Teaching with Blogs

Caleb McDaniel

caleb.mcdaniel@rice.edu

Twitter: @wcaleb

http://mcdaniel.blogs.rice.edu
Objectives

1. Share some examples of how I have used blogs in my courses.
2. Share some lessons that (I think) I have learned from these experiences.
3. Demonstrate “how to” create and maintain a blog in Wordpress MU.
How I’ve (Mainly) Used Blogs

• As “course management” software for publishing syllabi, assignments, & announcements
• As a place to post questions about assigned readings (either from myself or from students) and invite written student responses prior to class discussions
• As a place to have students post assigned writing, chronicle their research projects, and do informal writing about course themes.
Blogging Setups I’ve Used

• One blog, with myself as the sole author: students write comments but can’t post
• One blog, with students as authors who can both comment and post
• Multiple blogs, one for the course as a whole to which I alone post, and multiple other blogs (linked from the main one) that students author
Lessons I’m Still Learning

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• A blogging assignment is a type of writing assignment. Similar rules apply.
• Professor participation required!
• Know why you’re using the blog: what learning objective does it serve? (For me, it has to do with learning how to write for an audience greater than one.)
Wordpress MU vs. Wordpress

• MU offers more control over privacy, technical support from Rice IT, and easy steps for adding students as users

• Your own installation of Wordpress would give you more control over the “look” of the blog and access to more “plugins” designed to extend functionality
Wordpress MU

- [http://blogs.rice.edu](http://blogs.rice.edu) -- Click “sign in” and use NetID and password to create a blog
Add and Manage Posts and Categories
Add Links you Want to Appear in Sidebar

NOTE: To make these links appear, you must activate the link “widget.”
Add Static Pages (e.g., a syllabus)
Approve, View, and Delete Comments
Change Themes and Add "Widgets"
Add Users (e.g., student authors)
Adjust Settings and Viewing Permissions
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