Blackboard Journals offer students a private opportunity to interact directly with the instructor and reflect on a course's content. Private by default, instructors must first create the journal before students respond with journal entries. Journals are gradable and instructors can choose to open journals up to the rest of the course to read and comment on.

How to Create a Journal

*Edit Mode Switch must be On to create a Journal.*

To access the Journals tool, expand the Course Tools menu in the Control Panel within a course, select Journals. On the Journals page, click the Create Journal button. On the Create Journal page:

1. **Journal Information**
   - Give the journal a Name
   - Use the Content Editor to add Instructions for the journal.

2. **Journal Availability**
   - Select Yes to Make Journal Available

3. **Journal Date and Time Restrictions**
   - Optionally select Display After and Display Until check boxes to enable the date and time selections.

4. **Journal Settings**
   - Select how the entries will be indexed, Monthly or Weekly
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- Optionally select **Allow Users to Edit and Delete Entries** if students will be able to edit or delete their journal entries.
- Optionally select **Allow Users to Delete Comments** if students will be able to delete comments they added to journal entries.
- Optionally select Permit Users to View Journal to allow all students to view Journal Entries.

5. **Grade Settings**
- Select **No Grading OR Grade: Points Possible** option and type the number of points possible. Once a journal is set to be graded, a column is created for it in the Grade Center. It is now permanently gradable and cannot be set to No grading.
- Select the number of entries required to **show participants in Needs Grading status** (optional). Applying this setting will show the Needs Grading icon in the Grade Center and place the entries in the queue on the Needs Grading page after the specified number of entries have been made. Optionally associate a Rubric by selecting a Rubric from the Add Rubric menu.

6. **Submit**
- Click **Submit** to finish. Click **Cancel** to quit without saving changes.

The Journals appear in alphabetical order on the Journals listing page. Columns may be sorted by clicking the column title or caret ▲ ▼ to the right of the title.

**How to Create a Journal Entry**
Navigate to the Journals page, select the **Journal Name** to open a journal. Click the **Create Journal Entry** button. On the Create Journal Entry page:

1. **Journal Entry Information**
   - Give the journal entry a **Title**
   - Use the **Content Editor** to enter the journal entry message.

2. **Journal Entry Files**
   - One or more files may be attached to a journal entry.

3. **Submit**
   - Click **Post Entry** to finish. Click **Save Entry as Draft** to complete the entry later. Click **Cancel** to quit without saving changes.

**How to Comment on a Journal Entry**
Navigate to the Journals page, select the **Journal Name** to open a journal. View a journal entry by selecting a user’s name in the side panel under **View Entries by**. Once on the Journal Entry page:
- Click the **Comment** button below the journal entry. A text box will appear. Enter your comment in the text box. Click **Add** to save the comment or cancel to quit without saving. To view all comments, click **Comments** below the entry.

**How to Grade Journal Entries**
*Edit Mode* switch must be **On** to grade journal entries.
Navigate to the Journals page, select the **Journal Name** to open a journal. View a journal entry by selecting a user’s name in the side panel under **More Journals**. A green exclamation mark beside a name means that student’s journal entry(ies) are ready for grading. Once on the Journal Entry page:
- Click **Edit Grade** in the side panel under **Journal Grade**.
- Enter points earned in the **Current Grade Value** box, or if a rubric has been created for this graded journal, click View Rubric.
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- Enter Feedback for the student and Grading Notes, which appear to the Instructor. Optionally click Content Editor for formatting Feedback and Grading Notes.
- Click Save Grade to add the Grade, Feedback, and Grading Notes to the Journal Grade section and to the Grade Center.

The Grade, Feedback, or Grading Notes can be edited by clicking Edit Grade again at any time. The changes appear in the Journal Grade section and in the Grade Center. The changes are documented in the Grade Center in the Grade History tab on the user’s Grade Details page.

*Note: If a rubric will be used to grade journal entries, it must be created and added in advance.*

Adding Journals to a Content Area

*Edit Mode switch must be On to add content.*

Hover your mouse pointer over the Tool on the action bar; select Journals from the menu. On the Create Link page:
Select the radio button beside Link to the Journal Page (the Journals page lists all journals in that course) OR Link to a Journal (link to the specific journal selected from the Link to a Journal list). Or create a new Journal by clicking on the Create New Journal button. Click Next. On the Create Link: Journal page:

1. **Link Information**
   - Enter a **Link Name** and use the Content Editor to enter optional Text that to appear under the link.

2. **Options**
   - Make the link **Available** (Yes) or **Unavailable** (No) to students.
   - Optionally select **Display After** and **Display Until** check boxes to enable the date and time selections.

3. **Submit**
   - Click **Submit** when finished. Click Cancel to quit.

The new link will appear last in the Content Area. Use the double arrow icon to the left of the Journal Link to drag it to the correct location in the Content Area.

Adding Journals to the Course Menu

*Edit Mode switch must be On to edit the course menu.*

Hover your mouse pointer over the plus at the top of the Course Menu to reveal the Contextual Menu; select Tool Link. In the Add Tool Link window:

- Give the tool link a **Name**.
- Select Journals in the Type dropdown menu.
- Check the box next to **Available to Users** so that students can see the link.
- Click **Submit** to add tool to the menu.

The new link will appear last in the Course Menu. Use the double arrow icon to the left of the Tool Link to drag it to the correct location on the Course Menu.