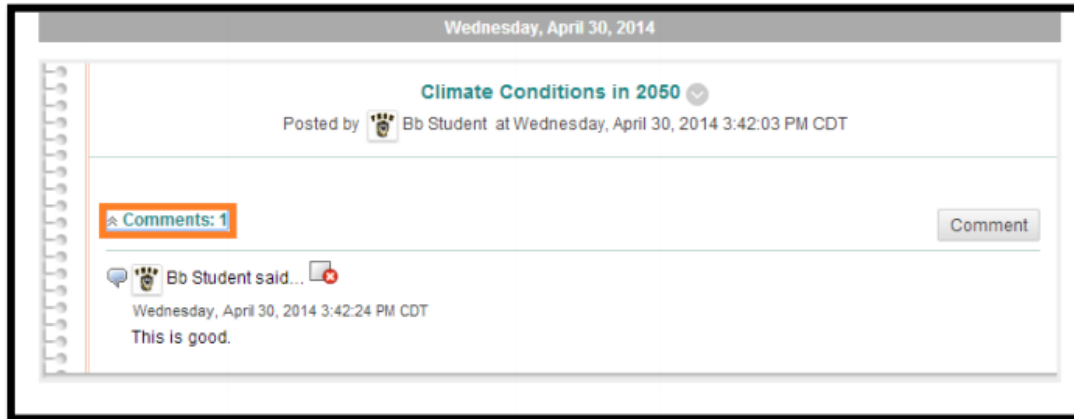4- Type a comment in the Comment text box.

5- Click Spell Check at the bottom of the Comment text box to check the spelling of the content before continuing.

6-Click Add. Click the Comments link below the entry to view the comment.


Editing and Managing Journals

Instructors can edit basic properties of a Journal topic, including the name, instructions, availability, and some settings. Journal topics can be changed from Private to Public and Public to Private. Instructors can edit any user's Journal entries and can delete Journal topics. Comments can be deleted by the Instructor.

How to Edit a Journal

1- Ensure Edit Mode is ON.

2- On the Journals listing page, click a Journal's Action Link to access the contextual menu.

3- Select Edit.
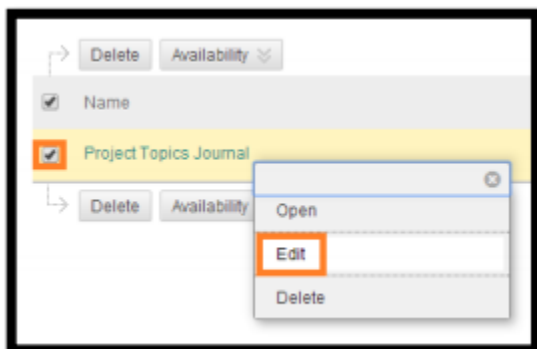
4- On the Edit Journal page, make changes.

5- Click Submit.

How to Delete a Journal

1- Ensure Edit Mode is ON.

2- On the Journals listing page, click a Journal's Action Link to access the contextual menu.

3- Select Delete.

4- Click OK in the confirmation window. All entries and comments are deleted.

Note: When a graded Journal is selected for deletion, a Delete Confirmation page appears. Select the appropriate check box or boxes to delete the Journal or the Journal and the Grade Center column.

How to Change the Availability of a Journal

1- Ensure Edit Mode is ON.

2- On the Journals listing page, select the check box next to the appropriate Journal.

3- Point to Availability on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.

4- Select Make Available or Make Unavailable.
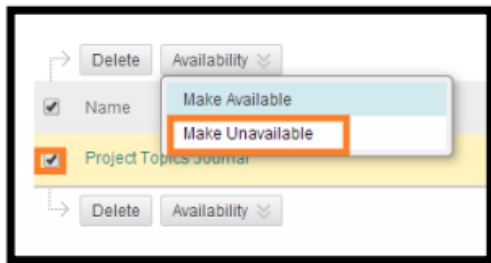
Grading Journals

Once you have set a Journal topic to be graded, a column is automatically created in the Grade Center. Individual student Journal entries can then be graded from the Journal topic page, where you can refer to all entries and comments.

1- Access the Journal topic page and select the Journal entry to grade by selecting the user's name in the side panel. The user's Journal entry or entries open in the content
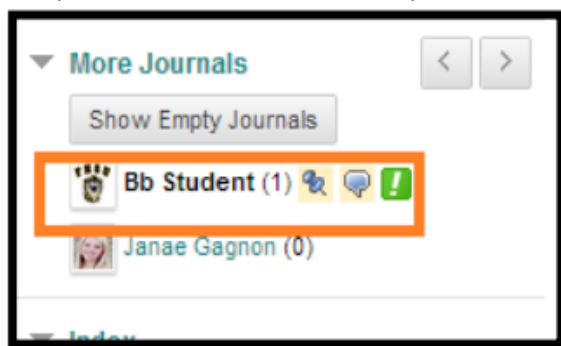
2- Enter a grade in the Grade window, any feedback to the student, private grading notes for yourself, and click add. This will be a grade for the overall journal, not for individual posts.

3- You can go back and edit the grade at any time. The grade will be saved in the Grade Center automatically.

4- Use the Previous User and Next User arrows to quickly access another students Journal entries to grade.

NOTE: You cannot change a graded Journal topic to ungraded. You need to delete the graded Journal topic from the Journals listing page and the Grade Center and create a new ungraded topic.