# ScholarBlogs Basics (WordPress)

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Use of ScholarBlogs at Emory

ScholarBlogs is a platform especially designed to host WordPress sites for faculty and graduate students. Scholar Blogs sites may be used as instructional tools to supplement the classroom experience or as platforms to demonstrate scholarly work/research.

Requesting a ScholarBlog

You may request a ScholarBlog site by accessing this link and completing a short form. An Emory NetID and password is required.

Logging in and Accessing the Dashboard

First Time Login

Before admins can add individual users to their ScholarBlogs site, each user must log in via the “login” link on the main Scholar Blogs website (https://ScholarBlogs.emory.edu/) using their Emory NetID and Password.

When attempting to log in, a first-time user will not have access to any sites. In order to gain access to a specific ScholarBlogs site, the admin for that specific site must add them as an Existing User. Users must be identified by their Emory email address.

Add New User

Add Existing User

Enter the email address of an existing user on this network to invite them to this site. That person will be sent an email asking them to confirm the invite.

E-mail

Role

Add Existing User

Subsequent Logins

Once a user has been added to a particular ScholarBlogs site, that user can access the site by navigating directly to the site URL (ex. https://ScholarBlogs.emory.edu/[SITENAME]), and entering their standard Emory credentials.
**User Roles**

When adding a new user to your website, you have the option of authorizing different levels of site access and functionality.

- **Administrator** - Somebody who has access to all administration features
- **Editor** - Somebody who can publish and manage posts and pages, as well as manage other users' posts, etc.
- **Author** - Somebody who can publish and manage his or her own posts
- **Contributor** - Somebody who can write and manage his or her own posts, but not publish them
- **Subscriber** - Somebody who can only manage his or her own profiles

**WordPress Dashboard**

The Dashboard in WordPress is the administrative area of your blog. Using the Dashboard, you can make changes to the settings, add or edit a blog post or page, and moderate discussion.

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**Settings**
General

Site Title - Enter the name of your website here. This will typically be used as the main title in the banner of your site, but will also be used as the main title by search engines, bookmarks, etc.

Tagline – This will be used as the subheading for your site. This optional, descriptive text is typically displayed alongside the Site Title on your website. A Tagline briefly informs guests about the general content and goals of your website, and it can increase the likelihood that users organically find your site through search engines.

Reading

Front Page Displays – This determines the page that your audience will see when they first enter your site (i.e. your homepage). By default, WordPress displays a running list of your latest posts, but you have the option to select a different, static page that does not automatically show new posts.

Privacy Options

- I would like my site to be visible to everyone, including search engines (like Google, Bing, Technorati) and archivers
- I would like to block search engines, but allow normal visitors
- I would like my blog to be visible only to registered users of Emory WordPress Sites
- I would like my blog to be visible only to registered users I add to "[SITE NAME]"
- I would like "[SITE NAME]" to be visible only to Admins.

Posts and Pages

The Difference Between Pages and Posts

Pages – Static site content. The content published here is meant to change little over time. Pages are typically undated and unsigned (i.e. there is not an ‘author’ credited with the production of the content). Although WordPress allows commenting on pages by default, the commenting function is generally disabled. By default, WordPress also generates a menu item for each page, although this is theme-specific.

Posts – Dynamic site content. This content is updated regularly. Often, several different authors contribute, so posts are typically dated and signed. Commenting is generally enabled because posts encourage interaction with the site. Menu items are not typically generated for posts, although this varies by theme.

Creating and Editing Pages and Posts

Creating a new page - To create a new page, click on the “Pages” link on the left-side navigation of the dashboard. Then click on “Add New” under the Pages link on the left-side navigation.

Editing an existing page - To edit the properties of an existing page, select “Pages” from the left-side navigation. Select the page you want to edit from the list by either (1) clicking the title of the page, or (2) selecting “edit” from the menu that appears when you hover your cursor over the page title.
Page / Post Elements

Post Title (pages and posts) – This is the title that will be displayed at the top of your page.

Permalinks (pages and posts) – The permalink defines the unique URL by which your page will be made accessible. By default, the permalink is the title of your page (lowercase and with spaces replaced with dashes). If your permalink is too long, you decide to change the title of your post, or wish to customize the permalink for some other reason, you can do so by clicking the “edit” button.
**WYSIWYG Editor** – add content easily to your post via the WYSIWYG (“What You See Is What You Get”) editor. This editor functions like a standard word processor and gives you the ability to easily produce a formatted document without having to know HTML. In order to make more advanced changes not supported by the Visual editor, you may view the raw code by clicking on the “HTML” tab to the top right of your post.

**Upload / Insert** – add images to your post / page by clicking the icon to the right of the “Upload/Insert” heading to the top left of your post content. You will be given the option of dragging and dropping files from your computer or selecting them manually.

Once media items are uploaded, you can edit their properties by selecting the “Gallery” link on the top of the “Add Media” dialogue. Click “Show” for the item(s) that you want to edit.

- **Title (Required)** – Add a brief descriptive title for your image. This will help your image (and your story) to be found by search engines
- **Alternative Text (Important)** – This is the text that will seen if the image cannot be displayed (i.e. if the reader has a slow connection or is using a screen reader).
- **Caption** – if left blank, then only the image will be displayed. If caption text is added, this will automatically by included as a caption underneath the image in the post / page.
- **Link URL** – by default, WordPress will insert a link to the physical location of the image on the server, so that users who click the image on your page will be redirected to the full image. If you would like this to direct the reader else where (i.e. to another page), then you can type the alternative URL here. If, on the other hand, you do not wish your image to be a link, simply delete the URL text or click the “None” button.
- **Alignment** – determines the location of the image relative to the text on your page
- **Size** – WordPress will recommend alternative image sizes depending on size of your original image. WordPress processes image by producing three versions of your image, or different
sizes, in addition to uploading the original. Often times people will upload very large image files that take a long time to display, especially on slower connections. The benefit of making use of these built-in size options rather than simply resizing your original image using HTML is that these refer to smaller files that load more quickly.

To insert the uploaded image into your post, click the “Insert into Post” button.

**NOTE:** images will be automatically be added wherever you have deposited your cursor within the post / page content.
Categories (posts only) – categories are a useful way of organizing your posts, increasing search engine optimization, and increasing ease of navigation on the part of end users. They are often used in menus and widgets, but are also listed at the bottom of each post as links, making it easy for readers to find related site content. For categories to be the most useful, they should remain generic.

To assign a post to a category, you may select one (or multiple) from the categories listed to the right of your post content. You can also easily add a new category by clicking + Add New Category.

Tags (posts only) – tags are another way of organizing site content, increasing search engine optimization, and improving accessibility for end users. As with categories, tags are listed at the bottom of each post as links. Some themes, widgets, and plugins make extensive use of tags, but they are not necessary to basic WordPress functions.

Comments (posts and pages) – The commenting feature in WordPress allows readers and subscribers to interact with your site content. For posts, you can enable and disable comments from the “Discussion” box.

To enable / disable this function for pages:

1. return to the list of posts or pages by selecting Posts / Pages from the left side navigation
2. hover your cursor over the item you wish to edit
3. select Quick Edit
4. check / uncheck “Allow Comments”
Publishing Options

**Preview** - clicking this button will open your page in a new browser tab, allowing you to view the changes you have made to your content without either saving it as a draft or publishing.

**Draft** - will save your page without making it publically viewable. This way, you can begin work on your page content and return to complete it at a later date.

**Pending Review** - this is a publishing option generally used for Contributors who must submit content to an Editor for approval before final publication. It is a very helpful option for managing workflow on sites with multiple authors.

**Publish** – selecting this option will publish the page to the web, making it viewable to everyone with permissions to view the site (including search engines).

**Visibility** – a post or page may be published with one of the following options

- Public – viewable by everyone with access to the site
- Password Protected – readers will be prompted for a password before being able to view the content
- Private – content is viewable only by the author (and site administrators)

**Scheduling** – rather than publish content immediately, you may choose for a post to be published at a later date. The date published will generally be stamped on the post itself, and so this feature can also be used to retroactively change the date associated with a particular item.

Appearance

**Themes**

Under “Appearance” on the left sidebar menu, selecting the “Themes” item will bring up a list of available website templates that can be activated in order to customize the look and feel of your WordPress website. Themes are independent of the content of the site, and so can be changed at any time without altering your pages or posts. This also means that you can create your website by adding content without having to commit to a theme before hand.

Before activating a theme, you may also preview it by clicking the ‘preview’ link next to a particular theme. This will give you a sense of what your site would look like with the new template applied, but may not be 100% accurate.

**Widgets**

Widgets are mini-applications that perform secondary functions within WordPress. The areas on your website to which widgets may be added are determined by your theme, but most themes allow you to add widgets to sidebars, and possibly your footer.

To activate a widget, drag the widget from the “Available Widgets” area into the...
widget area in which you would like it to be displayed (Widget areas are theme dependent and may differ depending on the template you have activated). Specific widget properties are defined by clicking the triangle to the right of the widget, customizing the widget using the available options, and clicking “Save.”

To delete a widget, click the triangle to the right of the widget to access the widget properties. Click the “Delete” link on the bottom left of the widget box.

To disable a widget but retain it for later use without losing the properties that you have already defined, drag the widget item from the widget area into the “Inactive Widget” area.

**TIP:** By default, if you do not have any active widgets. Most WordPress installations will still add the “Meta” widget to your primary widget area. To eliminate all widgets from view, it is sometimes necessary to add a blank “Text” widget to your primary widget area.

**Menus**

By default, most themes automatically generate a main menu based on the pages you have published (i.e. a link will be produced for every page). It is, however, possible to customize your menu in such a way as to rearrange items, add hierarchies, create links to category archives, and add external links. Menu customizations are managed via Appearance → Menus on the left side dashboard navigation.

a. **Creating a New Menu**

To create custom menu, click the plus sign (“+”) and enter a menu name (any name will do, but something that is easy to remember is best). Click “Create Menu.”

Once the menu is created, you may add published pages by selecting them from the “Pages” box and clicking “Add to Menu.”

Once pages are added to the menu, you may drag the menu items to produce any order that you choose. Save changes by clicking “Save Menu.”

You may change navigation labels by clicking the small arrow on the far right of each menu item.

To activate your newly created menu, you must select it from the “Theme Locations” box and click “Save.” Your new menu will replace the menu that was previously generated automatically.

**NOTE:** Once your custom menu is created, new pages and content items will no longer be added to your menu automatically, but rather must be added manually here. To get around this, you may select the option to “Automatically add new top-level pages,” but the order in which added menu items appear may still need to be adjusted.
b. Producing Menu Hierarchies

Menu hierarchies may be produced very easily by dragging added menu items to slightly to the right (as seen in the image) of the menu item above them. Make sure that you “Save Menu” to activate changes.

c. Creating Category Links

To create a menu item to an archive page including a list of all articles assigned to a particular category, select the categories you wish to add and add them to your custom menu as you would for individual pages.

d. Adding External Links

To add a link to an external web page, type the webpage address into the URL field in the “Custom Links” box. Label the link and click “Add to Menu.”