INSTRUCTIONAL COMPUTING *&* **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

Engage the Students. Infuse the Curriculum.
Empower the Faculty. Enhance the Administrative Process.

Reading and Posting to Wikis in Blackboard

What is a wiki?

A wiki is a collaboratively constructed web site. Wikis consist of "pages" that can include images, video, attached files, links to other web sites, and links to other pages within the wiki. Most wikis maintain a history showing how the wiki was changed and who changed it. The best known example of a wiki is Wikipedia, a collaboratively authored, online encyclopedia.
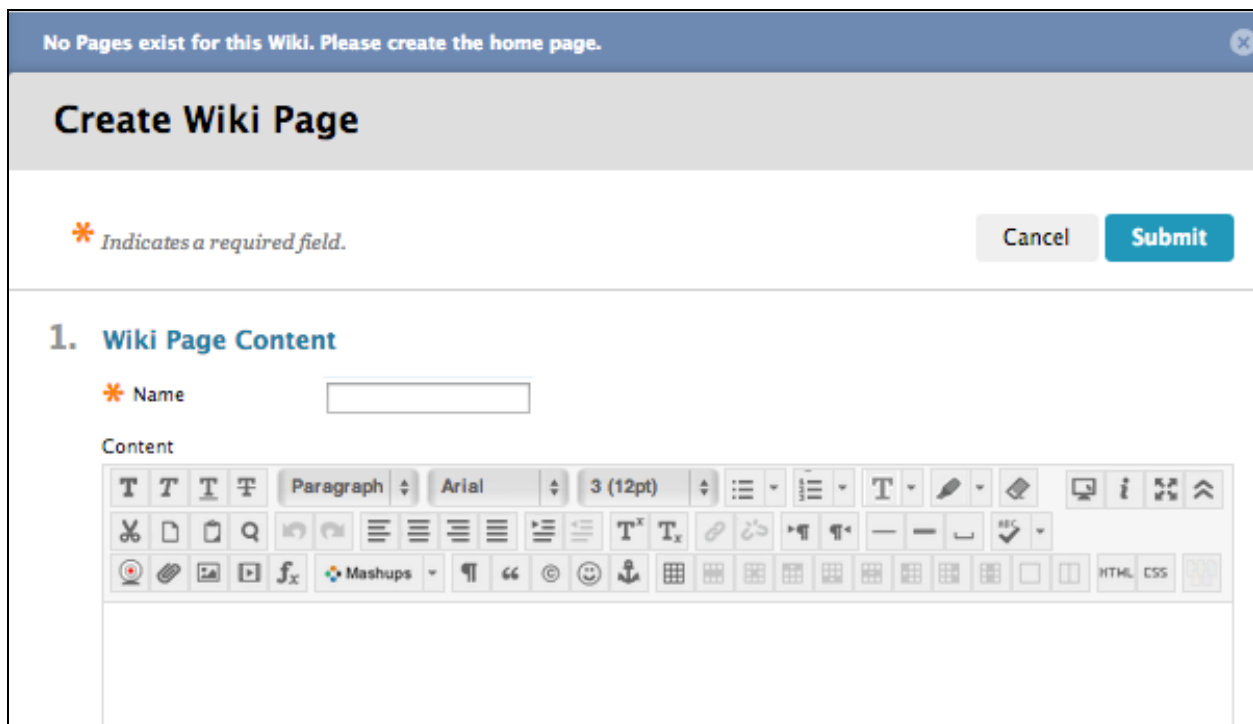
Accessing wikis in Blackboard

1. Your instructor/organization leader will tell you where in the Blackboard course site your wiki is located. Wiki sites are marked with an icon next to the title. Click on the name of the wiki to access the wiki.

2. You will see the wiki homepage. If no one has edited the wiki yet, the home page will be blank, and you will be prompted to create the homepage as in the example below.
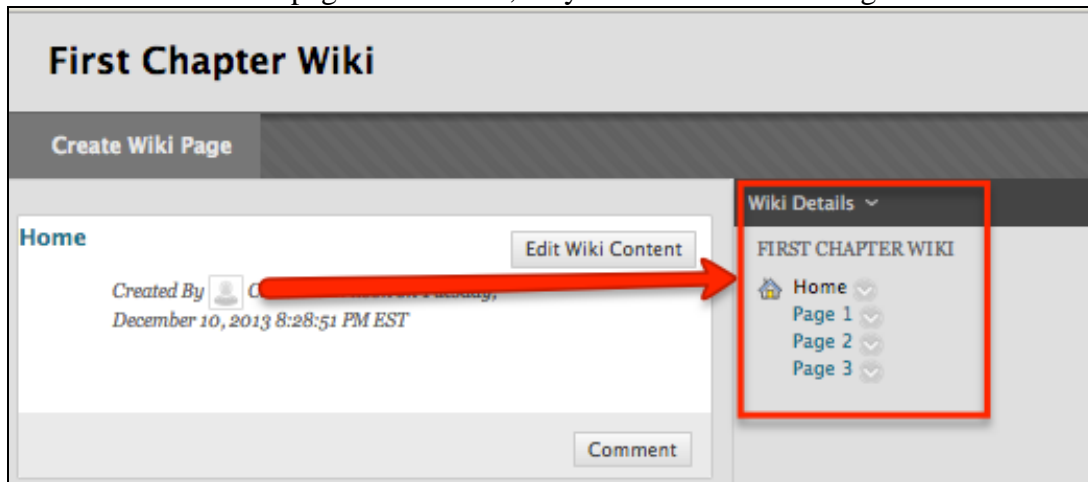
If there are additional pages in the wiki, they will be listed in the right sidebar.


> **NOTE**: Students who are able to edit a wiki are called wiki members. Your instructor can set up a wiki in different ways. Some wikis can be viewed but not edited by members and wikis can be opened or closed to commenting by members..
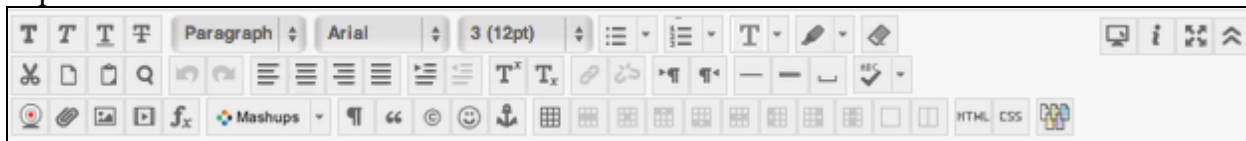
Editing a wiki page

If you are a wiki member, you can edit any existing page and add new pages. You can add to existing content on a page or change the content that is already there, even if someone else initially created it.

To edit a wiki page:

1. Click on the link to the page you want to edit. Then click the **Edit Wiki Content** button.
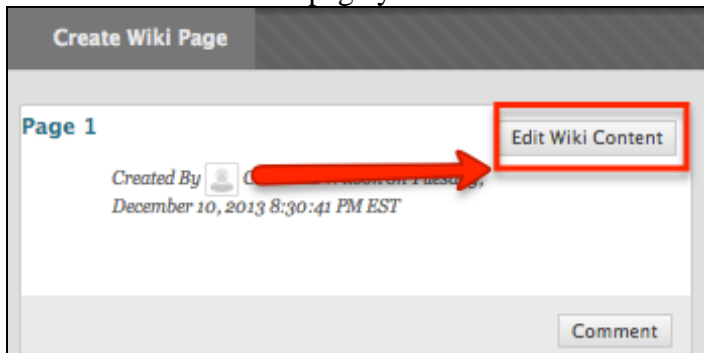

2. You will see an editor window, with buttons on the toolbar similar to a word processing toolbar. These buttons allow you to format text, add images and links, and attach documents. Holding your mouse pointer over any button will produce a brief explanation of its function.

3. Type your text into the editing window and click the **Submit** button at the top or bottom of the page to publish.

NOTE: More than one person cannot edit a wiki page at a time. If a page is being edited and another member tries to edit that page, a message appears stating that the wiki is unavailable. This is not an error message; it just means that you should return to the page at a later time.

NOTE: You can view individual contributions to a wiki by clicking arrow and then on the **History** link in the **Page** section of the right sidebar. You can also revert to a previous version of the page. To revert to a previous version, delete all versions saved after the intended version.
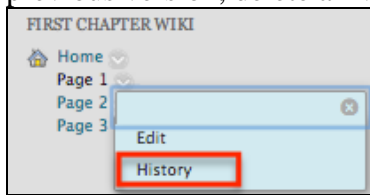

Inserting tables

You can use tables to structure your wiki page content and design a layout for images and text.

Use the icons on the editor to insert a table, merge or split a table, or insert or delete columns and rows and create the desired layout (see toolbar below).
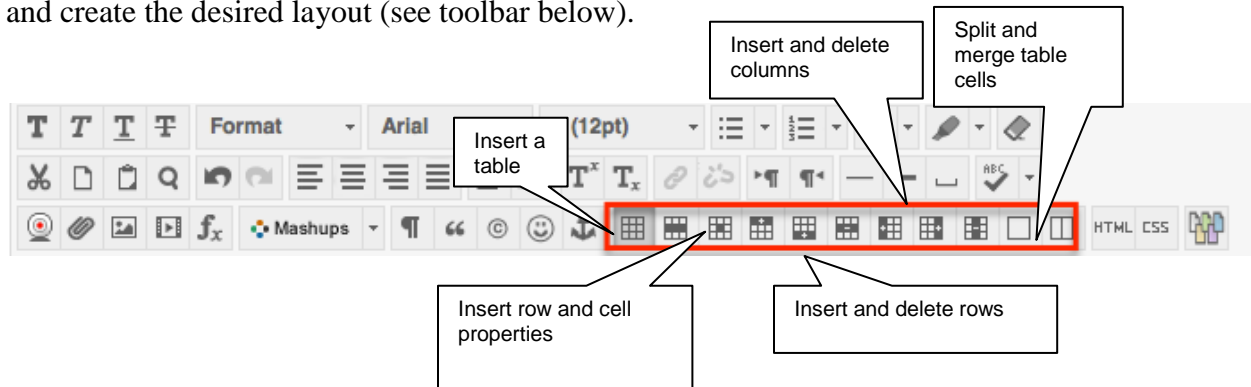
Once you have created your table, you can click on the **Table cell properties** icon to align your image or text within the cell. By default, text will appear to the left of the cell and the cell will expand to fit the text. You can change the alignment of the text in a cell in the **Table cell properties** dialog box. You can also change the cell's width or height.
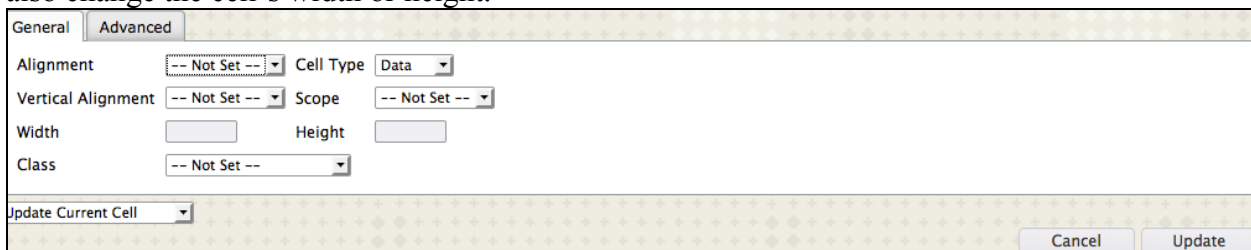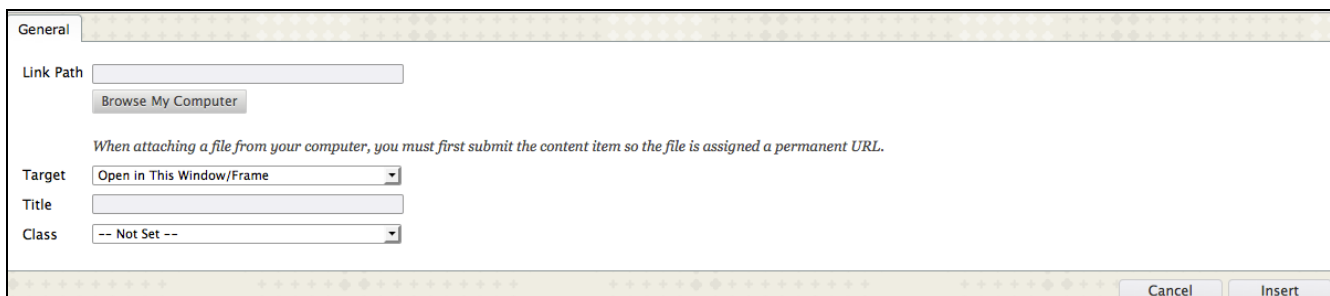
Inserting links

You can create links to web sites and to other pages within the wiki:

1. Highlight text that you want to hyperlink.

2. Click the **Insert Link** icon ( ) on the toolbar.

3. You will see a dialog box with three options:
   a. **Link Path**
      Here is where you can type your URL or click the **Browse My Computer** button to link to a file.

   b. **Target**
      This will allow the link to Open in the same window, Open in a new window, Open in a Parent window or Open in top frame

   c. **Title**
      You can type an alternative title that can be read on screen reading software.
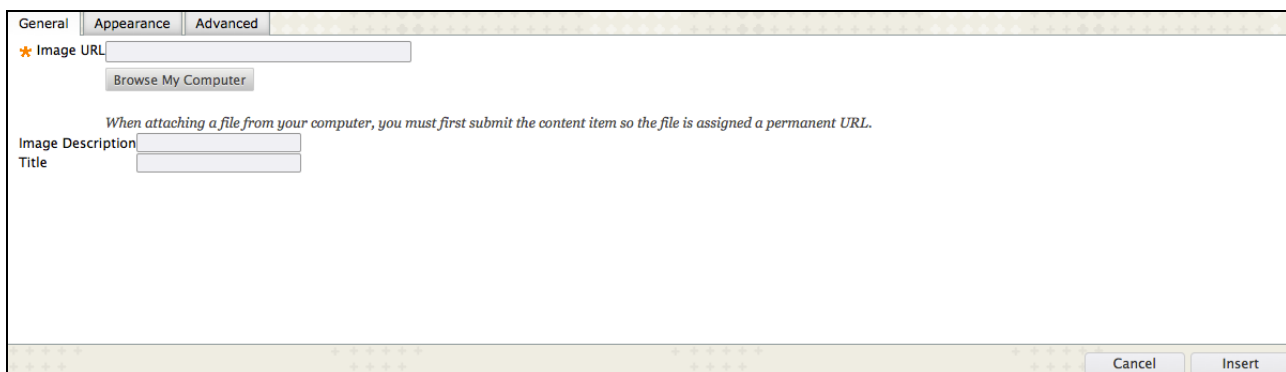
Click **Insert** to insert the link.

General	
Link Path	
	Browse My Computer
	When attaching a file from your computer, you must first submit the content item so the file is assigned a permanent URL.
Target	Open in This Window/Frame
Title	
Class	-- Not Set --
	Cancel Insert

Inserting images

1. Click on the **Insert Image** button ( )

2. Under the **General** tab you will see a dialog box with two options:
   a. **Image URL**
      Copy the web address of the image into the URL field. (If you are using Firefox, right-click on the image to copy the image location.)

   b. Click the **Browse My Computer** button to look for the image, then select the image file and **Open** in the **File Upload** dialog box.
      Note: We recommend that you resize your image before embedding it in the wiki. You could use a program like Paint or iPhoto.

General	Appearance	Advanced
★ Image URL		
	Browse My Computer	
	When attaching a file from your computer, you must first submit the content item so the file is assigned a permanent URL.	
Image Description		
Title		
		Cancel Insert

3. Enter an image description. "Alt text" is what appears as a replacement of an image when the image cannot be displaced. We recommend that you always enter "alt text" because it is especially useful for people who use screen readers.

4. Click **Insert** to upload the image.

Creating a new wiki page

1. Click on the **Create Wiki Page** at the top of the wiki.
2. Enter a title in the **Name** field. In this example, we call the new page "Materials."
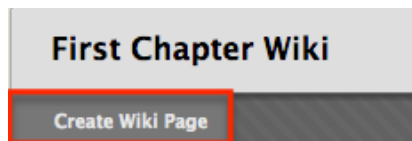
3. Add content to the page, as described in the "**Editing a wiki page**" section of this document.

4. Click the **Submit** button. Your new page will appear in the sidebar. You can now create a link to your new page from any other page in the wiki, as described in the **Editing a wiki page** section of this document..
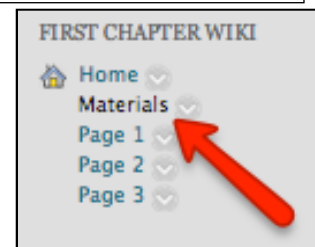
Commenting on wiki entries

Comments may be added to any page in the wiki if your instructor has enabled the comment feature. To view or create a comment, click on the **Comments** link at the bottom of the wiki page. You will see any comments that have already been made and can add a new comment using the **Add Comment** form. The number in parenthesis behind the word **Comments** represents the number of existing comments. **NOTE**: If you do not see a **Comments** link, then your instructor has not made the **comment** option available.
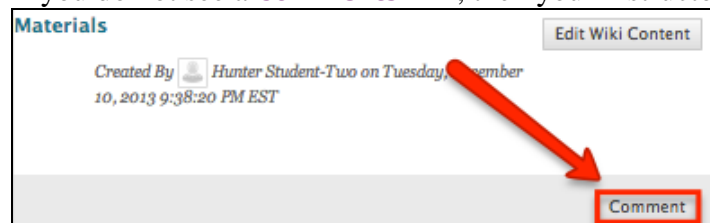
Getting Help with Wikis

STUDENTS: If you have further questions or need technical assistance, please contact your professor or the Student Help Desk at (212) 650-EMAIL (3624), studenthelpdesk@hunter.cuny.edu. Additional Blackboard documents are available at http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/it/blackboard/student-documentation-and-support-for-blackboard.

FACULTY: If you have further questions or need assistance, please email bb@hunter.cuny.edu or contact the Technology Resource Center, Thomas Hunter 402. 212-650-3358. For assistance designing and learning activities that incorporate wikis, please contact one of ICIT's educational technologists at edtech@hunter.cuny.edu. Additional Blackboard documents are available at http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/it/blackboard/blackboard-9.1-faculty-resources.