

Blogging in the Academy (Session Overview)

By the end of this session you should:

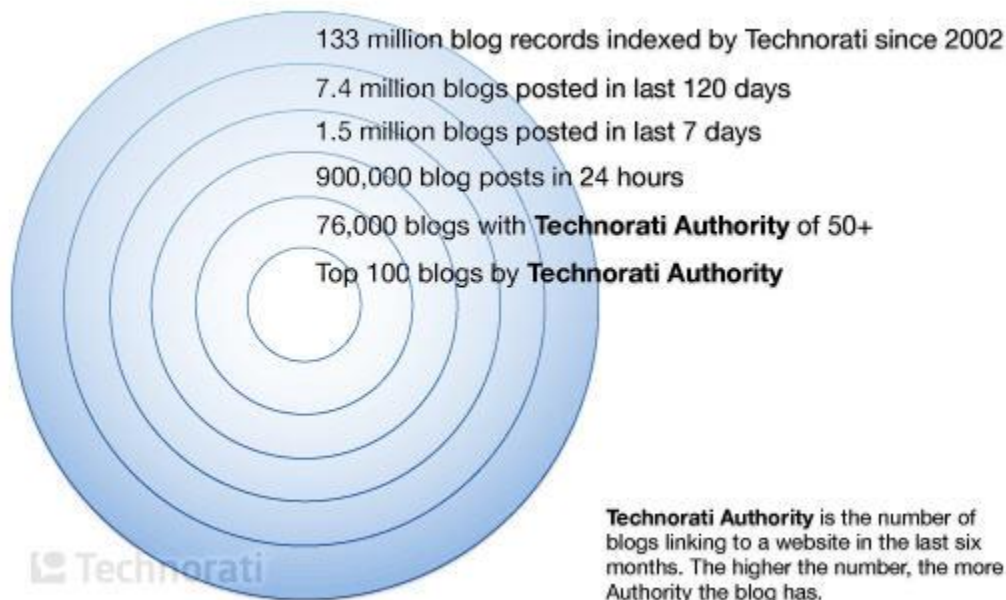
- Explore the potential of blogging as a form of academic publishing.
- Review the concept and issues associated with being a public intellectual.
- Discuss the advantages and disadvantages between the use of a VCU hosted blog with web-based blogs

Key Questions

- Do blogs fit within existing forms of scholarly communication?
- Would a reflective media offer new learning possibilities for my classes?
- Do blogs open up new avenues of connecting and communicating with students?

Blog Overview

A **blog** (a contraction of the term "**Web log**") is a website, usually maintained by an individual with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video. Entries are commonly displayed in reverse-chronological order. "Blog" can also be used as a verb, meaning *to maintain or add content to a blog*.



Many blogs provide commentary or news on a particular subject; others function as more personal online diaries. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, web pages, and other media related to its topic. The ability for readers to leave comments in an interactive format is an important part of many blogs. Most blogs are

primarily textual, although some focus on art ([artlog](#)), photographs ([photoblog](#)), sketches ([sketchblog](#)), videos ([vlog](#)), music ([MP3 blog](#)), audio ([podcasting](#)), which are part of a wider network of [social media](#). [Micro-blogging](#) is another type of blogging, one which consists of blogs with very short posts. As of June 2008, blog search engine [Technorati](#) was tracking more than 133 million blogs. {From [Wikipedia](#)}

Will Richardson, author of *Blogs, Wikis, Podcasts, and Other Powerful Web Tools for Classrooms* (2006), provided some [good guidelines](#) for student blogging:

1. What did you read in order to write this blog entry?
 2. What do you think is important about your blog entry?
 3. What are both sides of your issue?
 4. What do you want your readers to know, believe or do?
 5. What else needs to be said?
- 7 Things You Should Know About Blogging - <http://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/ELI7006.pdf>
 - Educational Blogging: Stephen Downes (2004), *EDUCAUSE Review*, vol. 39, no. 5 (September/October 2004): 14–26. <http://bit.ly/usIkB>
 - Blogs in Plain English - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NN2I1pWXjXI>
 - VCU Blogs – <http://blog.vcu.edu>
 - The Edublogger - <http://theedublogger.edublogs.org/>
 - My blog – <http://bwatwood.edublogs.org>
 - Jeff Nugent's Netvibe site – http://www.netvibes.com/jeffnugent#MASC-491_Learning_Journals
 - Henry Jenkins – Why Academics Should Blog - http://henryjenkins.org/2008/04/why_academics_should_blog.html
 - Commenting - <http://michelemartin.typepad.com/thebambooprojectblog//2008/10/on-the-power-of.html>

Contact Information

Britt Watwood (bwatwood@vcu.edu)

Jeff Nugent (jsnugent@vcu.edu)