Setting Up Student Profiles in Blackboard Learn
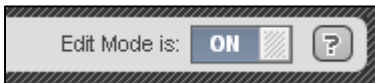
(Formerly Known as "Student Homepages")

Student Profiles allow your students to "introduce" themselves to you and the class, as well as provide some background information about them.   In previous versions of Blackboard this was accomplished through the use of Student Homepages.

The Student Homepage tool no longer exists, but you can utilize other tools to create a Student Profile area in a course. What tool you use will vary depending on what you want the students to be able to create and how you want their peers to interact with the space. Each of the strategies will be listed along with direction on how they can be set up for student use.

I.   **Journals**: The new Journal tool can be used to create a space that would be the most similar to the former Student Homepage, but does allow for more flexibility in what the student can create.   This would allow each student a "page" or journal for themselves that can be made viewable to the other students in the course. Journals only allow comments from the instructor and the journal entry author, so the class can only view or read the profiles. This strategy provides the lowest level of peer interaction (read-only). The student avatar (profile image), if they have loaded one, would show on each Journal entry.

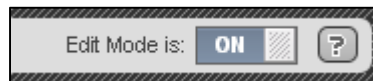**Creating a Student Profile with Journals**

1. Ensure **Edit Mode** is **ON**. The edit mode toggle is in the action bar, located in the upper right corner of the course area.

2. Access **Journals** under **Course Tools** in the **Control Panel** menu and click the **Create Journal** button once in the journal area.

3. Name the journal **Student Profiles** or something similar. *I'm intentionally avoiding the use of homepage because of the new course homepage area.*

4. Provide the requirements and/or instructions for the profile in the **Instructions** text area.

5. Set the **Availability** and **Date Restrictions** if needed.

6. Allow **Edit** and **Delete** privileges if you wish.

7. You MUST enable the **Permit Course Users to View Journal** option in order for the other students in the class to view the profiles.

8. Enable **Grading** if desired.

The students will create and view Journals under **Tools** in the course menu.

II. **Blog**: The new Blog tool can be used to create a space that is very similar to the Journal listed above, but allows for peers to comment on each student's profile entry. This strategy provides for more interaction through the comment feature. Blogs only allow for one level of comments, so you cannot make a comment on a comment. The student avatar (profile image), if they have loaded one, would show on each Blog entry.

Creating a Student Profile with Blogs

1. Ensure **Edit Mode** is **ON**. The edit mode toggle is in the action bar, located in the upper right corner of the course area.

2. Access **Blogs** under **Course Tools** in the **Control Panel** menu and click the **Create Blog** button once in the blog area.

3. Name the blog **Student Profiles** or something similar. *I'm intentionally avoiding the use of homepage because of the new course homepage area.*

4. Provide the requirements and/or instructions for the profile in the **Instructions** text area.

5. Set the **Availability** and **Date Restrictions** if needed.

6. **Blog Type** should be set to **Individual to All Students**. **Allow Anonymous Comments** if desired.

7. Allow **Edit** and **Delete** privileges if you wish.

8. Enable **Grading** if needed. This can be used to grade the entry (profile) itself, but not for evaluating comments. You cannot "collect" a particular user's comments to all entries within a particular blog.
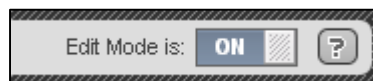
The students will create and view Blogs under **Tools** in the course menu.

III. **Discussion Board**: The Discussion Board tool can be used to create an "Introduce Yourself" forum that would provide the highest level of interaction of all three options. Students would create a thread introducing themselves to the class. This strategy would allow for several levels of reply (comment) on a given "profile" or thread. The student avatar does not show in the discussion board forums so a photo would need to be placed in the thread itself.

Creating a Student Profile with Discussion Board

1. Ensure **Edit Mode** is **ON**. The edit mode toggle is in the action bar, located in the upper right corner of the course area.

2. Access **Discussion Board** under **Course Tools** in the **Control Panel** menu. You may only see one discussion board listed (the main discussion board, named based off your course ID) or several if you have groups setup with discussion board privileges.

3. Select the discussion board with your course ID as the name and click the **Create Forum** button once in the discussion board.

4. Name the forum **Student Profiles** or something similar. *I'm intentionally avoiding the use of homepage because of the new course homepage area.*

5. Provide the requirements and/or instructions for the profile in the **Description** text area.

6. Set the **Availability** and **Date Restrictions** if needed.

7. Configure the **Forum Settings** appropriately for your needs.

8. Enable **Grading** if needed. You could use the forum grading system to evaluate both the profile (thread) itself and the peer replies.

The students will access the Discussion Board under **Tools** in the course menu.