

# Blogs



Web Log; Communication tool for posting thoughts on topics, collecting feedback and generating further discussion; also a way for students to “publish” their own thoughts and materials. Entries are posted in reverse chronological order and tend to be archived after several posts are created (allows for greater organization). Blogs tend to be managed and created by a single person although there are ways to allow multiple users to post to a single blog.

## Problems addressed:

- Improve student critical thinking and writing skills.
- Students learning from other students
- Instructor having difficult gathering feedback from students or getting responses from everyone in class.
- Instructor needs a place to organize materials like videos, podcast, pictures, links or text you want each student to have access to.
- Especially useful for communication, writing/journalist courses. Useful for peer review- comments can be left on the post
- Students can feel that their course work is part of a larger dialog since this material would be available to anyone on the web- they are writing for a real audience

## Blogging Applications

<http://www.blogger.com>

<http://edublogs.org>

<http://www.wordpress.com>

## Examples:

At HCC:

Nancy Evans' Blog

<http://ndevans.edublogs.org/>

Other Examples:

University of Minnesota blogs - English 1701 Discussion

<http://blog.lib.umn.edu/lega0044/engl1701sect4/>

## Problems with Blogs

1. Blogs can contain inaccurate information and shouldn't be used as a primary source of information for students. Information contained in a blog isn't usually subjected to any type of editorial/publishing standards.
2. Creating Pages and Moderating a Blog takes a time commitment.
3. Digital Divide issues (does each student have internet access, should class time be devoted to contributing to the blog, etc).
4. That information is out there in the public for all to see (no firewall/security) generally most blogs for free are public (private blogs cost a subscription price).

## A few different ways to use blogs in Higher Education

- Instructor lead blog- instructor posts original topics, student comment, instructor moderates comments.
- Student centered blogs- students post topics (on a rotation basis), students add comments and the instructor moderates both the posts and the comments.
- Individual student/learner pages within a single blog- instructor creates pages for each student, the student posts topics, others post comments, instructor moderates both.
- Individual blogs for each student- students control the administration of their own blog, post, moderate comments and manage the blog.

## The five roles a user can be assigned in decreasing level of responsibility are (on EduBlogs):

### Administrator

can do everything including complete power over posts, pages, plugins, comments, choice of themes, imports, settings, assign user roles and are even able to delete the blog.

### Editor

is able to publish posts/pages, manage posts/pages, upload files, moderate comments as well as manage other people's posts/pages.

### Author

can upload files plus write and publish own posts/pages.

### Contributor

can write own posts/pages but can't publish them.

### Subscriber

can read comments and write comments.

