



User Needs Report: Blogging Tool

Fall 2018

At the request of the Teaching and Learning Committee, the User Advisory Group has developed this document on user needs for blogging tools (in connection with courses). Blogging is a genre of online publication that requires a bundled set of tools for content creation by multiple users; a default chronological display of posts, with the most recent at the top, characterizes the blog format, though options for arranging posts by other means (e.g., by author or by topic) are nearly as intrinsic to the form. Currently, NYU has three tools that provide blog platforms: NYU-WP, Blogger (part of the Google tools suite), and the blog tool (BlogWow) in NYU Classes. Nb: this report focuses solely on user needs for blogs as a component of teaching, not on personal blogging by faculty or students.

Needs

I = Immediate Need (the platform would not meet baseline user needs without this capability)

E = Eventual Need (the platform would meet initial needs without this capability, but its absence would become a pain-point if it were not added by the end of the first year of use)

N = Nice to Have (capability not necessary for successful use of the platform, but desired by some users)

- Standard Compliance (all **I**):
 - SSO
 - Accessible
 - LTI-compliant
 - NYU Analytics standards compliant
 - GDPR compliant
- DISPLAY
 - Mobile Responsive Design **I**
 - Options for basic look/feel (colors, fonts, layout, menus) **I**
 - Option for school/unit branding **N**
 - Option for automatic title based on course title and section (which could be altered by admin) **E**
 - Option to display/edit CSS for owner/admins **I**
 - Sequential display of unlimited number of posts **I**
 - Default chronological display (most recent to least recent post) **I**
 - Option to reverse chronology (display least recent to most recent post) - controllable by viewer **E**
 - Option to display/not display time-stamp on each post (admin option) **E**



- Option to display/not display author on each post (admin) **I**
- Option to display posts by: (controllable by viewer) **I**
 - Author **I**
 - Subject (e.g., by tag or keyword) assigned by post author **I**
 - Prompt/keyword assigned by site administrator (e.g., instructor) **I**
- Option to set number of posts displayed per page (or to activate continuous scrolling) (admin) **E**
- Option for sticky posts (post that remains at top of page, rather than being included in the chronological arrangement below them) **I**
- Robust search capacities **I**
 - Search on any word in text **I**
 - Search on keyword (tag) **I**
 - Highlighting of searched-for text in results (to easily locate) **I**
 - Filter search results by: **I**
 - Author **I**
 - Date/time **E**
 - Keyword (tag) **I**
 - Word in text **E**
- Ability to have multiple blog channels on a single site **E**
- Ability to display full post, teaser (truncated) post (with full post for teaser opening on click) (admin) **I**
 - only title of post on main display page (with full post for title opening on click) (admin) **N**
- Ability to toggle on/off option for comments on posts (admin) **I**
 - Threaded comments (reply to post or to reply) **E**
(Note: If a stand-alone discussion tool is developed, it might be useful to have it serve as the comment feature in the blog as well)
- Ability for administrator to turn blog public/display to all NYU/restrict to users **I**
- Ability to turn individual posts (or posts by individual authors) in blog public **E**
- Ability to display activity streams **I**
 - Recent posts **I**
 - Recent comments **I**
- Ability to display tags/keywords **I**
 - As list **I**
 - As cloud **I**
- Option for owner/admin/editor to create static pages viewable through a top-line or side menu (eg, to give instructions on posting, assignments for particular posts, contextual material, etc.) **I**
- PERMISSIONS
 - Default settings for instructor: **I (all needs in Permissions section are immediate, unless indicated otherwise)**
 - Owner - All permissions of Viewer, Author, Editor, and Administrator, plus:



- Can delete blog site
 - Can limit Administrator's ability to add users or change visibility settings **E**
 - Ability to have more than one owner of a site (with notification/approval if owner in a site with multiple owners wishes to delete a blog site) **E**
 - Administrator - All permissions of Viewer, Author, and Editor, plus:
 - Control over blog layout options
 - Can delete/edit/hold for review before publication all posts, comments, etc.
 - Can set view permissions (including add/delete users)
 - Ability to add/delete users in bulk
 - Editor - All permissions of Viewer and Author, plus:
 - Can edit content of all posts
 - Can add/delete tags
 - Can make sticky posts
 - Author - All permissions of Viewer, plus:
 - Can author posts
 - Can make comments on posts (if comments enabled by Admin or Owner)
 - Viewer
 - Can see blog posts
 - Can comment on blog posts (if allowed by Administrator)
 - Granular permissions (same permission options on individual posts as on site as a whole) **N**
- SET-UP
 - One step generation of blog f with rich options to revise layout, features, etc. **I**
 - Generation from accessible template **I**
 - School/unit-based blog templates **E**
 - Generation of blog from add/edit tools menu in NYU Classes (dynamically updated roster) **E**
 - Generation of blog from Albert roster (dynamically updated) **E**
 - Share posts to social media option (default is off) **E**
- In-tool help links and support contact **I**
- CONTENT CREATION
 - Rich text-editor for posts, including: **I**
 - footnotes/endnotes **E**
 - Images **I**
 - Embedded Video player **I**
 - True wysiwyg capabilities including LaTeX, non-Western characters, text direction **I**



- Preview post capability (if not true wysiwyg) **I**
 - Integration with NYU Stream **I**
 - Toggle to html code **I**
 - Accessibility-checker (issue warning and prompt user to fix or proceed) **I**
 - Ability for administrator to attach rubrics to posts **E**
 - Ability to feed grades from posts to gradebook (NYU Classes or Albert) **E**
 - Ability to generate an embed code so the blog or an individual post can be embedded in another site **E**
- ARCHIVING/MANAGEMENT
 - Ability to download blog content in a way that saves formatting, whether of whole blog or individual author's contributions **E**
 - Ability to export all blog posts into csv or json file **I**
 - Ability to import into portfolio tool, maintaining formatting **E**
 - Generate reports/analytics **I**
 - Invite external users **I**
- NOTIFICATIONS
 - Option for instructor to receive email notifications for new posts or comments (either on own post or on any post; either aggregated over several time options (eg, 24 hours, one week) or immediate) **I**
 - Option for all permission levels to receive email notifications for new posts or comments (either on own post or on any post; either aggregated over several time options (eg, 24 hours, one week) or immediate) **E**
 - Option for instructor to push email notifications to students when the instructor had posted new material **E**
 - Option for administrator to assign post to an author via email notification **N**