Key Take-Aways

WordPress Guided Tour

What is WordPress?

WordPress is an open platform for creating websites or building a collection of blog posts. Around a third of the content available on the Internet is housed on **WordPress. WordPress** is provided free to post-secondary educators and students through a provincially-hosted installation organized by BC teaching and learning leaders (the Open Educational Technology Collaborative - OpenETC).

How Do Instructors and Students Access WordPress?

WordPress sites are available for free through the OpenETC, a community of educators, technologists and designers who wanted to share their expertise to foster and support an open infrastructure for the BC post-secondary sector (students and instructors). No contracts, no money, no fees – just access to open platforms including **WordPress.** All you need is your NIC email address (a student one or an instructor one) and you can sign up for a **WordPress** site. Go to https://opened.ca/get-started/ to get started. See the tip sheet, **WordPress** "Quick start" Summary for Creating a blog or website using **WordPress**, available under Instructor Resources on your Blackboard Learn site, or watch the video Signing up for a WordPress Site.

What are the Essential Tools and Processes Instructors Need to Know?

To create your **WordPress** site, you need to:

- Create a **WordPress** account through OpenETC;
- Choose a theme for your site;
- Customize your site name and byline;
- Add pages;
- Add posts;
- Create a menu;
- Create links / populate media library, and add to pages and posts;
- Identify which widgets / plug-Ins you need to enhance your site.

What are the Benefits for Teaching and Learning?

WordPress is an incredibly versatile platform that can be used in a myriad of different ways:
- Student or course portfolios
- Portfolio of examples to demonstrate program learning outcomes
- Group projects or individual research projects
- Hosting course content

WordPress sites have the advantage of being open to anyone to whom the site creator grants access (no NIC email address required for access, only for creation). Blogs, photos, and links (including to YouTube) can be included in ways that reflect the individual creativity of the user. An instructor can create a site and ask students to contribute to it. Or, individual students can create a site to showcase their work, without the instructor having to create a site.

It's also possible to create multiple sites, within the account you have created.

What are the Challenges and Limitations?
WordPress is hosted outside of the tools supported by the NIC helpdesk. The 'add-ons' (widgets/plug-ins) available through a site created through OpenETC are limited along with the storage space, as the sites are free. Although **WordPress** cannot be embedded within a **Blackboard Learn** Site, you and your students can share links to **WordPress** sites, through the different functions available in **Blackboard Learn.**

What Can Instructors / Students Do Next?
Sign up for the **WordPress** Hands-on Studios for help with setting up your site and getting started. Explore the resources available on the Learn Anywhere site. Attend the Applied Teaching and Learning Workshops to learn more ideas about how **WordPress** can be integrated into teaching and learning.

Check out the resources listed below if you are looking for a more independent exploration of **WordPress**.

Resources
For more information on how to use **WordPress** and its various tools, check out the following websites:

WordPress Support
https://wordpress.com/support/

7 Essential Tips for WordPress Beginners
https://copyblogger.com/new-to-wordpress/

OpenETC videos
https://opened.ca/community-resources/wordpress-support/

How to use widgets to make changes to your WordPress website
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cmFJdP5JLZc

What are WordPress Plug-Ins and how to use them
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XepVypDc9fA

Teaching and Learning Examples

Below are some examples of how **WordPress** can be used by educators.

Small Teaching Online – a **WordPress** site created by Langara College for its Book Club. This site shows a way to engage readers in its site. It also includes a range of great ideas and advice for teaching online.
https://smallteachingonline.opened.ca/

Anthropological Perspectives on Pandemics Past and Present – this is a UNBC course that uses **WordPress** to host the entire course, including course description, syllabus, readings, lectures and assignments.
https://anth298.opened.ca/course-syllabus/

29 Ways That WordPress is Taking Over Higher Education – a useful article with multiple examples of how different institutions are using **WordPress**.
https://premium.wpmudev.org/blog/wordpress-is-taking-over-higher-ed/