Journals

Journals are a personal space for students to communicate privately with you. 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. You can create journal assignments that are broad and student-directed as your students reflect on the learning process and document changes in their perceptions and attitudes. Students can describe problems faced and how they solved them. You can also create instructor-directed journal entries that are more formal in nature and that narrow the focus by listing topics for discussion.

How to use journals

Journals are ideal for individual projects. For example, in a creative writing course, the owner of each journal creates entries and an instructor comments. In this manner, a student can refine a section of a writing assignment over a period of time, using an instructor’s guidance and suggestions. A student can also comment on his or her entries to continue the conversation.

You can choose to make journal entries public, allowing all course members to view all entries. For example, you may choose to make a journal public when asking for opinions on how to improve the evaluation process. Students can read what other students wrote and build upon those ideas.

When used in the group area, members of a group can view and comment on each other's entries for the group journal. The group, as a whole, can communicate with you and all members benefit from the comments.

You can grade journal entries or use them solely for communication. In either instance, a student can make multiple entries for one journal topic.

Create a journal

You can create one or more journals for your students to use in your course. You must create journal topics before students can add their entries.

2. Type a name and optional instructions. Make the journal available to students.
3. Select the Display After and Display Until check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Display restrictions do not affect the journal availability, only when it appears.
4. In the Journal Settings section, select Monthly or Weekly Index Entries. If desired, you may select check boxes to allow users to edit and delete entries, or delete comments.
   o 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.
5. In the Grade Settings section, 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 a user to the journal topic. After you enable grading, a column is created automatically in the Grade Center. It is permanently gradable, and you cannot change the setting to No grading.

6. If desired, select the check box for Show participants in needs grading status and select the number of entries required. 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 student activity meets this threshold.

7. Add a rubric if you'd like.

8. Select Submit.

The journal topics appear in alphabetical order on the Journals listing page. You can sort columns by selecting the column title. You can also add links to journals in course areas, such as content areas and folders.

Create journal entries

You and your students can create journal entries. You are the only one who can comment on students’ private entries. You and group members can comment on group entries. On the Journals listing page, information is provided about each journal. Students can see if their entries are private—between the student and you—or public.

1. On the Journals listing page, select a journal title.
2. On the journal’s topic page, select Create Journal Entry.
3. Type a title and entry.
4. Optionally, browse for a file to attach.
5. Select Post Entry to submit the journal entry or select Save Entry as Draft to add the entry later.

For additional support, contact the Helpdesk at 330-672-4357 (HELP) or visit support.kent.edu.