

# Creating a Wordpress Blog



## For Instructional Use

*An instructional guide on course-oriented blog production and  
maintenance for college level professors*

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**Welcome! This booklet is your guide to creating a blog for your college course. Inside, you will find instruction on generating a profile, designing the visual layout of your blog, and adding the appropriate features.**

Why create a blog for your college course?

Blog web pages are a useful tool in consolidating course information in a location that is easily accessible to both students and professors. Unlike school-assigned course websites, which also house all course information, blogs contain a Subscribe feature that allows students to submit their email addresses and receive notifications on blog updates. This allows the professor to send out information, assignments, and notifications to keep the students updated outside of the classroom on any relevant information. Blog web pages are also flexible, and allow for more creativity on the administrator's part in terms of visual design and feature functionality.

## **Pre-Instructional Activities**

Before beginning these instructions, please gather the following information:

Professional title

Course name

Section number(s) (if applicable)

Course syllabus

List of links to outside information useful to students in your course

# Step One- Create a Wordpress Profile

For this step, you will need your professional title, course name, and section number(s).

Go to [www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com)

Get your own WordPress.com account in seconds

Fill out this one-step form and you'll be blogging seconds later!

<b>Blog Address</b> <input type="text" value=""/> Choose an address for your blog. Don't worry, you can change this later. If you don't want a blog you can <a href="#">signup for just a username</a> .
<b>Username</b> <input type="text"/> Your username should be a minimum of four characters and can only include lowercase letters and numbers.
<b>Password</b> <input type="password"/> Great passwords use upper and lower case characters, numbers and symbols like !"\$%&' Password Strength

- Create a blog address
- Create a username
- Create a password with a strength of “good” or higher

To create a blog address and username easily identifiable to your target student audience, incorporate your professional title, the course name, and the section number into your blog address and incorporate your professional title into your username. If the blog you are creating is not section-specific, incorporate your professional title and course name only into the blog address.

Example:

Dr. John Smith, Chemistry 101, section 3

Blog address- smithchem101-3.wordpress.com

Username- Dr. John Smith

## Step One, Continued

Occasionally, a desired blog address or username is unavailable, meaning it is already in use. If this happens you will have to alter the unavailable title until you find one available for use.

Practice:

Given the below professional title and course, create three unique sets of blog addresses and usernames.

Dr. Alan Michaels, English 211.005

Blog address \_\_\_\_\_

Username \_\_\_\_\_

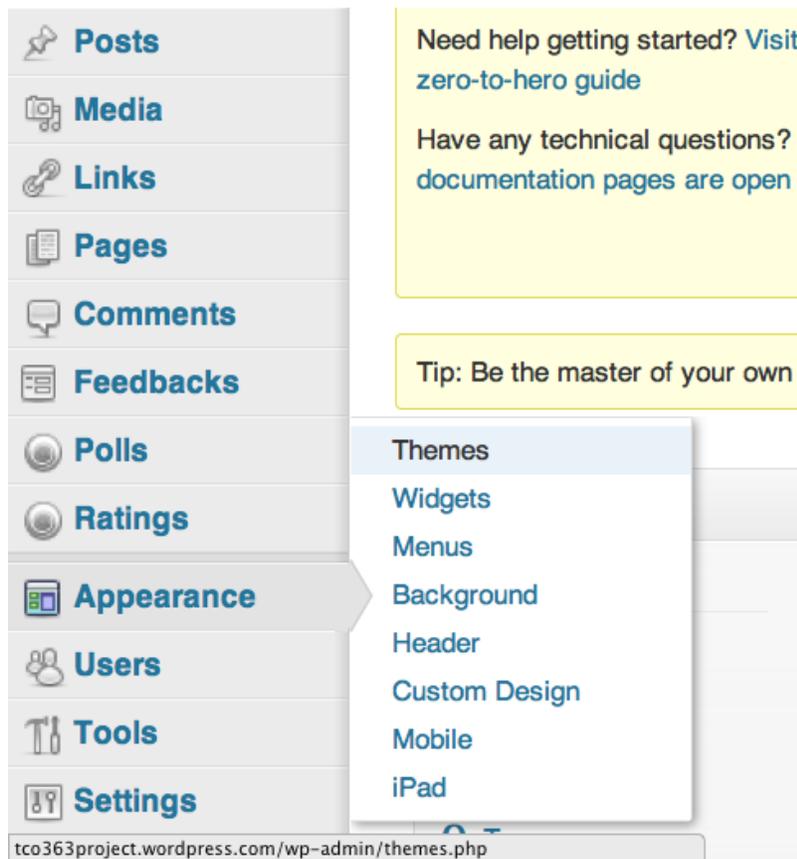
Blog address \_\_\_\_\_

Username \_\_\_\_\_

Blog address \_\_\_\_\_

Username \_\_\_\_\_

## Step Two- Choose Visual Design Elements

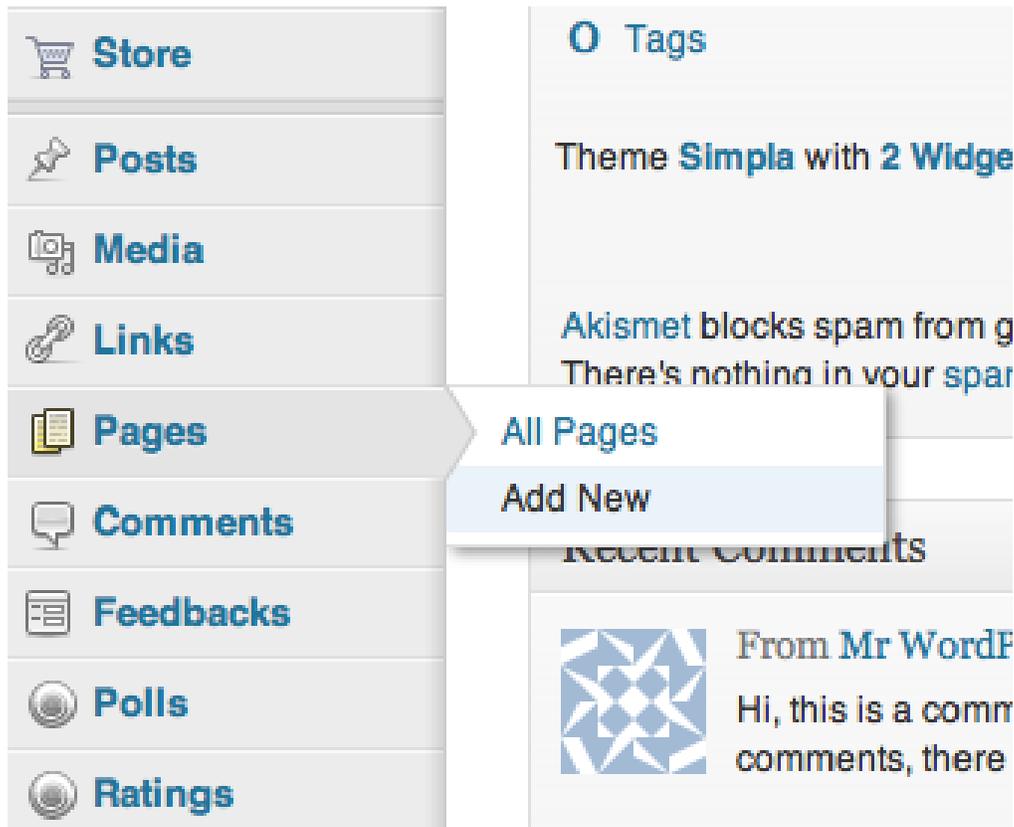


- You should now be on what is called your “Dashboard.” From the menu on the right, hover your mouse over the tab labeled Appearance.
- A list of options should appear. From the list, select Themes.

- From the available themes, find and activate a theme that follows the following guidelines:
  - Simple design  
(You don’t want to distract from the educational purpose of your blog)
  - Places title in a prominent, noticeable position  
(The content of your blog should be easily identifiable to viewers)
  - Does not contain use of a photographic banner
- If you want to see what a theme looks like without activating it, click on the word Preview under the theme’s picture.

## Step Three- Add Features

- Create page to hold course information  
(For this step, you will need your course syllabus)



1. From the menu on the left, hover your mouse over the Pages tab.
2. A list of options should appear. From this list, select Add New.
3. There will be an empty box with “Enter title here” in light gray text; in this box, type “Syllabus.”
4. In the larger box below, fill in all relevant course information as you see fit. You may simply put in basic course information and provide a link your syllabus elsewhere. Feel free to use any of the available text features.

## Step Three, Continued

5. If you wish to preview how the page will look to viewers before publishing it, click on the Preview button on the right side of your screen. This will open a new tab in your Internet browser. When you are finished looking, simply close that tab only.

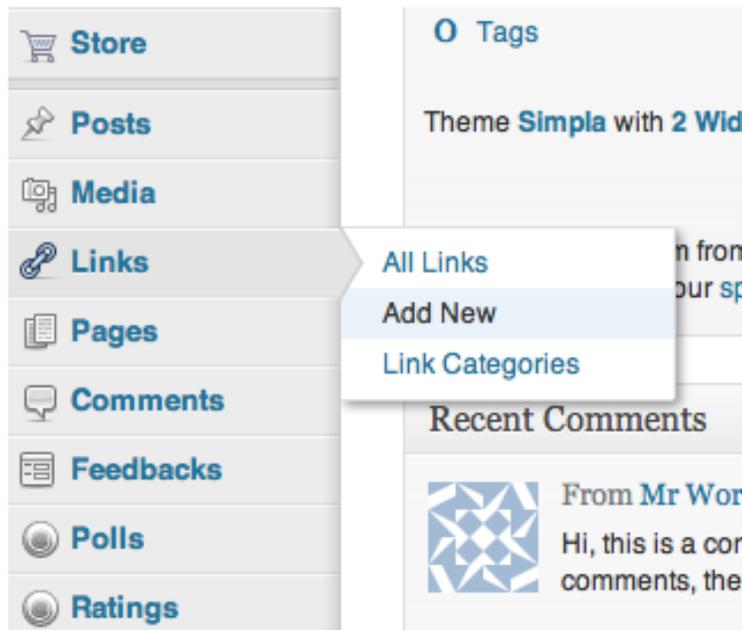
6. When you are finished editing the page, click on the blue Publish button on the right.



7. If at any time you wish to edit this page, follow these same steps. A blue Update button will replace the Publish button.

## Step Three, Continued

- Add useful links  
(For this step, you will need your list of links to outside information.)



1. From the menu on the left, hover your mouse over the Links tab.

2. From the list of options that appears, select Add New.

3. For each website on your list:

In the Name box,  
Enter the name of the website

In the Web Address box,  
Enter the website's URL address

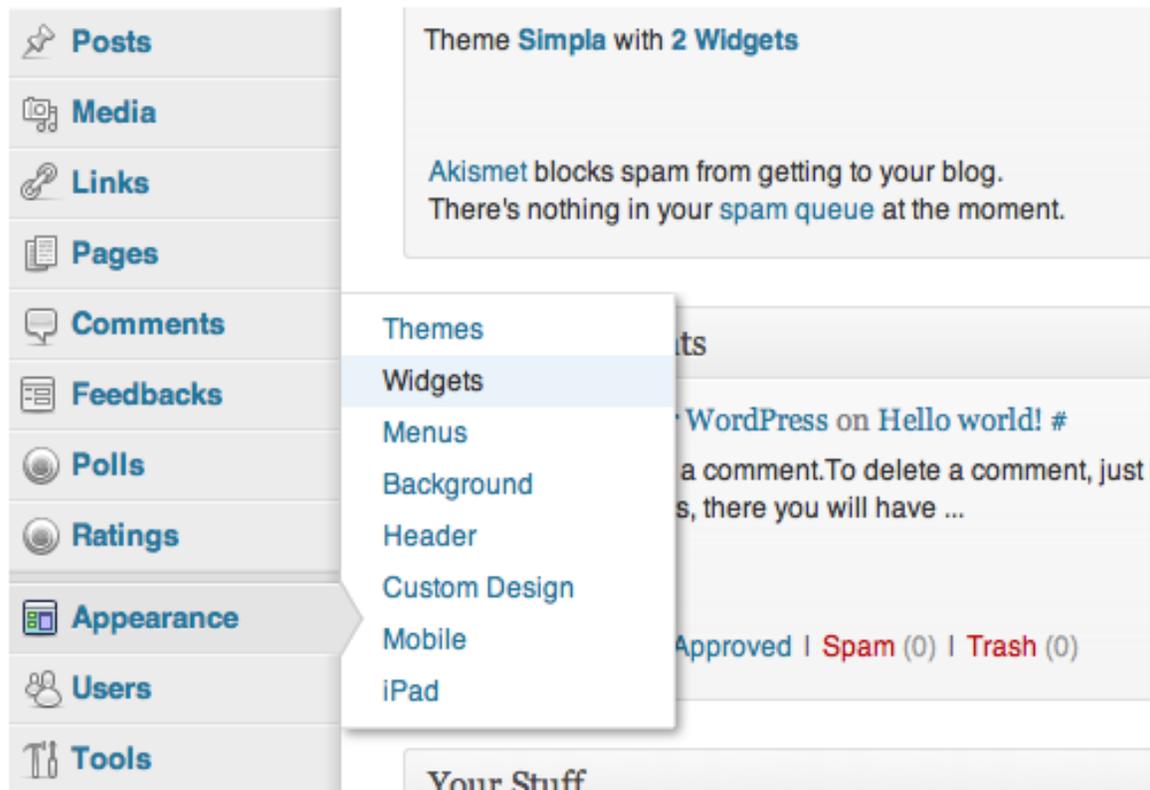
In the Categories box,  
Check the box labeled Blogroll

In the target box,  
Select the “\_blank” option  
(This opens the link in a new tab)

Click on the blue Add Link button in the top right corner of the page.

## Step Three, Continued

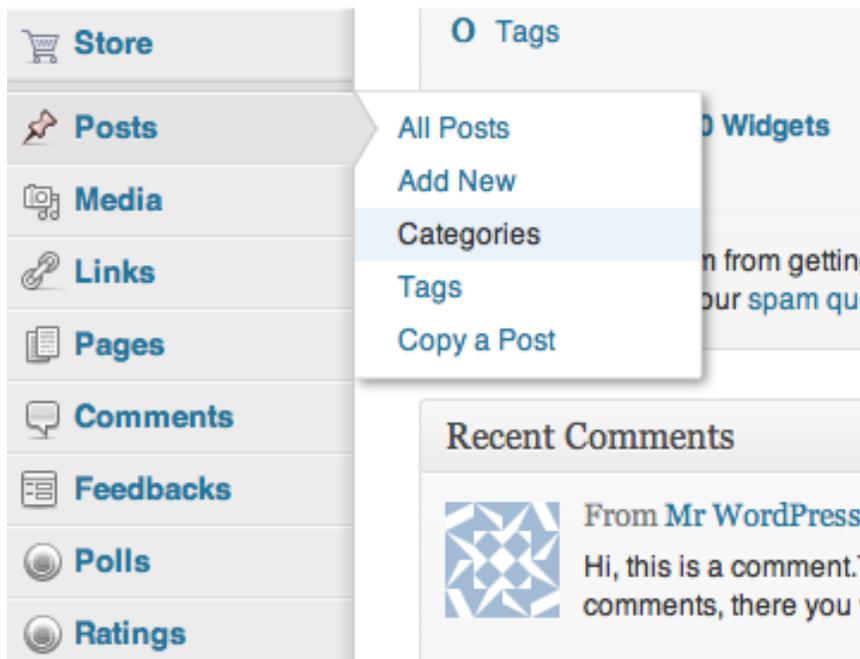
- Add appropriate widgets



1. From the menu on the left, hover your mouse over the Appearance Tab.
2. From the list of options that appears, select Widgets.
3. From the list of available widgets, choose one to fill each of the three criteria below.  
Choose a widget that:
  - Allows students to be notified of new blog posts by email
  - Allows students to search through blog posts by category
  - Displays your list of links to outside materials
4. After you have chosen a widget to fill each requirement, you may choose to activate additional widgets.
5. To activate your chosen widgets, select each widget and drag them one at a time to the box on the right labeled Sidebar.

## Step Four- Personalize

- Group blog posts into categories  
(For this step, you will need your course syllabus.)
  1. From the objectives listed on your course syllabus, make a list of categories by which to classify future blog posts.  
(Homework, Study Materials, etc.)



2. Hover your computer mouse over the Posts tab on the menu on the left.
3. A list of options will appear; select Categories.

4. For each category on your list:

In the Name box,  
Enter the name of the category

Click on the Add New Category button at the bottom of the page

## Step Four, Continued

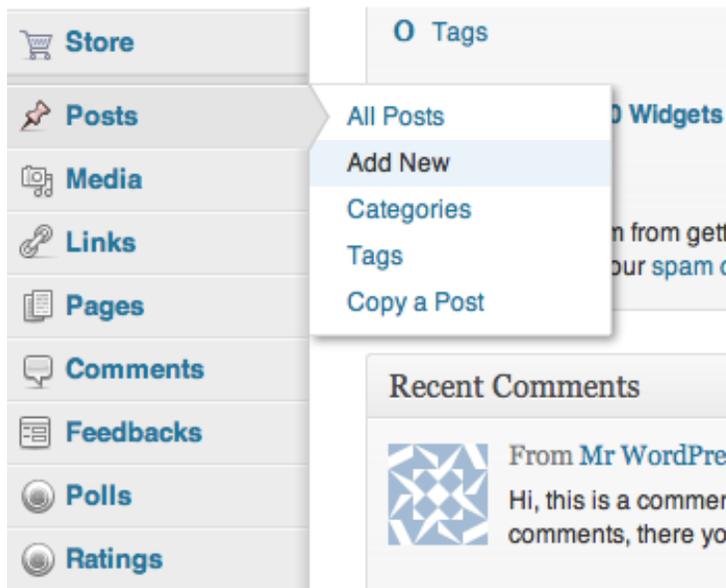
5. If any of your categories have sub categories:

Create the parent category first

When creating each sub category, select the name of the parent category from the dropdown box under “Parent”

For example, you may have a Test Material category with children categories for Test 1, Test 2, and Test 3.

6. Place posts into categories



Hover your mouse over the Posts tab on the menu on the left.

Select the Add New option from the list that appears.

Compose a model post from the information on your course syllabus.

If you wish to preview your post, click on the Preview button on the right.

When you are finished, publish your post by clicking on the blue Publish button.

## Step Four, Continued

Practice:

Classify each model blog post as homework assignment, reminder, or announcement.

*Don't forget, presentations start on Tuesday. Come prepared.*

Category: \_\_\_\_\_

*Class is cancelled today, my apologies. My son called me from school to come get him because he was sick. We will pick up with chapter 7 on Wednesday.*

Category: \_\_\_\_\_

*For Friday, read chapter 10 and have Assignment 4.1 completed and ready for peer review.*

Category: \_\_\_\_\_

- Add or change layout and features according to your preference.

Using the skills you've acquired from previous steps, add to or change your blog's design and features as you see fit.

## Assessment

Congratulations! You have reached the end of instruction and should have a functioning blog page. To ensure successful completion of these instructions, verify that your blog meets the following criteria:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Blog URL contains the course name (and section number if applicable)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Username mirrors your professional title
- \_\_\_\_\_ Blog layout is not distracting
- \_\_\_\_\_ Course name is prominent on blog's home page
- \_\_\_\_\_ Syllabus information is available and easy to locate
- \_\_\_\_\_ Relevant links are available and are functioning and easily located
- \_\_\_\_\_ A subscription feature is available and prominent
- \_\_\_\_\_ Blog categories are listed and available on the home page