



BLOGS :: INTRODUCTION

Workshop Description, Goals, and Outcomes

This workshop will give you a general understanding of blogs and how they can be used effectively in the classroom. You'll create and configure a blog using Blogger.com, a free blogging service on the Web.

Goals:

- ✓ Provide an overview of blogging and its use in education.
- ✓ Create, configure and post messages to a course blog.
- ✓ Plan an assignment and assessment for a course blog.

Outcomes:

Upon completion of this workshop, you will be able to:

- ✓ Create and configure a course blog.
- ✓ Add a variety of content to your blog including text, images, videos, links, RSS feeds for related topical web sites, lists of links, etc.
- ✓ Develop an assignment using the blog
- ✓ Create an assessment for the assignment.

Workshop Web Site

<http://wec-blogs.blogspot.com/>

Schedule

2:45 – 3:05 pm	Introduction to blogs used in instruction
3:05 – 3:30pm	Create and configure a blog
3:30 – 4:15pm	Add, edit, delete postings and enhance blog
4:15 – 5:00pm	Create assignment and assessment



BLOGS :: INTRODUCTION

1. What is a blog?

How can blogs be used in instruction?

- ✓ Course web site
- ✓ Course announcements
- ✓ Discussion board using comment feature
- ✓ Provide supplementary resources
- ✓ Distribute course podcasts
- ✓ Engage students in blogging projects
- ✓
- ✓



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What are the potential benefits to students?

- ✓ Access to course content 24/7
- ✓ Comments feature can promote active learning
- ✓ Student blog to reflect on daily/weekly learning
- ✓ Course announcements
- ✓
- ✓
- ✓
- ✓



BLOGS :: BLOGGER QUICK START

Blogger Basics

These instructions will help you to quickly create a basic blog. Create your Gmail account first (if necessary) and then go to <http://www.blogger.com/start> to create your blog.

1. Sign-in to Blogger with your Gmail account user name (email address) and password.
2. Click on the orange **CONTINUE** arrow and give your blog a title and an address (URL); and in the Word Verification box, type in the letters you see.

Note:

- a. The blog address must be unique (no two URLs can be the same) and you can check the availability by clicking on the “**Check Availability**” link. You might have to think of an alternative address.
- b. The address you enter can’t have spaces but you can use dashes so **BUS 101 at BCC** would need to be entered as **BUS-101-at-BCC**.



BLOGS :: BLOGGER QUICK START

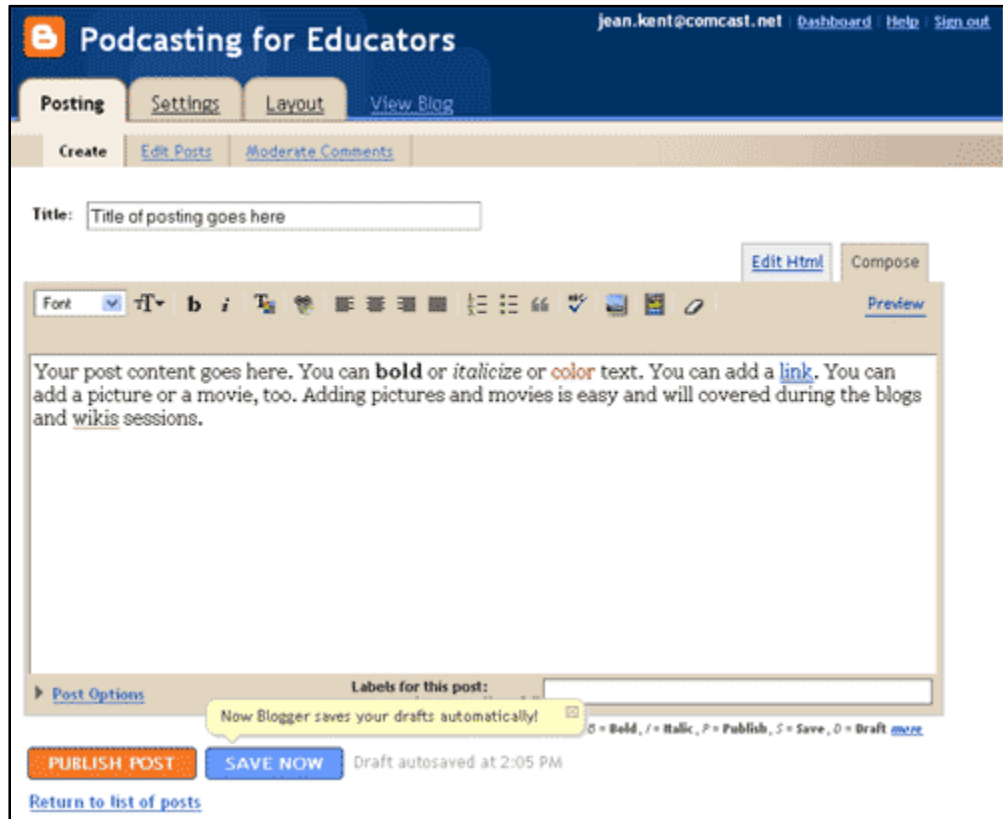
3. Next, choose a template. You can select a different template later on. Click on the orange **CONTINUE** arrow.



4. You should see a page that says your blog has been created. Click the orange **START BLOGGING** arrow to write your first post.
5. The posting screen looks a lot like a blank email message.
 - a. Type in a title for the posting
 - b. Enter the content of your posting in the box below the title.
 - c. Notice the formatting buttons and buttons that allow you to make links and add images and movies.
 - d. You can preview your posting before you publish it or save it as a draft if you don't have enough time to complete it.
 - e. When you're finished, click the orange **PUBLISH POST** button
 - f. See the figure on the next page.



BLOGS :: BLOGGER QUICK START



6. Before you start using your blog, there are a few important settings you'll want to change. Click on the **Setting** tab.
7. In the **Basic** section:
 - a. Add a short description
 - b. Select **No** for **Add your blog to our listings?**
 - c. Leave all other options unchanged.
 - d. Click the orange **Save Settings** button.
8. In the **Publishing** section:
 - a. Make a note of your blog address (selected when you created the blog).
 - b. Click the orange **Save Settings** button.



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9. Skip to the **Comments** section.
 - a. If you want students to leave comments, make sure **Show** is selected in the **Comments** option.
 - b. Select **Anyone** in the **Who Can Comment?** option.
 - c. Select **Yes** in the **Enable comment moderation?** option. This is very important as it allows you control over the comments that appear in your blog.
 - d. Enter your preferred email address in the box. Comment notifications are sent to this address so you can approve or disapprove new comments.
 - e. Click the orange **Save Settings** button.
10. Skip to the **Permissions** section.
 - a. Click the **ADD AUTHORS** button if you will allow others to create posts to your blog.
 - b. In the **Blog Readers** option, select **Anybody** unless you need greater control over your blog readership. I have NOT found this to be necessary!



BLOGS: ENHANCING YOUR BLOG

Enhancing Your Blog

Edit Your Profile

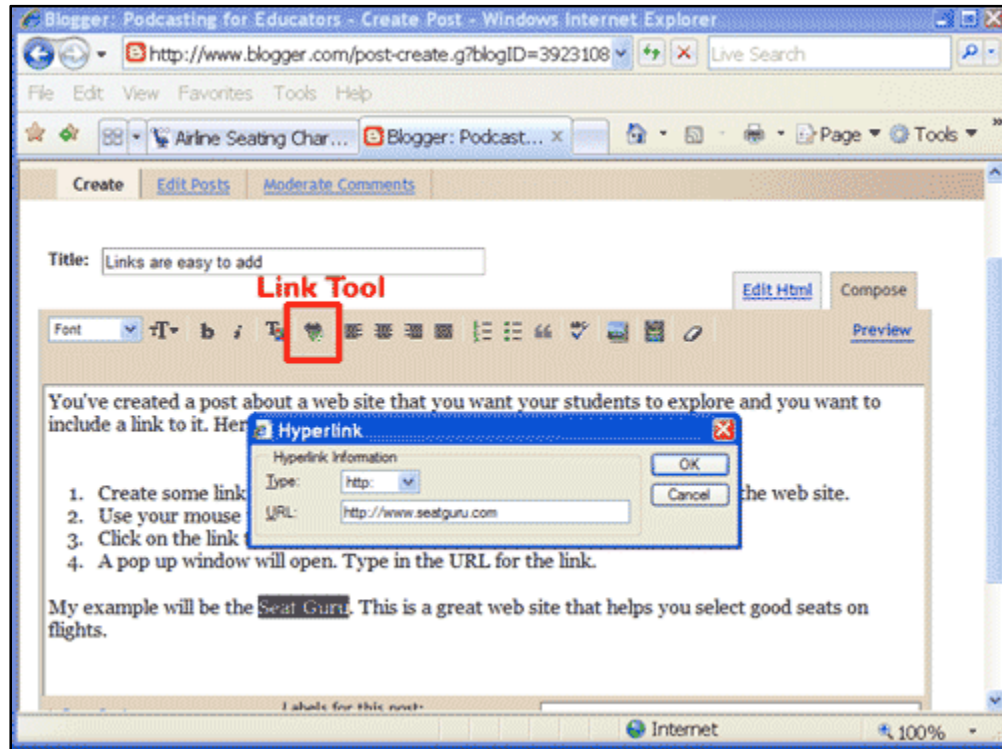
1. Edit your profile. I encourage you to:
 - a. Share your profile.
 - b. Show your real name (if you feel comfortable doing so).
 - c. Don't show your email address.
 - d. Select a Display Name that shows up when you post a message. I use my first name only.
 - e. Include a photo (if you feel comfortable doing so).
 - f. Include an audio clip (if you have one).
 - g. Don't fill out the gender or birthday information.
 - h. Provide your home page URL (if you have one).
 - i. Include city, state, and country.
 - j. Add industry and occupation.
 - k. Fill out extended info (if you feel comfortable).
2. When done click the orange **Save Profile** button.
3. Click "**Return to dashboard**" link.

To Add a Link

1. In your post message create some link text. This is the text your students will click on to follow the link.
2. Use your mouse to select (highlight) the link text.
3. Click on the **Link** button from the formatting menu.
4. A pop up window will open. Type in the URL for the link and click **OK**. See the figure on the next page.



BLOGS: ENHANCING YOUR BLOG



5. After the link has been added, always test it to make sure it works.

To Add an Image

1. First create/find an image to add. The maximum file size is 8 MB and Blogger accepts GIF, JPG, and PNG formats. Here are some suggestions for creating images:
 - a. Use a digital camera but resize the image to 640 by 480 or less.
 - b. Create a screen snapshot but resize it to 640 by 480 or less.
 - c. Use a photo sharing site like Flickr (<http://www.flickr.com>) and make sure you can legally use the image. Resize it so that it is no more than 640 pixels wide or high depending on the orientation.
2. Place your mouse in the message where you want the image to display then click on the **Add Image** button from the formatting menu.
3. A new window will open. Click the **Browse** button to find the file on your computer. See the figure on the next page.



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To Add a Video

1. Adding a video is very similar to adding an image. First, create the video. Here are some suggestions for creating videos:
 - a. Use the movie feature of your digital camera or a digital video camera.
 - b. Keep it short (unless you are as talented as Steven Spielberg).
 - c. The file size limit is 100 MB and Blogger accepts AVI, MPEG, QuickTime, Real, Windows Media file formats.
2. Place your mouse in the message where you want your video to display then click on the **Add Video** button from the formatting menu. It is to the right of the Add Image button.
3. A pop up window will appear. Browse for the video, give it a title, click in the “I agree to the Upload Terms and Conditions” checkbox then click on the orange **UPLOAD VIDEO** button. See the figure below.

Add a video to your blog post

Choose a file to upload

We accept AVI, MPEG, QuickTime, Real, and Windows Media, 100 MB maximum size.

Video Title

Do not upload infringing or obscene material.
 I agree to the [Upload Terms and Conditions](#).

4. A place holder will appear showing the progress of the uploading and processing of your video. It may take a few minutes for the video to appear.



BLOGS: ENHANCING YOUR BLOG

To Add Page Elements

1. Click the **Layout** tab then click the **Page Elements** section. Click on the link labeled **Add a Page Element**. Page elements include:
 - a. Link list
 - b. List
 - c. Text
 - d. Feed
2. There are other page elements but these are the ones faculty will likely want to use. The two that are extremely useful, Link lists and Feeds, will be demonstrated in the workshop.
3. **Link lists** allow you to provide web resources to your students. Click the blue **ADD TO BLOG** button for a **Link list**.
 - a. Give your link list a meaningful title.
 - b. Enter the URL for a web site.
 - c. Add the title of the web site.
 - d. Click the blue **ADD LINK** button to continue adding links on this list.

Configure Link List ? Help

CANCEL **SAVE CHANGES**

Title

Number of links to show in list Leave blank to show all links

Sorting ▼

New Site URL

New Site Name

ADD LINK

[Edit Delete](#) [Check List from Web Pages that Suck](#)

[Edit Delete](#) [Sample Chapter from Don't Make Me Think](#)

[Edit Delete](#) [Web Design Principles](#)

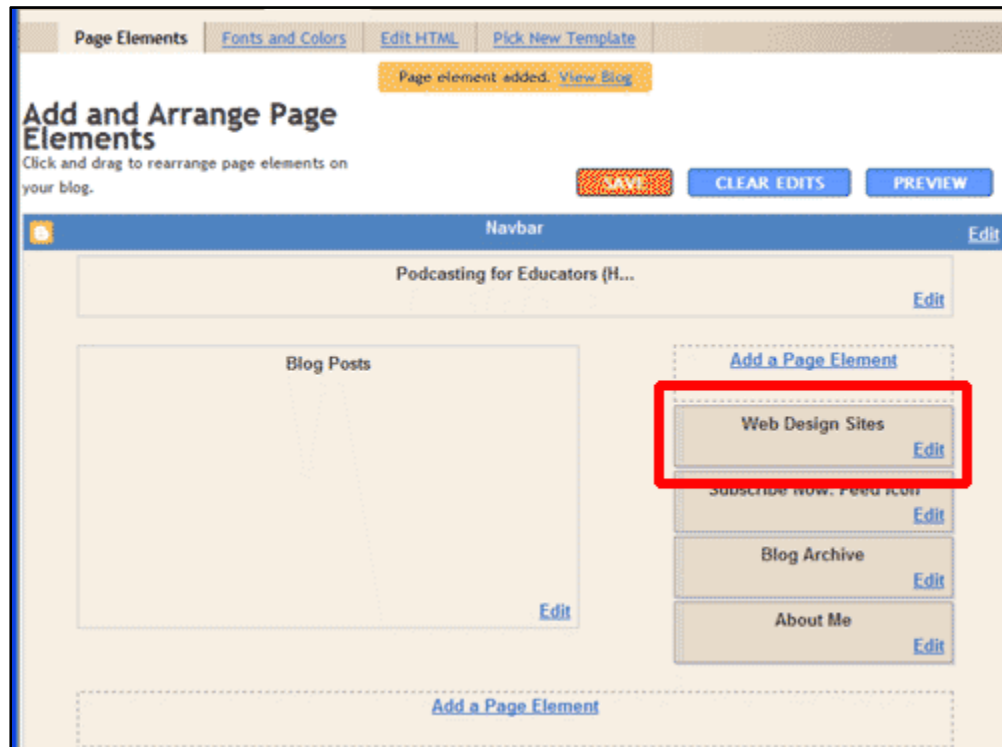
[Edit Delete](#) [Web Design Pattern Library](#)


CANCEL **SAVE CHANGES**



BLOGS: ENHANCING YOUR BLOG

4. When all the links are added, click the orange **SAVE CHANGES** button. Your page element will appear in your blog layout now. See the figure below.



5. The Feed page element allows you to add automatically updated content from other relevant blogs, news web sites, professional journals, etc. You will add the RSS feed address provided by the source to create a Feed page element.
6. In the layout screen, click on **Add a Page Element** then click the blue **ADD TO BLOG** button to add a **Feed**.
 - a. Minimize the **Configure Feed** window. You need to find a feed before filling in the Feed URL box.
 - b. Open a new Tab in your browser and locate a resource with a RSS feed. For our workshop, let's add the New York Times feed for their education section. To find it, go to <http://www.nytimes.com/services/xml/rss/index.html>
 - c. Click on the orange **RSS** button which looks like this: 
 - d. A new page will open. Copy its URL to the clipboard.



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- e. Return to the **Configure Feed** window and paste the URL into the Feed URL box. Click the orange **CONTINUE** button.
- f. The feed information will display with some configuration settings. See the figure below.

Title: NYT > Education

Show: 5 items

Item dates

Item sources/authors

Preview

NYT > Education

- [Joseph Berger: Principal's Fast Ouster a Mystery](#)
- [Education: Choir School Celebrates Its 70th Season](#)
- [State House Journal: Fear, Paranoia and, Yes, Some Loathing in Alabama's Hallowed Halls](#)
- [Robert A. Dentler, Who Helped Shape Desegregation in Boston, Is Dead at 79](#)
- [Catholic School Teachers Strike Over Health Care and Plan Another Walkout](#)

[Change Feed URL](#)

CANCEL **SAVE CHANGES**

- g. Click the orange **SAVE CHANGES** button and your feed will appear in your page layout. See the figure below.

Navbar Edit

Podcasting for Educators (H... Edit

Blog Posts Edit

Add a Page Element

NYT > Education Edit

Web Design Sites Edit

Subscribe Now: Feed Icon Edit

Blog Archive Edit

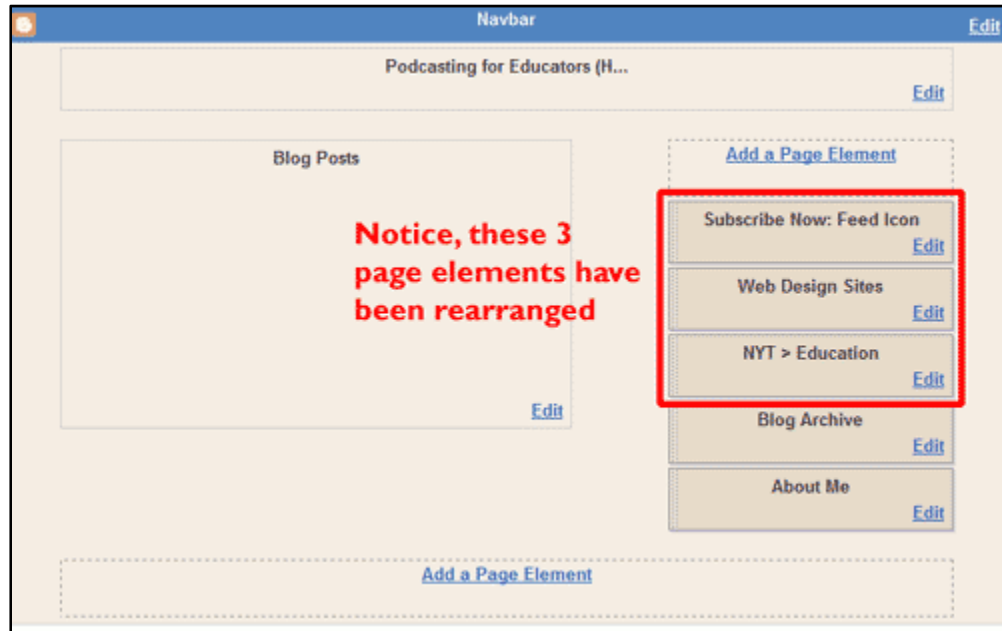
About Me Edit

Add a Page Element



BLOGS: ENHANCING YOUR BLOG

7. Last but not least, you can rearrange the page elements on your blog. Use your mouse to drag and drop an element to a new place in your page layout. See the figure below.



8. Explore some of the other page elements, rearrange them, and view your blog to see how they look.



BLOGS : PROJECT IDEAS

Examples found on the Web (see workshop web site for links)

Weekly discussion questions

- ✓ Sociological Reasoning class. Jay Keeton, the instructor, developed an excellent rubric for grading the assignment, too.
- ✓ GEL 100 Dinosaurs.

Course web site

- ✓ Reading and Composing (ENG 096/097)

Supplemental class resources

- ✓ Information Technology for ESL Students Podcasts.
- ✓ Applied Math 40S

Blogs from professionals in the field

- ✓ *About a Nurse: a nurse's blog* (<http://www.aboutanurse.com/>)
- ✓ *See Jane Compute: the adventures of a woman in computing* (<http://scienceblogs.com/seejanecompute/>)