**Blackboard Blogs and Journals Quick Guide**

What is a Blog?

A Blog is a collaborative tool that allows students to post their personal reflection about the course or discuss and analyze course related materials. There are three types of blogs in a Blackboard course: individual, group or course blogs. An individual blog belongs only to one student and only that student can contribute to it. A group blog can be added whenever a group is created. Only members of that particular group have access to it. In a course blog all students can participate and contribute to the discussion.

### Creating a Blog

1. From the Control Panel, click Course Tools
2. Click Blogs
3. Click Create Blog
4. On the Create Blog page, provide the blog Name and Instructions
5. Set Blog Availability to ‘Yes’
6. If the blog is going to be restricted to a certain time period, select Blog Date and Time Restrictions; otherwise, leave the fields empty
7. Select what type of blog it is: an individual or a course blog under Blog Participation
8. Specify Blog Settings by selecting either monthly or weekly indexing and customizing editing options for students. If the blog is going to be graded, select Grade and specify Points possible
9. Click the Submit button

### Creating a Blog Entry

1. From the Course menu, click Tools
2. Click Blogs
3. Click on the blog name
4. Click Create Blog Entry
5. Enter the Title of the entry
6. In the Entry Message area, type the blog entry. Using the Visual Textbox Editor, faculty and students can add multimedia files or embed mashups
7. Attach any files, if needed, under Blog Entry Files by clicking Browse My Computer or Browse Content Collection
8. Click the Submit button

### Remember!

- Blogs and journals can only be viewed from Blackboard; they are not publicly accessible
- Blogs do not support RSS
- If grading is enabled, a column will be automatically added to the Grade Center
- If a course is copied or archived, blog and journal entries are not copied or archived, but blog and journal definitions are
- Links to course blogs, wikis or journals can be added to the course menu or to any content area
- More information about Blackboard blogs: www.niu.edu/blackboard/communicate/blogs.shtml
Grading a Blog
1. If grading for the blog has been enabled, from the Course menu, click Tools
2. Click Blogs
3. Click on the blog name
4. In the right-hand box, under View Entries by, click on the student you would like to grade (Note: all students who haven’t been graded will have an exclamation point icon displayed next to their name)
5. After reading the entries displayed on the page, click on Edit Grade in the box on the right under Blog Grade
6. Enter the grade under Current Grade Value
7. Enter comments to students under Feedback
8. Enter notes under Grading Notes (those can only be seen by course instructors)
9. Click the Save Grade button

Creating a Journal
1. From the Control Panel, click Course Tools
2. Click Journals
3. Click Create Journal
4. On the Create Journal page, provide the journal Name and Instructions
5. Set Journal Availability to ‘Yes’
6. If the journal is going to be restricted to a certain time period, select Journal Date and Time Restrictions; otherwise, leave the fields empty
7. Specify Journal Settings by selecting either monthly or weekly indexing and customizing editing options for students. If you would like, students to see each others journals, then select to Permit Course Users to View Journal. If the journal is going to be graded, select Grade and specify Points possible
8. Click the Submit button

What is a Journal?
A journal is self-reflective tool for students. Only the student and the instructor are able to add comments to journal entries. However, journals can be made public by the instructor so all enrolled users can read all entries made to the journal topic. Group journal entries can be read by all group members and the course instructor.

Creating a Journal Entry
1. From the Course menu, click Tools
2. Click on the journal name
3. Click Create Journal Entry
4. Enter the Title of the entry
5. In the Entry Message area, type the journal entry. Using the Visual Textbox Editor, faculty and students can embed multimedia files or mashups
6. Attach any files, if needed, under Journal Entry Files by clicking Browse My Computer or Browse Content Collection
7. Click the Submit button

Remember!
- Grading a Journal is similar to grading a Blog
- More information on Blackboard Journals: www.niu.edu/blackboard/communicate/journals.shtml