



Blog Instructions: Where, How, and What to Blog

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Introduction

Reflecting on learning is an essential part of learning, so each week, you'll write reflections in the form of blog posts.² Please **write at least 1 blog each week** that relates to the reading (could be the best and worst things you learned in the reading, most and least favorite, a related contemporary issue, etc). Some weeks you will be asked to write an additional blog post about your learning process or journey, such as the goal-setting, midterm check-in, and final wrap-up. Of course, you are welcome to write additional posts if you like. Remember to include links to what you are talking about (whether it's from your assigned readings, or a relevant news article you're writing about, or a website with data, etc). Aim for for **3-4 well-written (spell-checked and proof-read!) paragraphs for each post**. You will grade yourself on how well you met the requirements for weekly blogging at the end of the semester in your final blog.

A note on privacy

Not everyone has the same privacy needs on the Internet, so please think about your needs when choosing a blogging platform. Everyone is encouraged to use only their first name (and last initial if needed), or a pseudonym for their blogging if they wish (please email me the pseudonym so I know which blog belongs to which student). If

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² I have chosen blogging as the means of weekly writing in this class for a number of reasons. First, I have not found that discussion boards yield very much discussion- just individual posts with superficial comments, i.e., a blog! So this way, it's easier for you to see your work, and how it accumulates and develops throughout the semester. Engaging with course topics in a short written piece will help you sort out complicated topics, and the freedom of blogging should let you choose what you are most interested in thinking and writing about. Regular writing practice will make you a better writer, whether you're already comfortable with writing or not. Finally, our blogs are meant to be open to each other, so we can write for a specific audience (our class!) and learn from each other.



you have more specific privacy concerns, please email me and we will find a solution that allows you to participate safely and comfortably.

Where & How to Blog: Choose one of the following options. If you have a different idea for where to blog, please email me and we will make it work.

- A. on a **site you create on the CUNY Academic Commons**, which is open source and run by CUNY. Once you create your site, email me the link to your site so I can add it to our course page. [This video explains how to register on the Commons](#) (for which you need your KCC or other .cuny email address) and I [made this video about exactly how to make a site for this class](#)). If you have any trouble, we'll work through this during our first class meeting. Upsides: the Commons is easy to use once you get started and uses WordPress, which means you can add "Basic WordPress" to your resume when the class is done. You decide whether the site lives or dies when the class is done- you control your work. Downsides: work from you to set it up, you need a CUNY email, your work is on the Internet (though you can choose the privacy settings that you like).
- B. on our **class website on the CUNY Academic Commons**. [Register on the Commons](#), then email me your username so I can add you as an author on our site. Upsides: you make our course website your one stop for everything- find your reading, post your blogs- easy peasy! Downsides: you still need a CUNY email address to set up your username on the Commons, and your work is on the Internet (our class site is public, but not indexed to search engines, so anyone can really only find it with our link).
- C. On a **google doc**. This one's not really a blog, but just a google doc you write in each week, with sharing settings set to "anyone with the link can comment" (you can follow the instructions [here](#) to set it up). Send me the link so I can add it to our class site. Upsides: very easy to set up/maintain. You control your work and can archive or delete it after the semester if you like. Downsides, your work is on the Internet (though only those with the link can find it), and Google is definitely monetizing your data.



- D. on a **site you create anywhere on the web**. Send me the link so I can add it to our course website feed. If you have a google/gmail login already, you can make a blogger site pretty easily- just click “Create Blog” at [Blogger.com](https://www.blogger.com) and follow the prompts. Upside: easy to do, you don’t need your KCC email, you control your intellectual property. Downside: Google is definitely monetizing your data and you’re open to the Internet.
- E. in **Blackboard**. If you prefer to blog in Blackboard, that’s fine- please email me and I’ll open a blog for you. Upside: very little set up needed from you and you’re not as open on the Internet. Downsides: Blackboard takes your work, and you can’t get it back from them once it is ingested. Blackboard is clunky and annoying to use, and is definitely monetizing your data.

What to Blog About/Sample Post:

You should write your blogs about things you want to explore or analyze from our readings, or a current event that relates to what we’re covering in class, or about your learning process/journey in our class. You should not write a summary of your reading- while it might be a useful activity for your reading practice, in your blog, we want you to go further in your analysis. What you write about, as long as it relates to what we are working on in class, is up to you, so you can pursue the topics that are most interesting to you each week.

Each blog post should have 3 to 4 paragraphs, because it is hard to say anything interesting or meaningful in much less. In terms of both length and tone/formality, your blog posts should be less than 5 page research papers, but more than a facebook post or text to your groupchat. They should be thoughtful and include some deeper engagement, not just superficial glossing over. For example, don’t just say “I like this” or “I didn’t like that”- tell us why, and why it matters.



You should also [link to any articles or sources you're using](#), because it's a good habit to get into, and will help your reader know where you got your information. If you don't know where you got the information, that is a problem- how does your reader know you're not just making it up? If you are talking about something from the reading, go ahead and link to it! If you're discussing something that isn't in the reading, then it is even more important that you should link to where you got the information. This is good practice for you to do as a writer, and for you to demand as a reader- whenever you read something, think about where the author got the evidence that they are talking about. If what you're reading has neither an author nor any referenced source, you probably should not trust it too much (even if it happens to be something you would agree with).

(Meta learning moment: the answer you just read is actually a pretty good model of a blog post for this class in length and style- more than a facebook post or text to your friends, but less than a 5 page research paper.)