LEARNING MODULE: UO BLOGS

LM: UO Blogs

Michael Hennessy, UO/CIS, (image by http://xkcd.com/802/)
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Creating a Web Dev Code Portfolio Blog

As 21st c. digerati, you not only must navigate the internet and the WWW, but you must also learn to create and manage your own personal cyber-infrastructure, hosted in the cloud. Our first cloud provider is the UO.

During week 1, you created a 110 website on uoregon.edu. Now you will add to that infrastructure a Wordpress blog hosted at blogs.uoregon.edu.

You will be using UO Blogs to create a Web Dev Code Portfolio for this class. Since your UO blogs will persist after this class ends (and one year after you graduate), you can continue to use them as a portfolio for your other classes, too.
UO Blogs is an easy-to-use academic blogging and web publishing service for the University of Oregon community.

You will be using UO-Blogs to create a Web Developer Code Portfolio for this class. Since the blog will persist after this class ends (plus one year after you graduate), you can continue to use it as a portfolio for other classes, as well.

In this learning module, you will create two UO Blogs:

A. Your personal UO Blog, that will serve as the parent blog, or portal, for any sub-blogs you create.

B. A CIS 110 code portfolio blog. You will connect this blog to your UO blog by adding a tab to the parent blog that connects to the portfolio blog.

A. CREATE A PERSONAL UO BLOG

If you already have a personal UO blog, you are welcome to skip this step. You can use your existing blog as the parent for your CIS 110 portfolio blog.

To prepare, read Setting Up Your First Blog (https://it.uoregon.edu/blogs/firstblog).

Then follow these instructions to set up your UO blog:

1. In Firefox, go to http://blogs.uoregon.edu

2. This will open the Create a Site Now! page. Click 'All Other Sites'. (Do not click 'UO Courses'.)

3. In the All Other Sites page, click Login.

4. On the following screen, click the 'Use My DuckID' button and log in with your DuckID.
Type in your UO DuckID credentials (same as for Blackboard).

5. When you first login, the WordPress Dashboard page opens.

Click 'My Sites' in the left navigation:

6. In the My Sites screen, click Create a New Site:

7. Fill in the Create New Site dialog as follows:

   Site Name: yourDuckIDusername
   Site Title: UO Blog for your first and last name

   Language: English
   Privacy: Check Visitors must have a login
   Blog Category: College of Arts and Sciences
   Select a Template: none.

   NOTE: The Site Name field determines the URL for your blog. The best site name to use is your DuckID username (same as for Blackboard).

   Your Site Name has to meet the following criteria:
   - Use only lowercase letters and numbers.
   - No dashes, underscores, dots, or spaces can be used.
   - Must be at least 4 characters long

   Possible Problems: If you already have another blog that uses your DuckID as a site name, or if your DuckID is shorter than 4 characters, then you will not be able to use your DuckID as a site name.

   Solution: Add 'uo' to your DuckID, and use that for the Site Name. For example: uosusanq, uossq, uokevin2, uoashleyb.

   The Following Shows an Example of a Completed Dialog:
8. Click the **Create Site** button to make it Official!

A confirmation message is displayed:

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**NEXT: CONFIGURE YOUR NEW UO BLOG**

1. **Open your UO Blogs Admin Dashboard.**

   (a) You can open `blogs.uoregon.edu` in Firefox, click the **Login** tab, and login with **Use My DuckID**. Then click **My Sites** in the left navigation of the Dashboard.

   (b) Or, you can open the permalink for your new blog: `blogs.uoregon.edu/yourSiteName/`.

When your new UO Blog home pages opens: use the **Login link** in the **Meta** section on the lower left of the home page. This will take the admin dashboard.
**Do not use the Member Login Button.** You are not enrolling members in your blog, so you will not use this blog feature.

2. **Verify your Blog’s Privacy Settings.**

   In the dashboard, click on the long hyperlink next to *Privacy*:

   This will open the *Settings > Privacy* panel.

   Make sure the *Visitors must have a login* radio button is selected, as shown here:

3. **Turn Off Comments on Future Posts and Pages, as shown here:**

   We are using UO-Blogs for a WebDev Code Portfolio, and will disable the Blog Comments feature. Follow these 3 steps:

   (a) Dashboard > Settings >Discussion
   (b) Deselect ‘Allow people to post comments on new articles ‘ and ‘Allow link notifications from other blogs (pingbacks and trackbacks’ under Default article settings.

   (c) Click Save Changes at the bottom of the page.

4. **Turn Off Comments on Existing Posts and Pages.**

   (a) Dashboard > Posts > All Posts.
   (b) Select all the existing posts (there will just be two on a new blog).
   (c) In the Bulk Actions drop down menu, select *Edit* and then click *Apply*.
   (d) Disable comments on the posts by selecting *Do not allow* from the *Comments* drop down menu. (More details at this Edublogs Help page: [http://bit.ly/oWCvJ0](http://bit.ly/oWCvJ0)).
   (e) Disable pings on the posts by selecting *Do not allow* from the *Pings* drop down menu. (More details at this Edublogs Help page: [http://bit.ly/Vjwful](http://bit.ly/Vjwful)).
(f) Click the **Update** button.

Congratulations! You have successfully created and configured your own personal UO Blog. This completes Part A.

**B. CREATE A SECOND BLOG, AND NAME IT 'CIS 110 BLOG FOR YOUR NAME'**.

You have learned the basic blogging skills to create a WordPress blog using the UO Blogs platform.

On your own time outside of class and lab, use your skills to create a second blog named, CIS 110 Blog for Your Name, substituting your actual first and last name for Your Name.

When you create your new site:

- **Site Name:** 110yourDuckIDuserName
- **Site Title:** CIS 110 Blog for your first and last name
- **Language:** English
- **Privacy:** Check Visitors must have a login
- **Blog Category:** College of Arts and Sciences
- **Select a Template:** none.

The Following Shows an Example of the Completed Dialog:

SEE AN EXAMPLE CIS 110 BLOG HERE:

http://blogs.uoregon.edu/110michaelh/
Enhancing your UO Blogs

On your own, you can increase your basic blogging skills and enhance your blogs’ appearance, as follows.

• Choose a Theme and Change the Tagline.

• Edit the 'Hello, World' post.

Reading the Docs

To learn how to use your blog you will need to consult the help pages.

Now that you have created your first site, you may want to investigate how to submit your first post, edit your theme, etc.

To find out more on these topics, visit http://blogs.uoregon.edu/help/ from within UO Blogs, or the following links from the UO IT web site:

• Personal Site and General Help: http://it.uoregon.edu/blogs/generalhelp

• The EduBlogs User Guide: http://help.edublogs.org/user-guide/

• Personal Site and General Help: http://it.uoregon.edu/blogs/generalhelp
1. Choose a Theme, and Change the Tagline for your CIS 110 Blog.

• Choosing your Theme: http://help.edublogs.org/2009/08/04/what-to-consider-when-choosing-your-blogs-theme/


Important: Choose a Theme with Navigation Links in the Header.

You are welcome to set your blog’s appearance as you like. In terms of theme layout, the Header is the area at the top of a blog where the blog title, graphics, and possibly navigational links appear.

Not all themes have links to pages hard coded into the navigation tabs at the top of the theme, but this is what we need to use for our CIS 110 blogs.

There is no direct way to find themes with navigational tabs in the header-- you just have to explore various themes using the Live Preview feature in the Themes Manager.

Example - Skin Blu Theme:

1 and Skin Blu. There are many others, too.

Two themes that include navigation links in the header are UO

...
2. Edit the 'Hello, World' Post on your CIS 110 Blog.

Every newly created blog has the blog posts displayed on its front page with a ‘Hello World’ post and a ‘Sample’ page.

Edit the Hello, World post to change the title and content; this will personalize your blog.

Select Dashboard > Post > All Posts

- Use the Preview Changes button as you are editing.

- Use the Update button to publish the completed post.

3. Example of Hello, World! Post After Editing:

DO THE SAME THING FOR YOUR PERSONAL UO BLOG.

Your CIS 110 Blog is the one you will use as a code portfolio for this class. Your personal UO Blog is for will serve as the parent for all of your course blogs.
In Project 2, you will connect your CIS 110 blog to your personal UO blog. Meanwhile, you can style your personal blog by choosing a theme, etc.

MORE DOCUMENTATION: PUBLISHING NEW POSTS

- Posts and pages-- The Basics: http://bit.ly/eH1i1x
- Posts and pages-- The Differences: http://bit.ly/w0wNN
- Editing and Deleting a page: http://bit.ly/RQSykw