



Grade Center

9 Steps to a Better Gradebook in Blackboard 9.1

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Goals

Learn how to:

- Add and configure columns for assignments, quizzes, tests, and other assessments.
- Enter scores, comments, and provide feedback.
- Set up weighted grading.
- Give extra credit.

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Overview of Grade Center interface

The screenshot shows the Blackboard Grade Center interface with several callouts pointing to specific features:

- Grade Center View**: Points to the 'Grade Center View' dropdown menu.
- Action Bar**: Points to the 'Create Column', 'Create Calculated Column', 'Manage', and 'Reports' buttons.
- Upload/Download Grades**: Points to the 'Work Offline' button.
- Sort Columns By**: Points to the 'Sort Columns By' dropdown menu.
- Action Link**: Points to the 'Grade Information Bar'.
- Grade Information Bar**: Points to the bar above the spreadsheet showing 'Grade Type: Grade', 'Points Possible: 50', and 'Displayed As: Score'.
- Spreadsheet Cell**: Points to a cell in the spreadsheet containing the value '35.00'.
- Frozen Columns**: Points to the first two columns of the spreadsheet.
- See more rows**: Points to the 'Icon Legend' button.
- Understand Symbols**: Points to the 'Edit Rows Displayed' button.

| Last Name | First Name | Weighted T | P 1 | Project 2 | Quiz 1 | Quiz 2 | Quiz 3 |
|--------------|------------|------------|-------|-----------|--------|--------|--------|
| Bikos | Lynette | 96.67% | 45.00 | 50.00 | 45.00 | 10.00 | 10.00 |
| Braden | Kathleen | 87.50% | 40.00 | - | 35.00 | 10.00 | 10.00 |
| Brewer | Tami | 97.50% | 50.00 | 50.00 | 50.00 | 10.00 | 9.00 |
| Casey | Susan | 90.00% | - | 45.00 | 10.00 | 10.00 | 10.00 |
| Champ-Gibson | Erla | 75.00% | 50.00 | 0.00 | 45.00 | 10.00 | 10.00 |
| Cheyney | Barbara | 84.00% | 34.00 | - | 40.00 | 10.00 | 10.00 |
| DeWater | Lezlie | 100.00% | - | 50.00 | - | - | 10.00 |
| Drovdahl | Bob | 100.00% | 50.00 | - | - | - | 10.00 |
| Espinor | Debby | - | - | - | - | - | 10.00 |
| Fitch | Cindy | 90.00% | - | 45.00 | - | - | 10.00 |

9 Steps

1. Organize content with categories.
2. Create columns for new assessments.
3. Delete, hide, or freeze appropriate columns.
4. Verify students will see columns you want them to see.
5. Enter scores.
6. Mark "Needs Graded" assignments using rubrics.
7. Set up weighted grading (if using it).
8. Verify calculations are accurate.
9. Include extra credit (if using it).

1. Categories

- Use to organize groups of grades in Grade Center
- Examples
 - Homework, Tests, Quizzes, Participation
- Uses
 - Sort on category to compare student performance
 - View only columns in a single category
 - Use to calculate grades

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Create a new category

To create a new Category, follow these steps:

1. Click **Manage** in the **Action Bar** of the **Grade Center**.
2. Select **Categories** from the **Action Link** menu.
3. Click **Create a Category**.
4. Enter a **Name** for the **Category**.
5. Enter a **Description**. The Description field can help differentiate Categories and explain a Category's purpose.
6. Click **Submit**.

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2. Adding columns in the Grade Center

1. Automatically generated Grade Center columns
 1. **Discussion Board** – Must choose setting to grade the forum or forum thread
 2. **Assignment** – Added to **Course Content** area and graded manually
 3. **Survey** – Automatically scored
 4. **Test**– Can be automatically scored and entered in **Grade Center**. Assessment may contain questions that need to be scored manually (e.g. essay question).
2. Manually created Grade Center columns are created in the Grade Center.

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Adding a manually created Grade Center column

To create a column in the Grade Center:

1. Click **Create Column** in the **Action Bar** of the Grade Center.
2. Enter a **Column Name** - formal name (15 characters)
3. Enter a **Grade Center Display Name** - only a header in Grade Center.
4. Enter a **Description** - optional (not seen by students)
5. Select a **Primary Display** option.
6. Select a **Secondary Display** (optional)
7. Select a **Category**.
8. Enter **Points Possible** – must be numeric (can be zero)
9. Select a **Grading Period** – optional (used primarily by schools with longer terms)
10. **Creation Date** – can't be changed
11. Enter a **Due Date** – none or specify
12. Set additional **Options**:
 - Include Column in **Grade Center** calculations
 - Show this Column to Students
 - Show Statistics (average and mean) for this column in **My Grades**
13. Click **Submit** to save.

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3. Delete or hide unnecessary columns and freeze columns that should always appear

1. Click **Manage**, and select **Column Organization**.
2. Hide unnecessary columns by checking boxes beside column names, click **Show/Hide, Hide Selected Columns**.
3. Modify which columns are frozen by dragging any part of row with column information above or below the “frozen” bar.
4. Click **Submit** to confirm changes.

A column can be deleted using Action Link associated with column.

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4. Verify Student View Settings

The screenshot displays the Blackboard Grade Center interface. The main area shows a table of student grades. The columns are: Last Name, First Name, Quiz 01, Quiz 02, Quiz 03, Quiz 04, Mid-Term 1, and Group Present. A blue arrow points to the 'Mid-Term 1' column header. The table contains the following data:

| Last Name | First Name | Quiz 01 | Quiz 02 | Quiz 03 | Quiz 04 | Mid-Term 1 | Group Present |
|-----------|------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|------------|---------------|
| Harris | Linda | 8.00 | 10.00 | 8.00 | 8.00 | 80.00 | .. |
| Kim | Paul | 8.00 | 10.00 | 10.00 | 8.00 | .. | .. |
| Moe | Galle | 6.00 | 8.00 | 10.00 | 7.00 | 70.00 | .. |
| Peter | Lyle | 9.00 | 9.00 | 9.00 | 6.00 | 50.00 | .. |
| Petersen | Janice | 10.00 | 10.00 | 7.00 | 9.00 | 80.00 | .. |
| Soto | Bianca | 5.00 | 10.00 | 10.00 | 9.00 | 80.00 | .. |
| Williams | Tracy | 8.00 | 7.00 | 10.00 | 8.00 | .. | .. |

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5. Entering scores

To enter a grade from the **Grade Center**:

1. Click on desired cell.
2. Type the value.
3. Press **Enter**.

Use **Enter**, **Tab**, and **Arrow** keys to move around.

Use **Enter** to submit scores.

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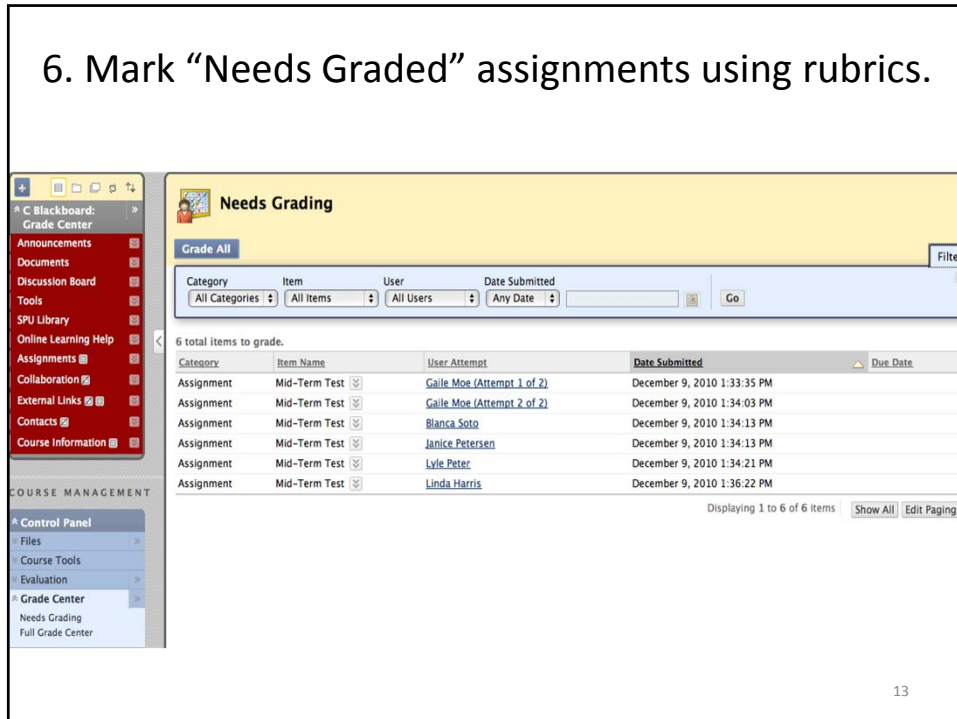
Adding comments

To enter a comment:

1. Move the cursor over an entered grade.
2. Click **Action Link** and select **Quick Comment** from menu.
3. Enter text in **Feedback to User** textbox to share with the student.
4. Enter text in **Grading Notes** textbox for reference. **Caution:** These notes are available to anyone who has access to Grade Center.
5. Click **Submit** to save comments.

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6. Mark “Needs Graded” assignments using rubrics.



The screenshot shows the Blackboard Grade Center interface. On the left is a navigation menu with options like Announcements, Documents, Discussion Board, Tools, SPU Library, Online Learning Help, Assignments, Collaboration, External Links, Contacts, and Course Information. The main area is titled 'Needs Grading' and features a 'Grade All' button and a filter box. Below the filter is a table with 6 total items to grade. The table has columns for Category, Item Name, User Attempt, Date Submitted, and Due Date. The data rows are as follows:

| Category | Item Name | User Attempt | Date Submitted | Due Date |
|------------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| Assignment | Mid-Term Test | Galle Moe (Attempt 1 of 2) | December 9, 2010 1:33:35 PM | |
| Assignment | Mid-Term Test | Galle Moe (Attempt 2 of 2) | December 9, 2010 1:34:03 PM | |
| Assignment | Mid-Term Test | Blanca Soto | December 9, 2010 1:34:13 PM | |
| Assignment | Mid-Term Test | Janice Petersen | December 9, 2010 1:34:13 PM | |
| Assignment | Mid-Term Test | Lyle Peter | December 9, 2010 1:34:21 PM | |
| Assignment | Mid-Term Test | Linda Harris | December 9, 2010 1:36:22 PM | |

At the bottom right of the table area, it says 'Displaying 1 to 6 of 6 items' with 'Show All' and 'Edit Paging' links.

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7. Weighted grading: Part I

To set up **Weighted Grade** column:

1. Click **Action Link** for **Weighted Grade** column.
2. Select **Primary Display** option from drop-down menu. (Percentage)
3. Select items to be included in **Weighted Grade** column, and enter the percentages for each column or **Category** to be included in the **Weighted Grade**.
 - Columns to Select – List of all columns in Grade Center. Select Column and click arrow to add it to Weighted Grade column.
 - Categories to Select – List of all Categories in Grade Center. Select category and click arrow to add it to Weighted Grade column.

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Weighted grading: Part II

4. After all columns and categories have been selected, enter percentage for each selection. When a Category has been selected, several other options appear:
 - Select how to weigh columns within the Category Equally or Proportionally. Category or use the lowest or highest value in category.
- To remove a selected **Grade Item** or **Category** from consideration, click the red “x”.

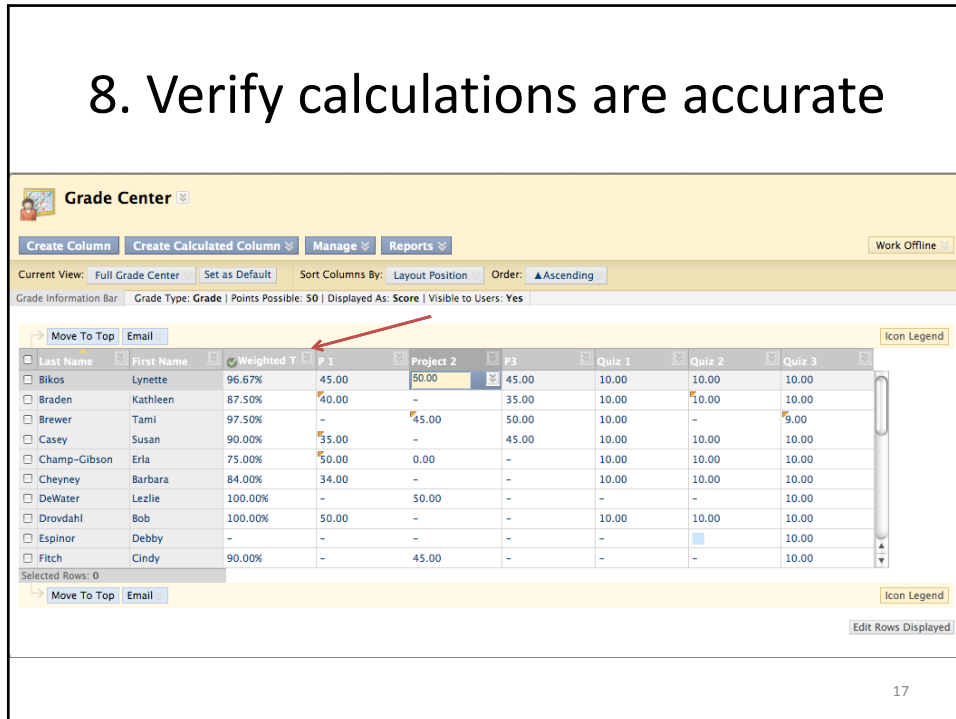
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Weighted grading: Part III

5. **Calculate as a running total** – Select **Yes** to calculate the weight as a running total to include only the Columns that have been graded. Select **No** to include all items.
6. Share **Weighted Grade** column with users. The following permissions can be selected to add the column to **My Grades**:
 1. Include Column in the Grade Center calculations – Makes the Column available for use in other calculations.
 2. Show Column in My Grades – Shows the column to Students.
 3. Show Statistics (average and median) to Students– Shows the Weighted Grade column statistics in My Grades.
7. Click **Submit to save**.

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8. Verify calculations are accurate



The screenshot shows the Blackboard Grade Center interface. At the top, there are navigation buttons: 'Create Column', 'Create Calculated Column', 'Manage', and 'Reports'. Below these are options for 'Current View' (Full Grade Center), 'Set as Default', 'Sort Columns By' (Layout Position), and 'Order' (Ascending). A 'Grade Information Bar' indicates 'Grade Type: Grade', 'Points Possible: 50', 'Displayed As: Score', and 'Visible to Users: Yes'. The main table lists students with columns for 'Last Name', 'First Name', 'Weighted T', 'P 1', 'Project 2', 'P3', 'Quiz 1', 'Quiz 2', and 'Quiz 3'. A red arrow points to the 'Weighted T' column. Below the table, there are 'Move To Top' and 'Email' buttons, and an 'Icon Legend' button. The page number '17' is visible in the bottom right corner.

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| Cheyney | Barbara | 84.00% | 34.00 | - | - | 10.00 | 10.00 | 10.00 |
| DeWater | Lezlie | 100.00% | - | 50.00 | - | - | - | 10.00 |
| Drovdahl | Bob | 100.00% | 50.00 | - | - | 10.00 | 10.00 | 10.00 |
| Espinor | Debby | - | - | - | - | - | 10.00 | 10.00 |
| Fitch | Cindy | 90.00% | - | 45.00 | - | - | - | 10.00 |

9. Extra Credit

- Straight Points
 - Assign 0 point to Points Possible
 - Verify points are being totaled correctly
- Weighted grading
 - Calculate weighted grade
 - Add column for extra credit
 - Add total points column
Weighted Grade + Extra Credit

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Comments or Questions?

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Bonus Material

(If we have time)

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Assignments

1. Adding an assignment
(students submit work online)
2. Download student work for
a single assessment
3. Return student work with feedback

<http://spuonlinelearning.wordpress.com/category/faculty-resources/assignment-tool/>

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Exporting grades to Excel

Downloading grades from the Grade Center:

1. Click **Work Offline**. (upper right corner of window)
2. Select **Download** link.
3. Leave default settings.
4. Click **Submit**.
5. Click the Download button and choose **Save**.
6. Select a location to save file and change **Save as Type** to **All Files**, then click **Save**.
7. Click **Open** on the **Download Complete** window.
8. Click **Yes** to answer the question about opening a file in a different format.

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General rules about downloaded “Excel” gradebook

- Do
 - Enter new scores for existing columns
 - Enter new column headings and scores
 - Use fill-down & fill-across to duplicate common scores
 - Maintain existing file format (tab delimited)
- Don't
 - Save the spreadsheet as an Excel file
 - Don't create formulas to be used as scores
 - Worry about formatting spreadsheet if you only plan to upload changes to Blackboard

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Importing grades from Excel

To upload spreadsheet with grades to Grade Center:

1. Click **Work Offline**. (upper right corner of window)
2. Select **Upload** link.
3. Browse for the file.
4. Leave Delimiter Type as the default – **Auto**.
5. Click **Submit** to upload the selected file.
6. Review list of data to be uploaded. Use check boxes to de-select data to be excluded from upload.
7. Review the **Upload Grades Confirmation** to ensure correct data is being uploaded.
8. Click **Submit** to confirm and upload the file.
9. **Modify** any new columns to make sure data is used correctly in **Grade Center**.

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