Open Professional Writing

User Guide Version 2.0

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Open Professional Writing: The Open-Source CMS for the Writing Classroom

Version Updates

Version 1.0
Added information on Groups and Blogs. Updated colors and dates.

Version 2.0
Added information for Drupal 7 version of course sites. Updated naming to Open Professional Writing. Corrected multipel typos in original manuscript. Replaced photos with relevant updated images. Replaced text. Dropped features no longer included.

Open Professional Writing

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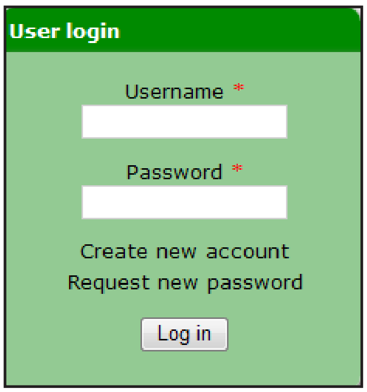
Site Setup

Updating your Account

When you first get your course site, you will be logging in as a generic instructor. In order to start making the site your own, we'll need to update your username and profile information. Read below to see the steps needed for this process.

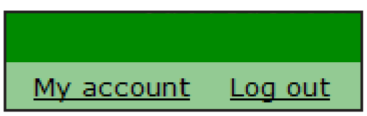
Step 1: Logging In

When you first go to your site URL, you will find yourself at the login screen. You will need to log into your site by inputing your username and password that you were given in the email that also gave you your course site URL. Once you've entered this information into the site, you'll be taken to the front page of your new course site.



Step 2: Accessing your Profile

Once you've logged into the site, you'll be ready to access your profile. This is where you'll be able to change your username and password, as well as enter in information about yourself that will be visible to your students. To access your account, click on the "My Account" link in the Account menu, found on the right-hand side of the screen.



Step 3: Updating your Account

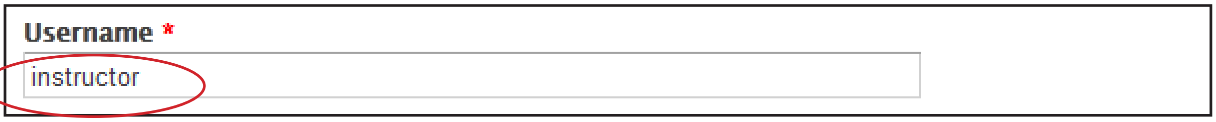
Once you reach your profile page, you'll need to simply click on the "Edit" link in the center to change your information. You'll want to change several things:

- username
- email address
- password

Updating your Account

Step 4: Changing your Username

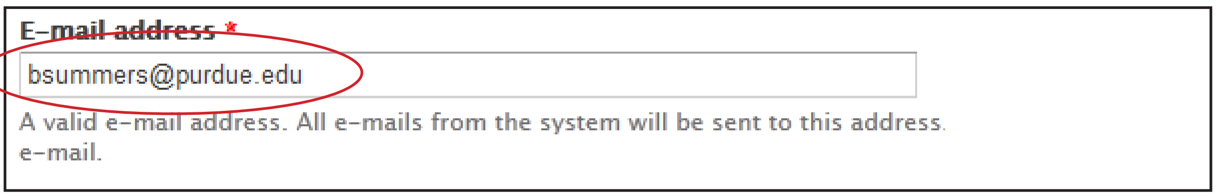
In the slot labelled “Username’ you’ll want to replace your username you were given to log in with your own personal username. When you choose your username, feel free to use spaces



as well as capitalization. The system will accept usernames such as “Jane Doe” with the space included. Additional options, such as “Ms. Doe,” are also available. The main goal is to make sure your username will be readily identified with you and reflect a professional attitude to your class.

Step 5: Updating your Email Address

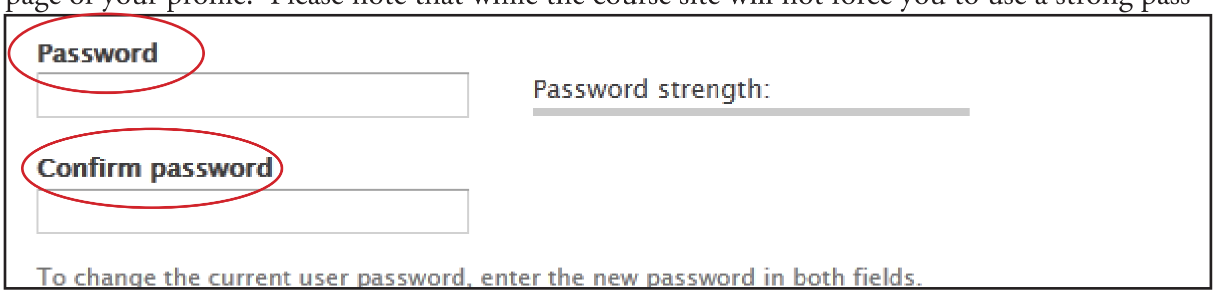
Below the “Username” slot you will see a space for an email address.



This will be the email address associated with your account for the site.

Step 6: Updating your Password

To update your password, you will simply need to enter it into the fields provided on the account page of your profile. Please note that while the course site will not force you to use a strong pass-



word, it is strongly recommended that you do. After you type in your password the site will give you an evaluation of the strength of your password. It is recommended that you use a password that rates as **strong**. This type of password usually includes a combination of numbers, symbols, and upper and lowercase letters. Whatever you do, do not use your username as your password, or something easy to guess like “password.” Doing so will make me cry. Once you are done you can click save. Do not change anything else on the account tab.

Site Setup

Updating your Account

Step 7: Updating your Personal Information

Once you've saved your account information, you'll want to finish the account update process by filling in all relevant entries that are required. You can tell if a field is required by the red asterick next to it on the account page. Currently, there will be placeholder answers there. You should replace these.

Please make sure to answer professionally, as this information will be publically visible to your students. The software knowledge, specifically, will be displayed on the Members page of your course site. When you are done, save, and you will have completed updating your account.

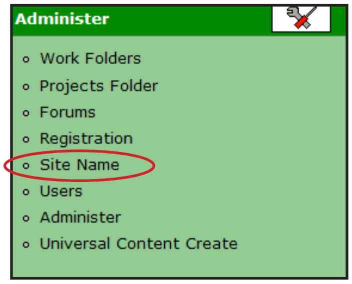
Site Setup

Setting your Site Name

When you first get your course site, your site will have a generic title at the top, as well as a default email address that will be associated with all content sent from it to your students. In this section you'll read about how to change the default sitename and email address to those of your own choosing.

Step 1: Access the Site Information page

To change your site information, you'll need to click on the "Site Name" link under the Administer menu. You can find this menu on the right side of the screen if you are in Instructor Mode.



Step 2: Edit your Site Information

Once you've accessed the Site Information page, you'll need to change a number of items to make your site your own:

- name
- email
- slogan

Step 3: Changing the Site Name

The site name will go at the top of your site, and will replace the default name of "Open Professional Writing." Due to the way that the site name appears on the site, it is recommended that you do use your course title here. So, for example, if you are teaching Introductory Composition, you would title the top of your site Introductory Composition.

Step 4: Changing Site Email

The next item you will see is "Site Email." You will want to change this to correspond to your own email address you will be using with students. The reason for this is that the site email will be associated with all emails sent by the course site, including the emails students will get when they first register for your course site themselves. Only put an email here you'd like students to know.

Site Setup

Setting up your Site Name

Step 5: Changing the Site Slogan

Under the site email, you will see "Site Slogan." This slogan will correspond with the second level of the site name listed at the top of the page. If you are working with a default site, it will replace "Course Number" at the top of your site. It is recommended that you include the course number in this section, using a format similar to something like ENGL:106. You may also include section information if this is helpful to students. Once you are done, you can save and your site name setup is complete.

Site Setup

Posting your Course Syllabus

Your course site will start off without a course syllabus. This set of instructions will walk you through putting in your own course syllabus for your students to reference throughout the semester.

Step 1: Go to your Course Description page

To add a course syllabus to your site, you'll want to navigate to the "Course Description" section of your course site. You'll find the link to your course syllabus in the main menu, listed as "Course Description."

Step 2: Edit your Course Description

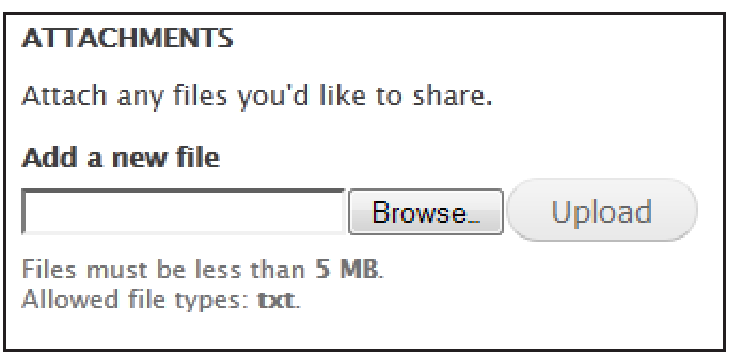
Once you've reached the course description page, you'll want to edit it to add in your own text. To do so, simply click "Edit" at the top of the page.

Step 3: Adding your Content

After you hit edit, scroll down and enter in your information into the "Body" section of the page.

Step 4: Attaching Files

Below the "Body" section you will find the "Attachments" section. This section allows you to attach files to the course description page. If you do attach files, please make sure that you also provide an alternate version of the syllabus in the body section. Once you are done with the body and attaching files, save your work and your course description will be updated with the new information.



Pasting from Word

When you post from a program like Word that makes use of a lot of formatting, your document may not look exactly the same in the site's text editor. Word uses a lot of markup that doesn't play nicely with your site (or any site in general). Be careful when pasting directly from Word and be on the lookout for issues this may cause in your site.

Site Setup

Posting Assignments to your Site

As part of setting up your site, you'll want to post assignments. Assignments on your site will show up under two places: the Projects section and the Calendar. Below are the steps to post assignments and other content to course sites.

Step 1: Using Folders

The first step to making an assignment is creating a folder for it. Folders are where you students place assignments when they are completed. Without folders, it is nearly impossible to find and grade student work. There are two types of these folders: Work Folders and Project folders. Project folders are used to differentiate between which Project an assignment belongs to. Work folders are used to name specific assignments. The best way to go about naming these will be covered below. There is some repetition in the process, but by laying out your Project and Work folders before you create assignments you are able to plan your assignments out over a section of the semester and keep that blueprint handy on the site for reference.

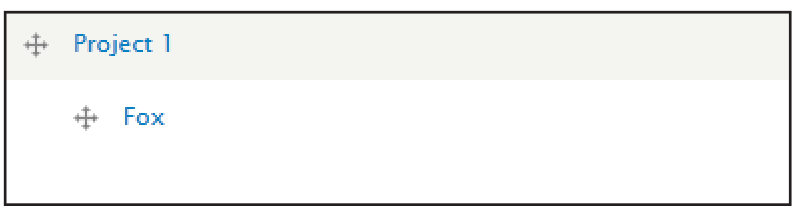
Step 2: Creating Project Folders

First, you should click on "Project Folders" in the "Administer" toolbar. Once you've done that, click on "Add Term" to add the names of each major project. When you are done, you can go back to the site's homepage.

The first step to posting content to your site is clicking on the "Deploy Content" link in the Instruct menu on your site. This menu is in the top right-hand corner. Any time you are posting assignments or something that you'd like to show up for a single day on your course site's calendar, you'll make use of of the "Deploy Content" link.

Step 3: Creating Work Folders

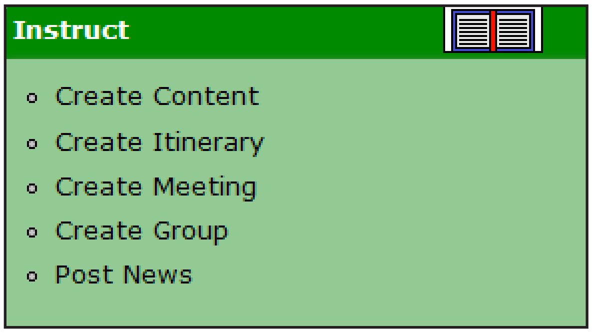
Next, you'll need to click the "Work Folders" link in your "Administer" menu. Here, you'll need to do two things: first, you'll need to recreate your Project folder names. This allows you to associate assignments by project, making it easier for students to turn things in. Next, you'll need to create folders for each major assignment you'll have students turn in. When you've done this, you can then click on the "List" Tab at the top of the page. This will take you to the list of terms. Using your mouse, you can then drag specific assignments under the correct Project so that they are listed as children. When listed as a child, the assignment title will be slightly offset. This will allow students to easily find the correct folder for turnins. When you are satisifed, click save.



Posting Assignments to your Site

Step 3: Creating an Assignment

Now that all your terms are created, you can now create a corresponding assignment. To do so, use the “Create Content” link in the “Instruct” menu.



Step 4: Filling in your Assignment

After you’ve clicked “Create Content” you’ll be taken to a blank assignment page. Here you’ll need to popualte your assignment with all of the pertintent information that you students will need to complete it ontime.

To complete you assignment, you will generally want to fill out the following information:

- Name of the Assignment
- Due date of the Assignment (only use an end-date if you need a range of days)
- The Project associated (this is so the site can place your assignment correctly)
- The Work Folders associated (so students can turn it in)
- The Description (either in text or as an attachment)

Once you’ve entered in all the above information, you can save your assignment. It should show up in the correct location on your calendar as well as in your Projects tab linked at the top of the home page.

Site Setup

Posting your Weekly Itinerary

If you like to keep your students up to date with a weekly schedule, you can make use of the Weekly Itinerary tool on your course site. See below for more about this feature.

Step 1: Creating a Weekly Itinerary

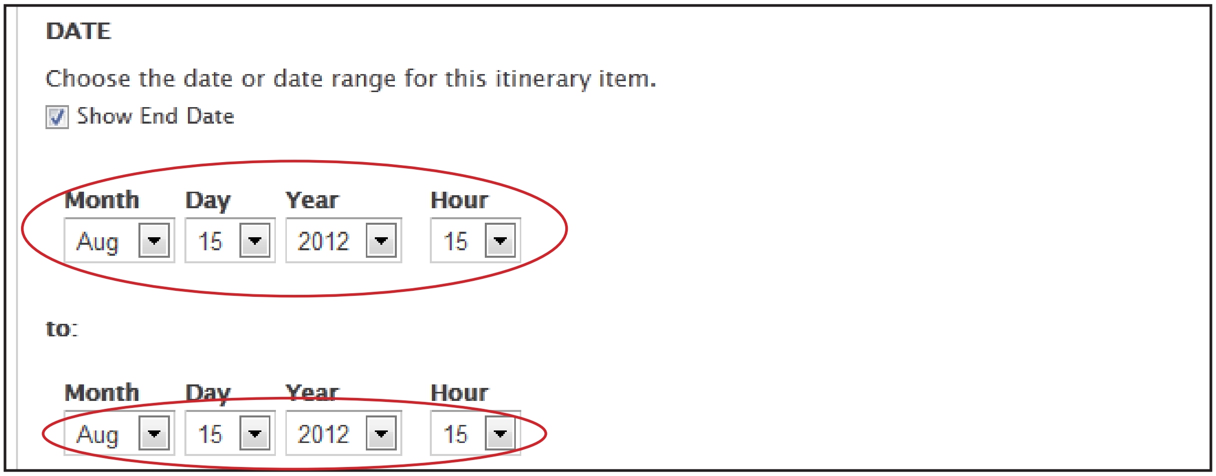
Use the "Create Weekly Itinerary" link in your Instruct menu. This will take you to the Weekly Itinerary creation page.

Step 2: Adding a Title

You'll need to enter in the title of your Itinerary item in the field labelled "Week of Itinerary." Please note the name that you use will be what shows up on the Calendar page.

Step 3: Setting your Date

Once you've done that, you'll need to enter in the date of your itinerary item.
You'll need to pick the "from" and "to" dates. This will be the range of dates that your itinerary item will be shown on the calendar. Pick a range that makes sense.



Step 4: Filling in Content

Just like the other work you've done on the site, you can now fill in the body of this item, and attach files as needed. When you are done, save your work. You can double check what you've done by checking the date on the calendar.

Site Setup

Registering Students

Part of setting up your course site is allowing students to access your site by registering. This section will walk you through the process of setting up that registration.

Step 1: Making Sure your Site Accepts Account Registration

First, you'll need to make sure your website will allow registration of new accounts. To do so, simply click on the "Registration" link on your new site's Administer menu. This will take you directly to the "Account Settings" page.

Once at the "Account Settings" page, simply make sure that your site allows registration with administrator approval only, and make sure that upon deletion an account is merely disabled with content kept around. **These are the recommended settings. You should not alter them.**

Step 2: Activating Student Accounts

Once students have created accounts, they will need to be approved to access the site. To do so, click on the "Users" link in the Administer Menu. This will take you directly to the "People" page. Here you will see a list of all site users. Simply select the checkbox beside each user you'd like to activate then click on update next to "Unblock the selected users." This will allow your students to access your site.

It is possible that spammers will attempt to register for your site at some point. Always make sure an account is legitimate before allowing the user to access the site.

Site Communication

Posting a Conference or Meeting

If you like to allow your students to use your site for scheduling conferences with you or setting up meetings during your office hours, you can make use of the Meeting feature of the site.

Step 1: Arranging a Meeting

Use the "Arrange a Meeting" link in your Instruct menu. This will take you to the Meeting creation page.

Step 2: Filling in the Date

You'll need to enter in the title of your meeting item in the field labelled "Purpose/Title." Once you've done that, you'll need to enter in the date of your meeting item. Please note the name that you use will be what shows up on the Calendar page.

You'll need to pick the "from" and "to" dates. This will be the range of time that you are free. This time will show up on the meeting page itself as well as the calendar.

Step 3: Filling in Content

Just like the other work you've done on the site, you can now fill in the body of this item, and attach files as needed. When you are done, save your work. You can double check what you've done by checking the date on the calendar.

Step 4: Receiving Student Responses

The meeting feature allows students to comment on the meeting page you've created, requesting a specific slot of time. Since the responses are listed in chronological order, there is a clear system for seeing who asked for what slot first. Students that are beaten to a time will simply need to request a later date/time. You can view these comments by browsing the specific meeting page.

Site Communication

Posting News

If you like to keep your students up to date with messages on the front page of your site, you can use the News function.

Step 1: Posting a News Item

Use the "Post News" link in your Instruct menu. This will take you to the News creation page.

Step 2: Filling in Content

You'll need to enter in the title of your News item in the field labelled "Title." Once you've done that, you'll need to enter in the content of your news item. Please note that your title used will be how the post will be titled when it shows up on your front page. If you need to, you may attach a file or audio piece.

Step 3: Choosing Publication Options

When you are done with your news item, you can choose between two options for publication. At the bottom of the page you'll see the "Publication" tab. There you can set whether or not your news item will be placed as a sticky item or just on the front page in chronological order. Making a note "sticky" means that it will appear at or near the top of the list of announcments. Other anouncements will appear below those made "sticky." Making a note sticky makes sure it is visible to the most students for the longest amount of time. Otherwise, your item will slowly move down the page until its on the second page or more of news items as you post them. When you've decided which makes the most sense for your post, save your work to post it.

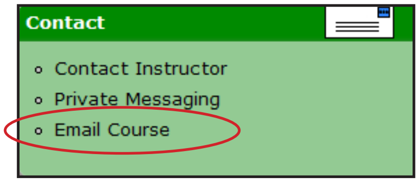
Site Communication

Emailing your Course

Your course site has built into it a mass email feature. Using it you can email all your users directly from the site, allowing you to send emails without a stand-alone client.

Step 1: Emailing the Course

To email your course, you'll want to use the "Email Course" link in the Contact menu. This will take you to the Mass Contact page.



Step 2: Adding Content

Once you've reached the Mass Contact page, you simply need to add a subject, message, and any attachments. When you've done this you can hit send. Checking the box to send a copy to yourself is mainly a waste of time since the feature by default will send messages to everyone registered for the site, yourself included.

Site Communication

Emailing Individual Students

Your course site has built into it a Contact form that can be used to send emails directly to specific students without going through a separate email client.

Step 1: Selecting a Studemt

To email a student, simply click on their user name on any page it is displayed. This will take you to that specific student's profile page. Once you are there, click on the "Contact" link. This will take you to the Contact page.

Step 2: Adding Content

On the contact page, you can add a message title and any text you see fit. Once done, simply hit send to email the student.

Note: You should never use the Contact form to send grades to a student who has requested you not send them grades via email. Instead, you will need to use the Private Messaging system of your site, covered on the next page.

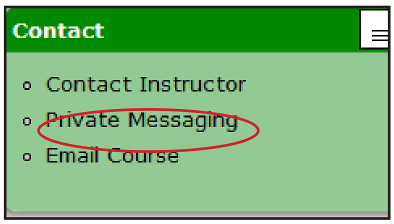
Site Communication

Sending Grades without Email

Your course site has built into it a Contact form that can be used to send grades to students while bypassing their email accounts.

Step 1: Sending a Private Message

To message a student without email, make use of a private message. You can create a private message by using the "Private Messaging" link in the Contact menu of your course site. This will take you to the private messaging system.



Step 2: Writing a Message

Once you've reached the private messaging system, you'll see your private message inbox. Here you will see a list of any and all messages received. At the top of that page you will see a menu with a choice to "Write new message." Click this to draft a new private message.

Step 3: Adding Content

On the private messaging page, you can type in your reciepient's username (the form will auto-fill), the subject of your message, and the body. When you are done with the message, simply click "Send message" to message your student.

Note: The private messsage system will not transmit the contents of your message to your student's email. Instead, they will be sent an email that lets them know they have a new private message to read on the course site, with a link included to that message. This option is the only way to contact a student with a grade electronically that has opted out of having grades emailed to them on their profile page.

Site Administration

Grading Assignments

Your course site has a built in grading system that you and your students can use to keep track of grades for assignments and to make comments on assignments. While this feature will not tabulate grades for you, it will keep them track in a manner that can be copy/pasted to Excel.

Step 1: Entering Grading Mode

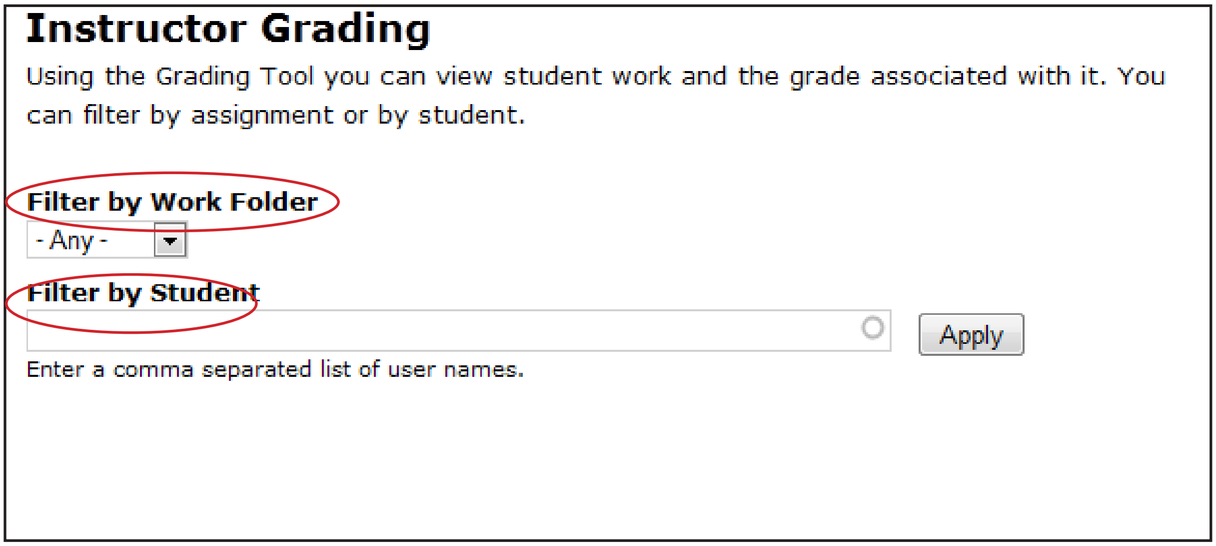
To start grading, you will need to enter your site's Instructor Mode. This mode exists to prevent grades showing up when you are browsing student work on the site via projector. It also allows for a compartamentalization of the user interface so you can see the site closer to how your students would.

Step 2: Accessing the Gradebook

Once you've toggled instructor mode, you will be able to see the grading menu and select "Grade Student Work." This will take you to your site Gradebook.

Step 3: Using the Gradebook

Once you've reached the site's gradebook, you'll be able to see all student work that has been marked as "Draft Complete." You can choose to grade this work directly on the page if you are simply grading for completion. If you need to filter your view to grade specific assignments, simply use the "Filter by Work Folder" tool or the "Filter by Student" tool.



Step 4: Choosing an Assignment to Comment On and Grade

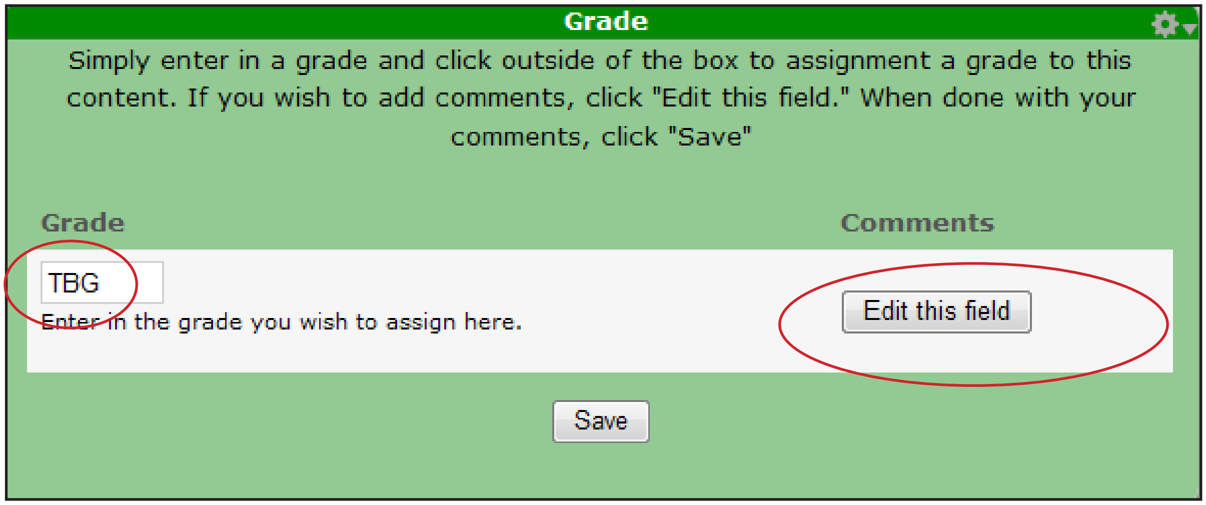
If you wish to grade an assignment indepth with comments, simply click on that assignment's name in the "Title" column to view the entire document.

Site Administration

Grading Assignments

Step 5: Making Comments and Grading Indepth

Once you've accessed an assignment indepth, you can enter grades making use of the grading box found at the bottom of the page. This box will accept entry directly, so there is no need to open a separate page.



Once you've entered in your comments into the grading box, your results should be saved automatically. To make sure of this, you can click elsewhere on the page. This should cause a blue circle to appear in the grading box, signalling the system has saved your work. Generally, this is not needed, but you should check on a browser-by-browser basis to avoid wasting your work. As with any online writing, if you have spent a lot of time on comments make sure to copy your work before leaving the page to avoid losing a large amount of text.

NOTE: Commenting on attached files directly is not supported by your site out of the box. If you would like this feature, please email the support group.

Site Administration

Taking/Tracking Attendance

Taking attendance with your course site allows for an easy tracking of attendance among students and allows you and your students to keep track of what days they are absent.

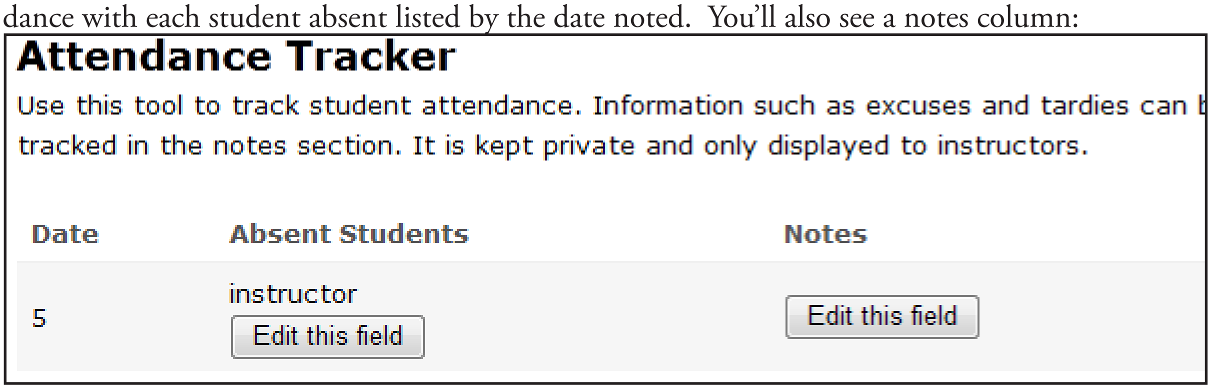
Step 1: Taking Attendance

To take attendance, click on the "Take Attendance" link in your Grading menu. This will take you to a black attendance item. Once here, you should put in the date you are taking attendance for, and then put a checkmark beside each student who is not present. When you are done, click "Save".

Step 2: Tracking Attendance/Editing Attendance Records

When you are ready to see who has been absent on a given date, use the "Track Attendance" button in the Grading menu. Please note this is different than the one in the Calendar section. The Calendar menu link is for students.

Once you've clicked "Track Attendance," you'll be treated to a list of all days you've taken attendance with each student absent listed by the date noted. You'll also see a notes column:



If you need to change a specific date's records due to a doctor's note or a tardy, you can simply edit the absent students field and the notes field. The notes field is kept private, so you can keep track of when someone has turned in a sick note or came in late. Later in the semester this can be useful in assessing tardies and the like.

Using Student Features

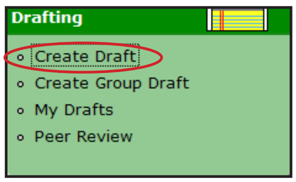
Using Student Features

Posting a Draft

When students go to turn in an assignment, they'll need to use the Draft feature.

Step 1: Creating a Draft

To create a draft, you'll just need to click "Compose a Draft" in the Draft menu. This will take you to the Draft composition page.



Step 2: Titling your Draft

Once you're at the draft creation page, you'll want to title your document. You can do this by simply entering the desired title into the "Title" field. Make sure this title matches the overall assignment that you are working on.

Step 3: Choosing a Work Submission Folder

You will need to choose a Work Submission Folder for this assignment. Each assignment that you turn in needs to be placed in a folder in order for your instructor to find it for grading. The folder system is two tiered. The first tier corresponds to the major category of assignment you wish to complete (such as Unit 1). The second tier will correspond to the specific assignment you are working on. **Remember: if you do not select a Work Submission Folder, your assignment won't show up to be graded.**

Step 4: Adding Content

To add in text to your document, simply type into the "Text" field of your draft. Alternatively, you can use the "File Management" or "Audio Upload" fields lower on the page to attach a file of some sort for your document. Make sure to submit your assignment as your instructor asks you.

Step 5: Setting your Draft Status

When submitting a draft, you need to choose what your draft's status will be. Each status has a different function:

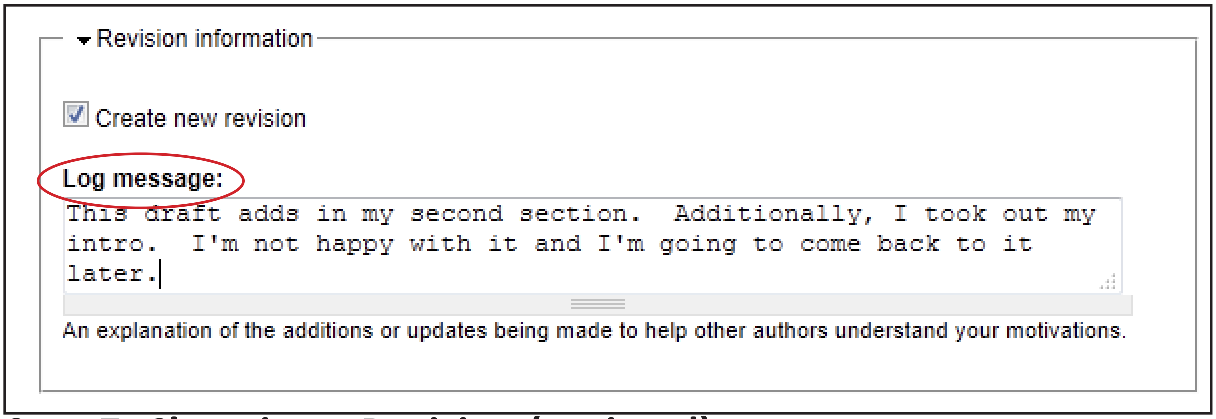
- **Drafting**: A draft that is set to drafting will not show up for grading. It will also not be visible to your fellow students.
- **Review Requested**: Setting a draft to review requested will make it show up in the Peer Review interface. This will allow other students to check that draft out and review it for you.
- **Submitted:** A draft that is labelled as submitted will show up to be graded on your instructors gradebook. You will also the grading block on the draft's page. It will only be visible to you and your instructor.

Using Student Features

Posting a Draft

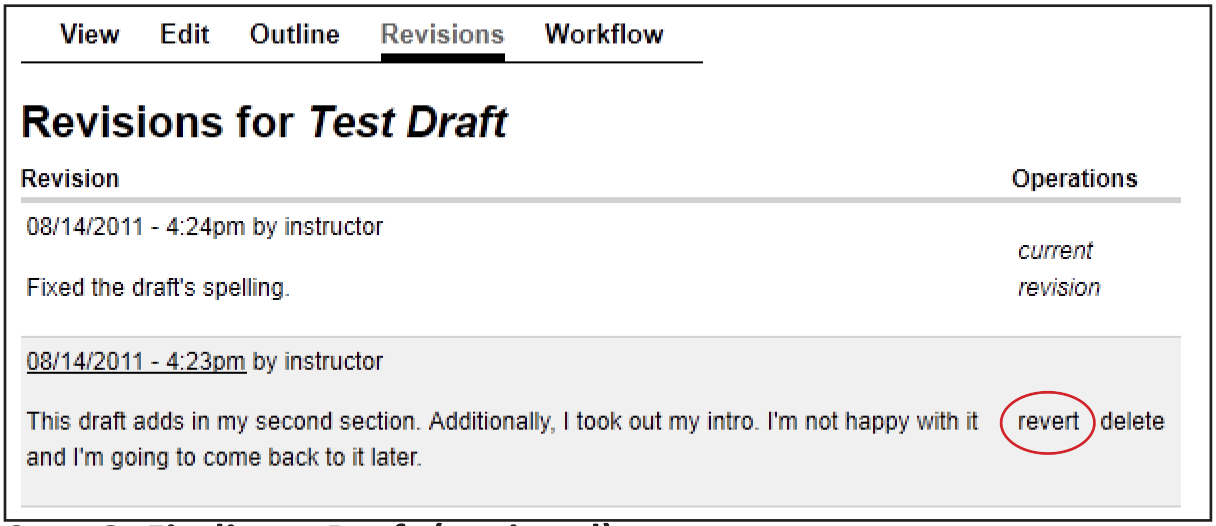
Step 6: Noting Revisions

Every time you post or edit a draft, the site saves a new revision for you. This revision is a snapshot of your draft in its current state. Using the Revisions tab of your draft, once its been posted, you can actually view and move between revisions as you see fit. The Revision toolbar on the draft composition page allows you to make notes about each revision, which can make it easier to understand what changed between drafts. Simply enter in your note on the revision and save your document for those changes and the note to take place.



Step 7: Choosing a Revision (optional)

To move between revisions, you can use the "Revision" tab on your draft. This tab will only show up after you've saved a draft twice. Using the tab, you can see your total revisions, the notes associated between them, and choose which to make your primary revision.



Step 8: Finding a Draft (optional)

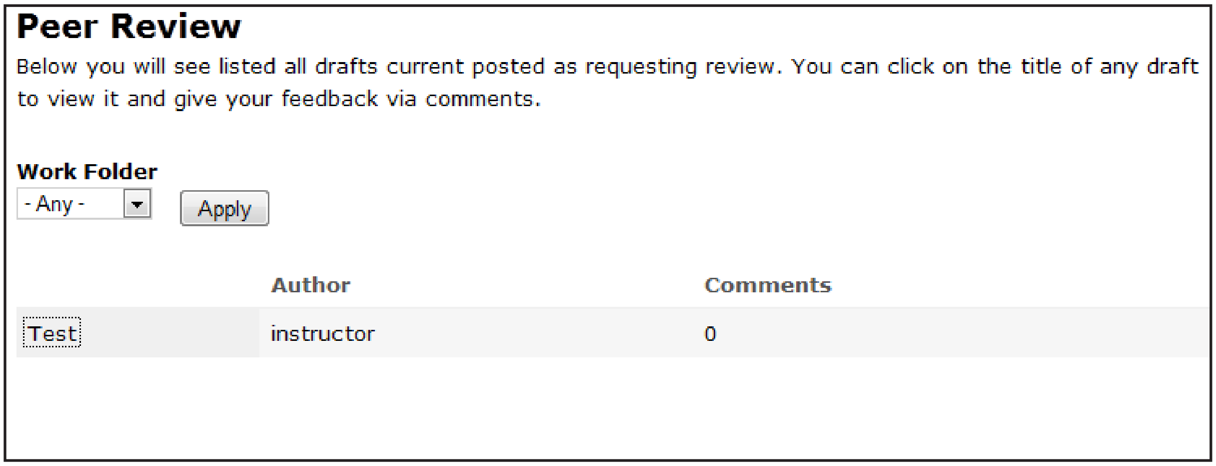
If you need to find a draft or view its status after posting, you can simply use the "My Drafts" button on your Draft menu to see a list of your current drafts, their title, and workflow status.

Reviewing Peer Work

Your course site has a built in peer review feature that allows students to solicit and receive feedback from others through the Drafting interface.

Step 1: Finding a Draft to Review

To find a draft to review, you'll want to use the "Peer Review" link on your Draft menu. This will take you to the Peer Review menu. On the menu, you will see a list of student drafts that have been set as requesting review. Simply select a document you'd like to review to view it. Try to focus on documents that have no comments on them currently.



Step 2: Making Comments

To comment on a draft, add a comment to the page by clicking the "Add New Comment" button. Make sure to follow whatever directions your instructor gives you.

Using Student Features

Using Groups

Groups are a feature that allows students to post within their own subsection of the site with other group members. This feature allows students to work together privately, and also turn in items as a group with each member getting credit.

Step 1: Creating Groups

To create a group, you'll need to use the "Create Group" button in the Instruct Menu. This will allow you to create groups for students to join. By default the groups are closed, meaning that you will need to invite student members to join.

Step 2: Joining a Group

Students can join a group by simply going to My Groups under the "Social" menu, if the group is set to open. Once there, they can view all groups, and click join next to the one they're assigned to.

Alternatively you can add members. To do this, simply go to "My Groups" in the Social menu and click on the group needed. Once you've reached that Group's page, you'll want to click "Group" from the tabs at the top. On the next page, use the "Add People" link to give your group members as you'd desire.

Step 3: Posting in a Group

To post in a group, a student click on the "Create Group Draft" button in the Drafting menu. This allows a creation of a draft just like any other draft, with a few differences. A group draft can be edited by anyone in the group, and is only visible to the instructor and group members. Additionally, the group draft can only have its state changed by the original author. Secondary authors can only change text, they can't set it to Review Requested or the like. Finally, there is a group members tool on the group draft creation page that lets students give credit to group members by adding them via username to the draft. Any member other than the author added to this list will be able to see the final grade and comments assigned, as well as see the item once its created in their "Group Gradetracker"

Using Student Features

Posting Blogs

Blogs are a feature that have been in previous course sites and have made a comeback recently. Blogs are a type of post students can create without having to worry about getting graded, and represent a different genre than your normal student draft.

Step 1: Posting a Blog

To post a blog, simply click "My Blog" in the social menu, and then click on "Post New Entry." This allows students to share blogs with the rest of the site.

Step 2: Reading Blogs

To read a blog, simply click on "Site Blogs" under the social menu. This allows students to see all blogs on the site that have been posted, and their number of comments given.

Using Student Features

Tracking Attendance

When you make use of the attendance tracking features of your site, your students can easily see what days they have been absent.

Step 1: Checking the Attendance Record

For a student to check their attendance record, they merely need to click on the "Track Attendance" link in the Calendar Menu. This will take them to the Attendance Tracker where they can see every date their are currently listed as absent by their instructor.