

Wikis

The Wiki is a powerful tool for collaborative learning. The term “**wiki**” is derived from the Hawaiian word for quick. A **wiki** <WICK-ee> is a website that allows the visitors themselves to easily add, remove and otherwise edit and change some available content, sometimes without the need for registration. This ease of interaction and operation makes a wiki an effective tool for **mass collaborative authoring**. Creating a wiki is a collaborative effort. Several users contribute information to develop content.

A primary goal of using a wiki is to build a shared repository of knowledge. As the knowledge base grows over time, you can expect the wiki to have some degree of seriousness and permanence.

With dedicated use, you can use wikis to:

- Provide an easy to use environment for communication.
- Promote collaboration rather than competition.
- Foster a social and interactive approach to learning.
- Build partnerships where you can benefit from the strengths of others.
- Increase network building, trust, and negotiation skills.
- Provide support and prompt feedback.
- Provide a one-stop area where information is searched, updated, and accessed easily and quickly.
- Increase and enhance the possibility of creativity, spontaneity, and innovation through the application of reflective thinking. (BbTanyaK, 2013)

Features and benefits of Wikis

The Blackboard wiki has several key features that make it an excellent tool for collaborative learning.

Feature	Benefit
Content editor	This feature allows users to type and edit text, as it will appear when published in the wiki.
Insert Photos, documents, audio or video clips	Photos, documents (presentations, spreadsheets or text), images and audio files add depth and clarity to the wiki by adding interactive content.
Instructors and students can add or edit content	Since wikis are collaborative, Instructors can create a home page that will outline the content of the wiki. Students create additional pages through keywords and links. These pages contain content developed by individual contributors (students). This content can include links to websites, images, audio and video clips, or links to documents.
Add comments to student's work	Instructors and students can comment and provide feedback to student content in the wiki. Because the wiki is editable, students can take that information and make necessary changes to the document.

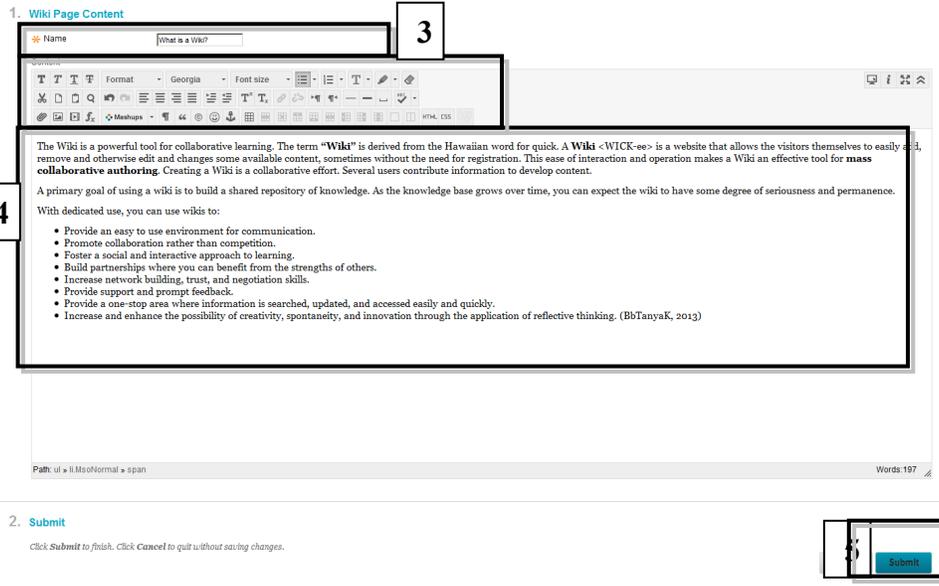
Track student content contributions	Instructors can track student contributions additions and deletions by contributor, date and time. Document editing is color-coded.
Create Gradebook items for wiki contributions	When a wiki is created, a Grade Center item can be created at the same time. The history report documents contributions. It is important that instructors create a rubric to assess students work, and that they share that rubric with students.
Set time limits for editing and viewing content	Instructors can limit the amount of time that students have to complete or edit a wiki assignment. This way they add a sense of urgency to when students must provide a finished product to the class. They can also limit the time that the wiki can be viewed by other students in the course.
Individual or group work	Because wikis are collaborative, they provide an excellent opportunity for group work. As with individual or class work, all of the features described above are applicable to group projects. In addition, you can appoint a group leader who can comment on individual contributions.

Create Wiki Pages

Each newly created course or group wiki requires a first page, which is the **home page**. The home page always appears first in the wiki page list, making it an ideal page for instructions. The home page and all subsequent pages are created following the same steps. You or any course or group member can create the home page. ***No one can delete the home page, but if the wiki is open to editing, any course or group member may edit it.***

Name	Type	Student Access	Student Comment Access	Last Modified Date
The History of San Antonio (Wiki is not available. Available after: 5/8/13 11:59 PM)	Course	Open to Editing	Open to Commenting	5/8/13 2:20 PM
wiki	Course	Open to Editing	Open to Commenting	2/26/13 1:16 PM
wiki	Course	Open to Editing	Open to Commenting	2/26/13 1:19 PM

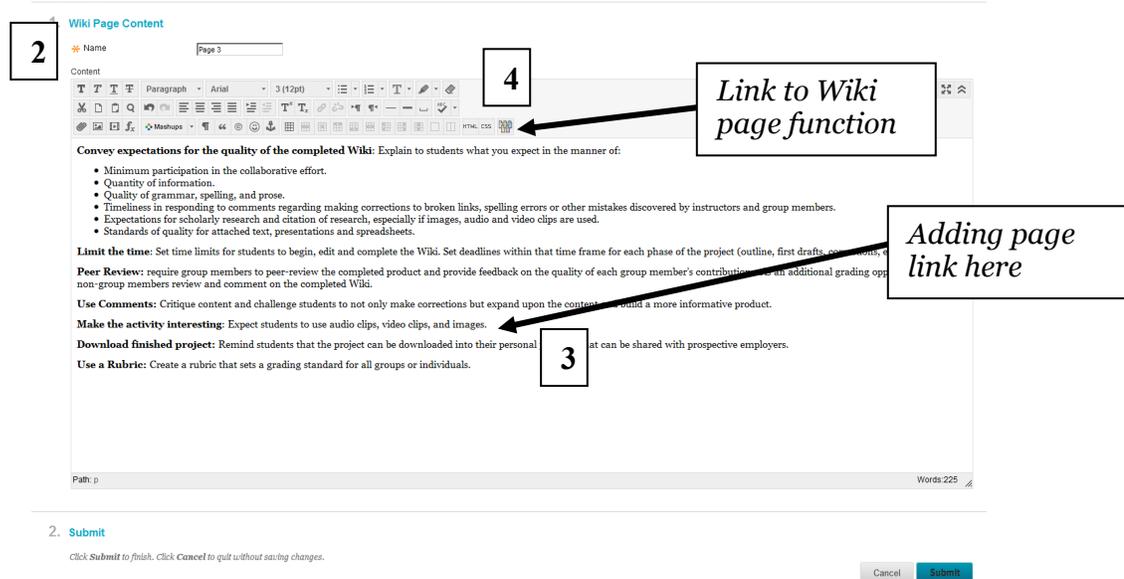
1. On the Wikis Listing page, click a **Wiki Title Link**.
2. To create successive pages, click **Create Wiki Page**  on the action bar.



3. On the **Create Wiki Page**, type a name.
4. Type a description or instructions in the **Content box**. Optionally, format the text and add images, links, multimedia, mashups, and attachments using the functions in the content editor. Attachments you add using the **content editor** can be launched in a new window and have alternate text added to describe the attachment.
5. Click **Submit**.

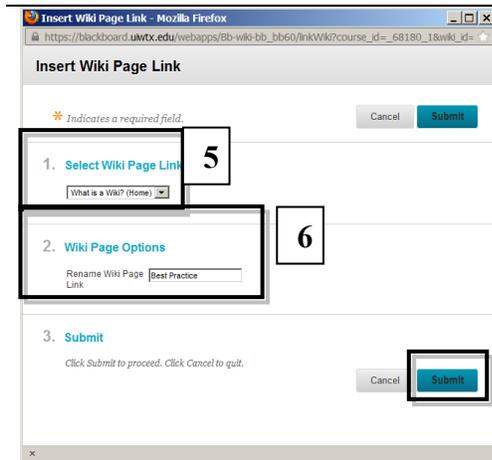
Link to Other Wiki Pages

When course members create or edit wiki pages, they may need to reference another page in the wiki. If the wiki consists of many pages, you can insert a link to that page right on the page you are currently viewing. You can use the Link to Wiki page function in the content editor to link to another wiki page within the current wiki.



1. On the **Wiki Topic Page**, click **Create Wiki Page** on the action bar.

2. On the **Create Wiki Page**, type a **Wiki Name and add content**.
3. In the Content box, position the mouse pointer where you want to include a **link to another wiki page**.
4. Click the **Link to Wiki page function** in the content editor, represented by several sheets of paper. *If only one wiki page exists, this function is disabled.*

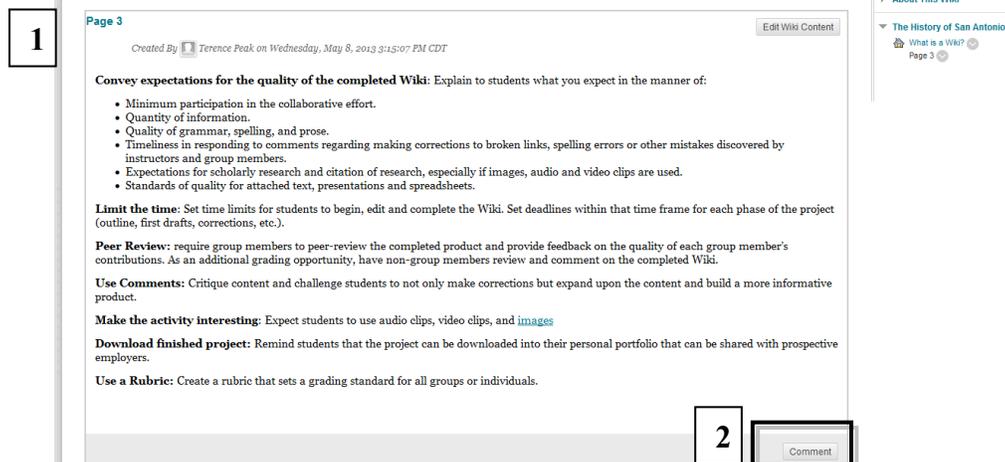


5. In the pop-up window, select the wiki page to link to from the drop-down list.
6. Optionally, type a name for the link in the **Rename Wiki Page Link box**. If the link is not renamed, the original page title is used as the link.
7. Click **Submit**. The link appears in the content editor.
8. Click **Submit** on the **Create Wiki Page**. The new page with the link to the other page is added to the wiki.

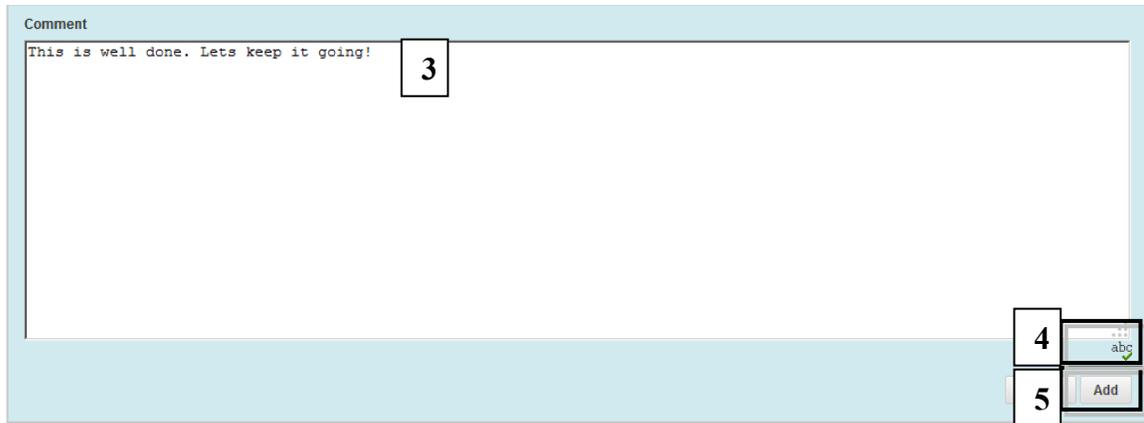
Comment on Wiki Pages

Course members can comment on wiki pages rather than contribute to or edit a page. Comments provide a way for you and your students to offer feedback and suggestions. Comments are visible to all course members.

For group wikis, the default setting allows all course members to read them, but you must be a member of the group to make a comment. You can change the default setting to allow only group members to view a group wiki.



1. On the wiki topic page, select the page to view in the side panel. The wiki page opens in the content frame.
2. Click **Comment** following the user's contribution.



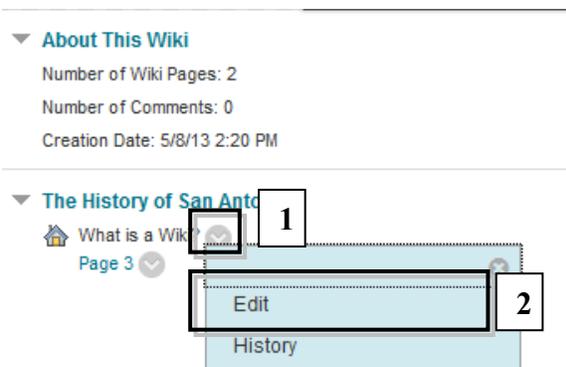
3. The **Comment box** appears. Type a comment in the Comment box. Comments have a 2,000-character limit. A pop-up message advises that a comment over 2,000 characters must be edited and resubmitted.
4. Click spell check  at the bottom of the Comment box to check the spelling of the content before continuing.
5. Click **Add**. 

Edit Wiki Content

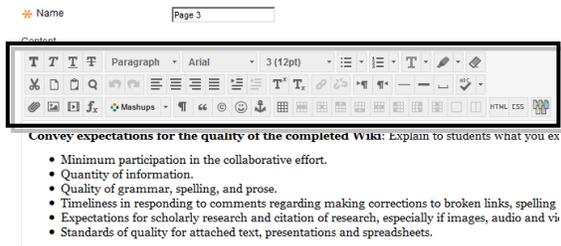
Any course member can edit a course wiki page and any group member can edit a group wiki page, unless the instructor has disabled this function. You might choose to disable editing when it is time to grade the wiki pages. However, you can still edit student pages. All course members, including instructors, edit in the same way.

When a user is editing a wiki page, it is locked for a duration of 120 seconds to prevent others from editing the same page. Users are informed that another user is currently editing the page. The lock will expire in 120 seconds regardless of a user's activity/inactivity. After 120 seconds, another user can start editing the page and a new 120 seconds lock is placed on the page.

You can select History from a page's contextual menu to see how a page was modified, view any version, and compare two versions side by side.



1. Click the **Action Button**  next to the page name on the side menu.
2. Choose **Edit**.



3. On the Edit Wiki Page, you can make changes to the name and content of the page. Optionally, use the functions in the content editor to format existing text or include links, images, multimedia, mashups, link to other wiki pages, and attachments.
4. Click **Submit**.

References

BbTanyaK. (2013, May 1). *Wikis*. Retrieved from The Official Blackboard Help Site: https://help.blackboard.com/en-us/Learn/9.1_SP_10_and_SP_11/Instructor/050_Course_Tools/Wikis