

## Blogs, Journals, and Wikis in Blackboard 9.1

The Blackboard upgrade now offers you new options for using social communication via blogs, journals, and wikis. Our objectives during this training session are:

- Identify similarities and differences between blogs, wikis and journals
- Identify potential uses of blogs, wikis and journals
- Practice creating, participating in and grading blogs, wikis and journals

	Wiki	Blog	Journal	Discussion Board
<b>Common Uses:</b>	A collaborative space where all students can view, contribute and edit content.	A shared online diary for use in class.	Personal writing space for self-reflection and private communication with the instructor.	Online discussions that are organized hierarchically with forums, threads and replies.
<b>Potential Uses</b>	Grant writing, creative writing, group research projects, student-filled study guide for test (Instructor provides the outline and students collaboratively fill it in)	“What we did / will do in class” saves instructor having to answer individual inquiries, online discussions about related topics, a place to hand in evidence of class participation, “Muddiest Points” of what was covered in class.	Reflect on personal growth throughout semester, record things learned on field trip, express oneself, document clinical experiences, and “Muddiest Points” that are private.	Since we’ve had the discussion board in Blackboard since the beginning, this is a tool you might be comfortable with for online discussions. The upgrade improved it a lot.
<b>Notes</b>	<p><b>When a student is updating a wiki page, the rest of the students are locked out of it until it is released.</b></p> <p><b>This is the only tool that allows multiple students to collaborate within the same text entry area.</b> The other two tools store student entries separately under the students’ names, but the wiki can be organized by research topic, work group, etc.</p>	<p><b>Important Setting:</b></p> <p><b>Individual to all students</b> = Entries and grades are separate to each student. To view entry, you click on the student’s name.</p> <p><b>Course</b> = All student entries are listed together and all students get that same grade.</p> <p><b>Entries can be saved as drafts</b> and posted later.</p> <p><b>Blogs are less structured</b> than the Discussion Board, and they’re chronological. The format is more open and conversational in style.</p>	<p>If you set <b>Permit course users to view journal</b>, the journal will not be private, making it more like a blog with commenting turned off.</p> <p><b>Cool idea from UND:</b> With “permit course users” turned off, ask students to post individual, original responses on a topic. Then make them public for review by everyone, preventing students from repeating remarks in early entries! (New discussion board has same functionality now.)</p> <p><b>Muddiest / Clearest Point:</b> Use last 5 minutes of class for summarizing and reflecting in the blog about the day’s content.</p>	<p>Discussion boards are <b>easily collapsed, expanded and searched.</b></p> <p><b>Users can Subscribe</b> to a forum or thread and receive an email update every time someone adds to it.</p> <p><b>Printing</b> is easy.</p> <p><b>Students can rate posts.</b> Can require student to participate first <b>before</b> seeing other student entries.</p> <p><b>May be the best of both worlds</b> now that the discussion boards are less sterile looking but have all this functionality.</p>

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**Similarities**

- To create, go to the course area where you want to add the tool. Then use **Add Interactive Tool** dropdown to choose the preferred tool. See notes above for help in understanding the setting options.
  - You can use the grading option on all four tools, which will automatically create a column in the grade center.
  - All three tools can be accessed in three places: via the “Tools” course link, the Control Panel > Course Tools link, and with the **Add Interactive Tool** choice when creating course materials.
  - When grading, only the entries created by the student displays, not the comments.
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For more detailed information, visit the ITS Blackboard page at [www.ndsu.edu/its/blackboard/](http://www.ndsu.edu/its/blackboard/) and use the links under the **Student Engagement** choices in the menu on the right.

**Voice Tools** offers an additional option for engaging students. **Voice Board** is similar to the Discussion Board, but allows both voice recording and text entry instead of just text. To learn more about Voice Board contact Tammy Cummings (tammy.cummings@ndsu.edu).