

GC Faculty Quick Guide

Blackboard - Grade Center & Weighted Columns

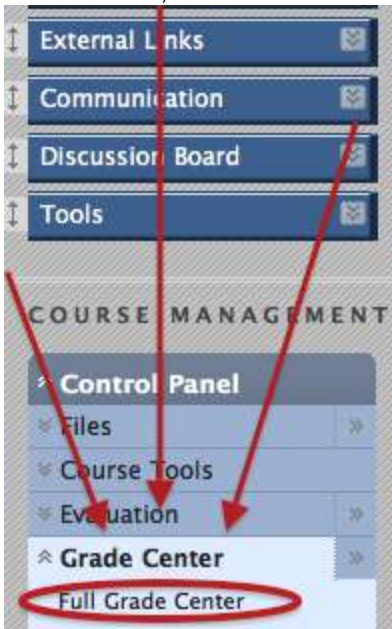
How do I set up a Weighted Column in the Grade Center

This document will:

This support document will guide you editing the existing "Weighted Total" column that exists in the Blackboard grade center. By editing this column you will be able to assign weighted values to individual assignments or categories of assignments regardless of their individual point value; for example, you can set a 20 point quiz to only count for 5% of the overall grade. This column can also be set to show a running total for the course, allowing students to track their progress as the semester progresses.

Getting Started:

Blackboard 9.1 has a powerful new grade center with many capabilities, but before we can dive into how these features work, we first need to locate the Full Grade Center.



To get to the grade center, log-in to Blackboard and look over at the left hand panel of your Blackboard course. You'll see the buttons for the course, and underneath you'll see a light blue rectangle titled, "Course Management." Look down the list links for the "Full Grade Center." Click this link.

The Full Grade Center should look something like this:

A screenshot of the Blackboard Grade Center interface. The page title is 'Grade Center: Full Grade Center'. Below the title is a help message about screen reader mode. There are four buttons at the top: 'Create Column' (1), 'Create Calculated Column' (2), 'Manage' (3), and 'Reports' (4). Below these buttons is a table with columns: 'Last Name', 'First Name', 'Username', 'Last Access', 'Availability', 'Test Course B', and 'Weighted Total'. The table contains four rows of student data. At the bottom of the table, there are buttons for 'Move To Top' (5) and 'Email'. The page also shows 'Sort Columns By: Layout Position' and 'Order: Ascending'. The date 'Last Saved: July 15, 2010 09:49 AM' is displayed. At the bottom right, there is an 'Icon Legend' button and a link to 'Edit Rows Displayed'.

1 Create Column: This button creates a column in your grade book. This column will not be attached to any assignment or assessment in Blackboard. You might use this button to create a column for a grade you'd like to manually enter, or for an assignment that is outside of Blackboard.

2 Create Calculated Column: This button will allow you to create a column that does some computation: average column, min/max column, total column, weighted column. Calculated columns are connected to the information in other columns.

3 Manage: This button links you to the various grade book management functions in Blackboard: Grading periods, Grading Schemas, Grading Color Codes, Categories, Smart Views, Column Organization, Row Visibility, Send Email.

4 Reports: This button will allow you to create various reports based on the information in the grade book: Create Report, View Grade History.

5 Active Columns: This is the active portion of the grade book. Here you can change scores by clicking directly in the cell you'd like to change, reorder the rows, see Column Statistics, hide columns, and Edit the columns.

Understanding the Weighted Column

The Grade Center's Weighted Total does not automatically pull grades (or grade weights) from other columns or assignments in the grade book. Instead, you must manually edit the Weighted Column and select which columns (assignments, tests, surveys, blogs, and wikis have columns automatically created for them, for all other grades you must create a column) or categories you would like to include.

The Weighted Column is a very useful tool, but its utility is rooted in the structure of your course. The more clearly you have mapped out your assignments, tests, and course expectations the more easily this will translate into the grade center.

A Word about Categories

You can create Categories for your assignments, or use the default categories created by Blackboard. When you create an assignment, survey, test, discussion board, blog, journal, or self/peer assessment, it is automatically assigned to the corresponding default category. **To change the category for an assignment you must edit its column in the grade center.**

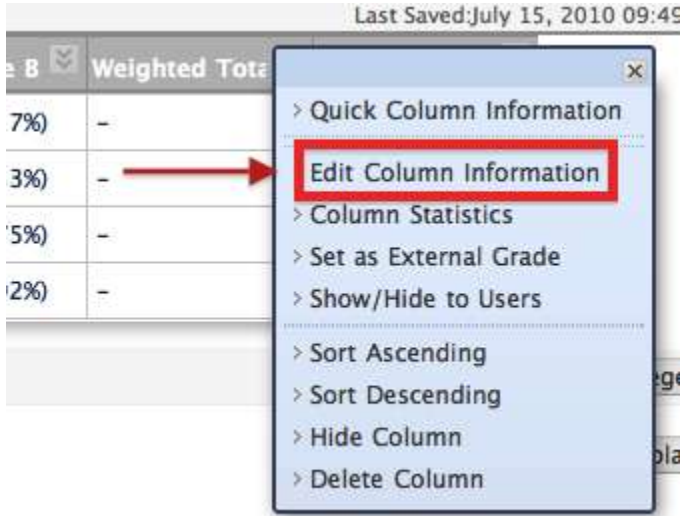
Editing the Weighted Column



Table showing grade center data with columns: Test Course B, Weighted Total, and Total. The 'Weighted Total' column header has a dropdown arrow circled in red, with a red arrow pointing to it from the left.

Test Course B	Weighted Total	Total
38.00 (79.17%)	-	83.29%
28.00 (58.33%)	-	78.73%
33.00 (68.75%)	-	85.07%
47.00 (97.92%)	-	74.25%

The Grade Center includes a Weighted Column in your default Grade Book. To edit this column, go to the Full Grade Center and look for the column labeled, "Weighted Total." You'll see a small gray box with what looks like a double arrow pointing down. Click this Double Arrow. You should now see a blue box with several menu options inside.



Click on Edit Column Information to change the way this column is calculated.

You should now see a page that looks like this:

The image shows the "Edit Weighted Column" form. The form has a yellow header with a person icon and the title "Edit Weighted Column". Below the header, there is a legend for required fields and "Cancel" and "Submit" buttons. The main section is titled "1. Column Information" and contains the following fields:

- Column Name:** Weighted Total
- Grade Center Display Name:** (empty field) Displays as the column header in the Grade Center. Cannot exceed 15 characters.
- Description:** The weighted sum of all grades for a user based on item or category weighting. (Rich text editor with Visual Editor is ON)
- Primary Display:** Percentage (dropdown menu) Calculated grades display in this format in both the Grade Center and My Grades.
- Secondary Display:** None (dropdown menu) This display option is shown in the Grade Center only.

On this page you can change the name of the column, enter a description, set the grade display type (Score, Text, Percentage, Letter, Complete/Incomplete), Select Columns/Categories for calculation, and adjust what students can see (make the grade available, show statistics).

To select columns, scroll down the page until you see the heading "3. Select Columns" You should see something like this:

3. Select Columns

Select the columns and categories to include in this weighted grade and then set the weight percentages.

Include in Weighted Grade

Columns to Select:

- Running Total
- Running Weighted Total
- AS1
- AS2
- WC1
- AS3
- AS4
- WC2

Categories to Select:

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

Calculate as Running Total Yes No

A running total only includes items that have grades or attempts. Selecting I

From here you can select the Columns or Categories that you would like to be included in this Weighted Total column. To do this, click on the column or category and then click on the gray arrow - above you'll see that it's circled; when you're working in Blackboard it should be located almost in the middle of your screen. Once you have added them to the column on the right-hand side of your screen (called, "Selected Columns"), you should see something similar to this:

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

25	% Column: AS1
25	% Column: AS2
25	% Column: AS3
25	% Column: AS4
Total Weight: 100%	

Here you can assign weights to the columns or categories that you have selected. ***It is important to note that the total weight must be 100%.*** If your total does not add up to 100% you cannot save the changes you have made to this column.

Other Options

Calculate as Running Total: If you select "Yes" this column will only use grades that have been entered in calculating the total for this column. If you click "No" the column will calculate scores as though grades not yet entered are zeros.

For example, Let's say that in your class you have four assignments, each is worth 25 points in the class - meaning that each assignment worth 25% of the final grade.

If you click "Yes" and a student receives all 25 points on their first assignment, their running total would be 100% - they have the maximum number of points possible for the assignments completed, hence 100%.

If you click "No" the student will see that they have 25% - as they have 25 points of the possible 100 for the course.

Include this Column in the Grade Center Calculations: This may be the only weighted column you would like to use in your course, and if that's the case, you would want to select "No" for this option. If, however, you're using more than one weighted column for assignments, you may want to select "Yes" for this option. If you have questions about how to structure the Grade Center for your course, please do not hesitate to contact CELT for further support.

Show this Column to Students: This allows you the ability to turn the visibility of this column on or off.

Show Statistics for this column to Students: You can allow students to see the statistics for this column - average and media scores - by clicking "Yes."

Submit

Once everything looks like it's in order, click "Submit" on the bottom of the page to save your changes.