

ITS Resource Center Home

Blackboard Grade Center Overview Continued

Contact Information

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Now that you've set up your Blackboard Grade Center, it's time to learn some advanced topics. First, set up a Weighted Total column to show students their current or final grade. The Grade Center can accommodate most grading schemes. Don't forget to check out some of the nifty time-saving tips at the end.

Weighting Grades

Before starting to set up the weighting scheme, it's a good idea to make sure that all of your grade center items have a category associated with them. This will give you additional options when setting up the weighting. Click the "action button" for each item and select "Quick Column Information" to check whether there is a category. If not, then select "Edit Column Information" and add an appropriate category (you can also define your own in Manage --> Categories).

	Last Name	First Name	Midterm Exam	edit Test	Quiz 1
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student	Average	-		-
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student	Bogus	C		-
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student	Demo	B		30
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student	Non-Hamilton	-		-

You should have a column called "Weighted Total" in your grade center (if not, create one by clicking the "Create Calculated Column" button and selecting "Weighted Column"). Click the "action button" for the Weighted Total column and then select "Edit Column Information." You will see an area which is unique to the weighted column and this is where you will set up your grade weighting scheme. Select an item and click the arrow to move it to the "Selected" area.

Columns to Select:

- Quiz 3
- Class 1
- Extra Credit Test
- Attendance
- assignment 2
- Weekly Response Paper 4
- AddCol
- Adjusted Quiz grade

Categories to Select:

- Assignment
- Attendance
- Essay
- Exam
- Extra Credit
- Final Exam

Selected Columns:

Enter the weight percentage for each item. Percentages should add up to 100 percent.

- 40% Category: Essays
- 25% Column: Midterm Exam
- 25% Column: Final Exam

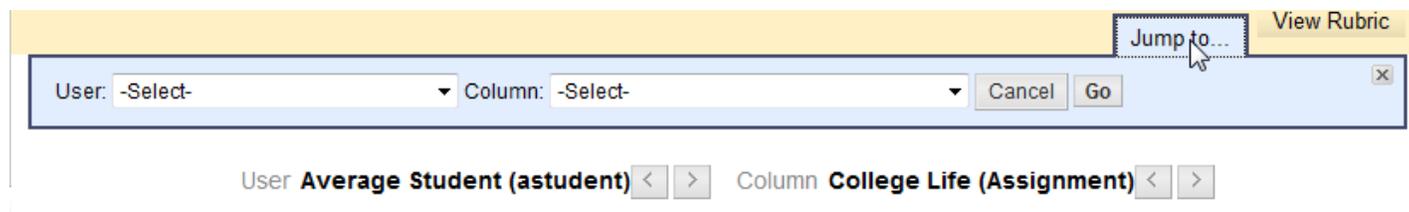
You should be able to replicate the weighting scheme on your syllabus in the "Columns/Categories to Select" area. As you can see, we can mix categories (quizzes, essays) in with individual columns (exams, attendance). You can also select calculated columns (total, average, min/max or weighted) which you have created to reflect specific grading needs.

As long as each essay-like item has the category “Essay,” it doesn’t matter how many there are; Blackboard will calculate the grade for this category based on however many items are in the category and weight them equally (each one has the same number of points possible) or proportionally (each one has a different number of points possible). You can also choose to drop the X number of lowest (or highest!) grades or use only the lowest or highest value of the group.

A Few Tips and Tricks

1) **Shorten column title by adding a Grade Center Display name.** This is a handy option if you use long assignment names. The descriptive assignment name remains in the content area; you see a name not longer than 15 characters in the Grade Center. Click the “action button” next to the column title and select “Edit Column Information.”

2) **Use the navigation tools on the Grade Details page** to jump from one student to the next or one assignment to the next without reloading the Grade Center page. This will allow you to go directly from one student to the next while grading assignments without the extra step of reloading the Grade Center when you don’t need to do so.



3) **Email students directly from the Grade Center.** Just check the boxes next to their names and click the “Email” button directly above the name columns.

4) **Add a Quick Comment to a student’s grade.** Once a grade has been entered for a student, you should see the option “Quick Comment” in the menu that pops up when you click the “action button” next to the individual student’s grade. When you select this option, an entry box will pop up with two fields, one for feedback to the student and one for notes to yourself. This is faster for quick comments than selecting the “View Grade Details” option.

5) **Exempting a single grade from a student’s total grade.** This is another option you will see on the menu that pops up when you click the action button in a grade cell. Selecting this option will cause the grade for that student to not be included in that student’s totals. Once created, it can be cleared if necessary.

6) **Overriding Grades.** You also have the ability to override a given grade with an updated grade. Click the “View Grade Details” option and look in the series of tabs beginning with “Edit.” Click the “Manually Override” tab and enter a new grade along with comments to the student or notes to yourself.

7) **Changing the category of a number of items at once.** Go to the Manage menu and select “Column Organization.” Select the columns whose category you need to change and then pick the new category from the list under the “Change Category to ...” button.

8) **Visual Cues for Grade Center statuses.** One may set up a Color Code to set background and text color of Grade Center items based on grading status or grade range

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