

Blackboard Grade Center Overview

INTRODUCTION

When setting up the Blackboard Grade Center, you must first decide how you would like all grades to be calculated for an overall final grade. Blackboard allows for either a points-based system or a percentage-based system. Each of those systems are described below.

Points-Based

In a points-based Grade Center, every gradable item is given a point value. The final grade is determined by adding up all of the points awarded and dividing by the total number of points possible. The weight (importance) of a gradable item is set by the number of points it is worth. For example a 50 point quiz is weighted twice as heavily as a 25 point quiz.

Percentage-Based

The percentage-based Grade Center uses assigned categories to determine the weight of gradable items rather than total points possible. Gradable items are grouped together in these categories and the category as a whole is given a weighted percentage of the final calculated grade. The sum of all of the categories is 100%.

VIEWS OF THE GRADE CENTER

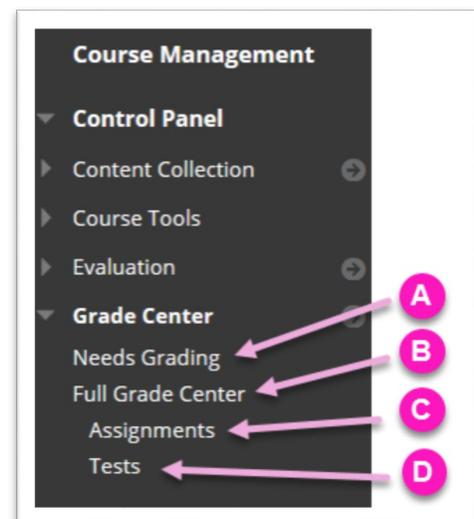
The Grade Center can be accessed through the Control Panel under Course Management on the left side of the Blackboard screen. There are several ways to view the Grade Center. Each of which is described below.

Needs Grading (A): The Needs Grading view will quickly bring you to only the items with student submission ready for grading or review.

Full Grade Center (B): The Full Grade Center option will give you access to all of the columns and rows in the Grade Center. This view will also allow you to add columns, create calculations, and perform other Grade Center functions.

Assignments (C): The Assignments link will filter only those columns that have been assigned to the “Assignment” category in the Grade Center.

Tests (D): The Tests link will filter only those columns that have been assigned to the “Test” category in the Grade Center.



COMPONENTS OF THE FULL GRADE CENTER

As noted above, the Full Grade Center view in Blackboard will display all columns and rows in the Grade Center. It is also in the Full Grade Center where you will be creating manually graded columns, managing gradable item categories, and performing calculations. Several of the key components of the Full Grade Center are labelled and described below.

The screenshot shows the Blackboard Full Grade Center interface. At the top, there is a title bar with the text "Grade Center : Full Grade Center" and a subtitle "The Full Grade Center displays all columns and rows in the Grade Center and is the default view of the Grade Center. More Help". Below this is an action bar (A) containing buttons for "Create Column", "Create Calculated Column", "Manage", and "Reports", along with "Filter" and "Work Offline" options. A "Grade Information Bar" (B) is located below the action bar, displaying "Possible: 100 | Homework | Homework 1 | 0 / 5 students have submitted. 0 attempts need grading." and "Last Saved: June 18, 2019 2:55 PM". The main grid (C) is a spreadsheet with columns for "LAST NAME", "FIRST NAME", "USERNAME", "LAST ACCESS", "WEIGHTED TOTAL", "TOTAL", "HOMEWORK 1", "HOMEWORK 2", and "QUIZ 1". The grid contains data for five students: Price Deena, Teststudent Carrie, Doe Jane, Demo John, and Teststudent Millie. An "Icon Legend" (D) is open on the right side of the grid, showing various status icons and their meanings. At the bottom of the grid, there is an "Edit Rows Displayed" button (E) and an "Icon Legend" button. A "Full Screen" button (F) is located in the top right corner of the interface.

Action bar (A): Contains functions and drop-down lists specific to the Grade Center. From the Action Bar, you can create/manage columns and categories, filter the Grade Center view, and download student grades.

Grade Information Bar (B): Displays information about a selected column, such as type of gradable item and points possible. Point to a Grade Center column title and details appear in the area preceding the grid and following the action bar. In this same row, you can view when data was last saved.

Grid/spreadsheet (C): Columns, rows, and cells that make up the current view of the Grade Center data.

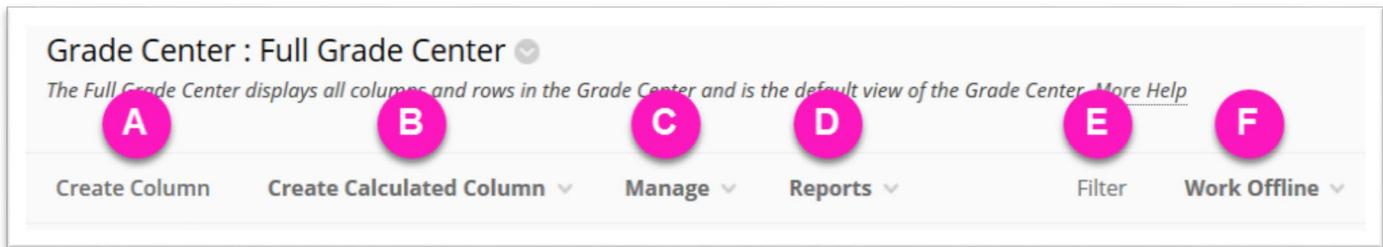
Icon Legend (D): Click on the Icon Legend button to display explanations of the symbols used in the cells.

Edit Rows Displayed (E): You can change the number of rows appearing in the grid. In the box, type a number between 5 and 50, and click **Go**.

Full Screen (F): Click on this button to display the Grade Center in Full Screen mode.

THE GRADE CENTER ACTION BAR

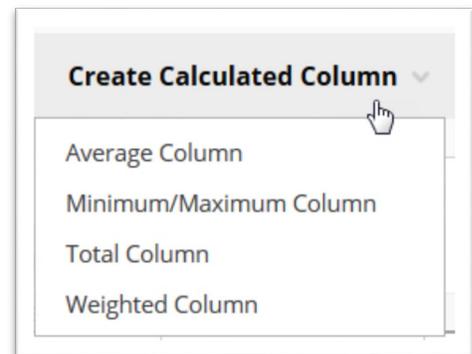
You can perform many actions in the Grade Center using the functions appearing on the action bar.



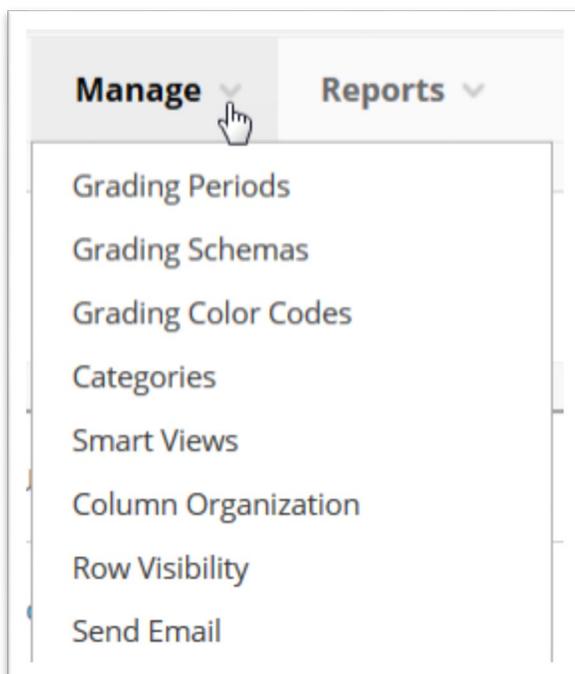
Below is a description of each of the options in the Action Bar. Several of the descriptions also contain additional information for the sub items located on the contextual menu for the option (indicated by the chevron to the right of the option name.)

Create Column (A): Click to manually create a grade column. Note: When you create graded activities within the course, a grade column is automatically generated. *The "Create Column" is generally used for graded activities that occur outside of Blackboard and need their grades manually entered into the Grade Center.*

Create Calculated Column (B): Access a drop-down list with options for creating calculated columns. If you prefer to use a Percentage-Based Grade Center, this is where you would create a Weighted column. You can also create an Average, a Min/Max, or a Total Column.



Manage (C): Access the drop-down list with options for managing the Grade Center:



- **Grading Periods:** A set of Grade Center columns that have been grouped based on a shared characteristic, such as a period of time.
- **Grading Schemas:** A grading schema takes the actual points scored on a graded item and compares it to the total points possible for that item to derive a percentage. This percentage is mapped to a range of scores for grade displays, such as A, B, and C or Pass/Fail.
- **Grading Color Codes:** User-defined rules to apply color to the cells in the Grade Center grid, either by grade or status. Color coding the Grade Center provides visual indicators to help you interpret information quickly.
- **Categories:** Classifications of columns containing similar items, such as "Tests" or "Assignments," used to organize and view Grade Center data.

- **Smart Views:** Custom made views of Grade Center data created by instructors and saved for continued use.
- **Column Organization:** Page displaying a table view of the Grade Center with functions to change the order and visibility of columns. From this page, you can also assign columns to grading periods and categories. Changes you make on this page are for your view of the Grade Center only and do not change which columns appear to students in **My Grades**.
- **Row Visibility:** You can hide user rows to reduce the number of rows in the Grade Center grid and help you focus on specific data.
- **Send Email:** This option will allow you to send an email to an email address outside of Blackboard.
Please Note: This function is not tied to the Course Messages tool in Blackboard and the message will not be save within the course.

Reports (D): Create reports from Grade Center data and access the grade history for all students.

Filter (E): To narrow your view of the Grade Center data, click **Filter** to expand the field and select an option from the following drop-down lists. In some instances, you can make another selection in an additional drop-down list to further narrow the columns and users that appear in the grid.

Work Offline (F): Access features that allow you to work with Grade Center data outside of Blackboard Learn. Use this option for downloading grades.

CONTEXTUAL MENU OPTIONS FOR COLUMNS

Each column's contextual menu displays options that are available and specific for that column. To bring up the contextual menu for a column, click the chevron to the right of the column name. Below we highlight some of the more commonly used options as the menu changes based on the type of column selected. Note: Some of the options described below do not appear in the screenshot to the right as they pertain to a different type of column.

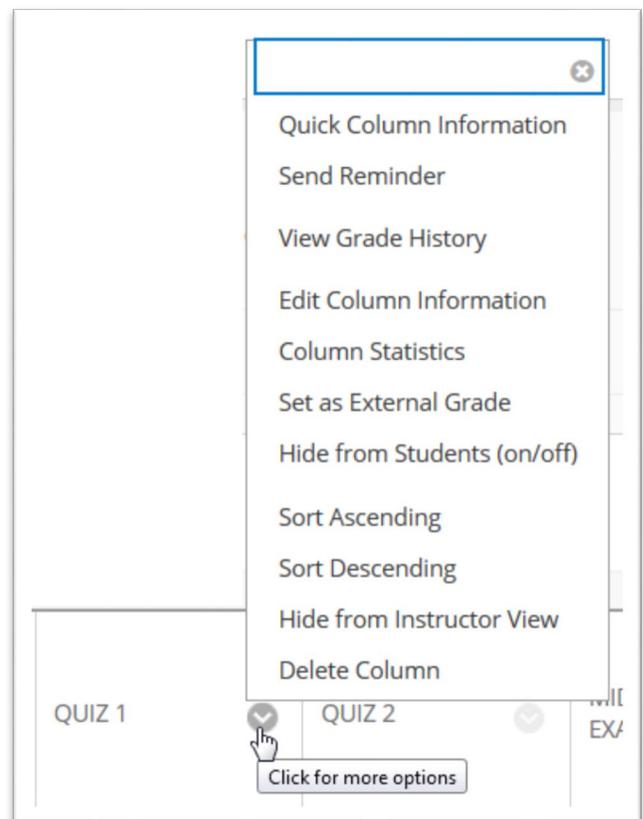
Quick Column Information: Displays information about the column in a pop-up window.

Send Reminder: Will send an email reminder to students who have no grade entered for the column. The reminder will go to the student's SUNY Broome Gmail.

Grade Attempts: Provide a grade for an attempt made for this item.

Download Results: Allows you to download Grade Center data for this column as a delimited file that is used in other applications, such as spreadsheet programs or statistical analysis programs.

View All Attempts: Displays all attempts for a test. From this page, you can grade the attempts, grade them anonymously, or grade by question.



Edit Column Information: Allows you to edit the settings of a column including the preferred grade display, category, and other options.

Column Statistics: Displays the **Column Statistics** page for this column. The following appears: Column details, status distribution, grade distribution, and basic statistics, such as range, average, median, and variance.

Set as External Grade: We do not use this designation at SUNY Broome, however, Blackboard requires that one column be marked as the External Grade. Instructors typically leave either the Total or Weighted Total columns set as the External Grade.

Hide from Students (on/off): Hide this column from students. If you hide the column, the column remains in the Grade Center grid, but your students will not see it in **My Grades**. In the grid, the **Column Not Visible to Users** icon (🚫) appears in the column header for any column hidden from students. Click again to show the column to users.

Clear Attempts for All Users: Displays a separate window for clearing attempts for all users. You can clear attempts based on criteria or a date range.

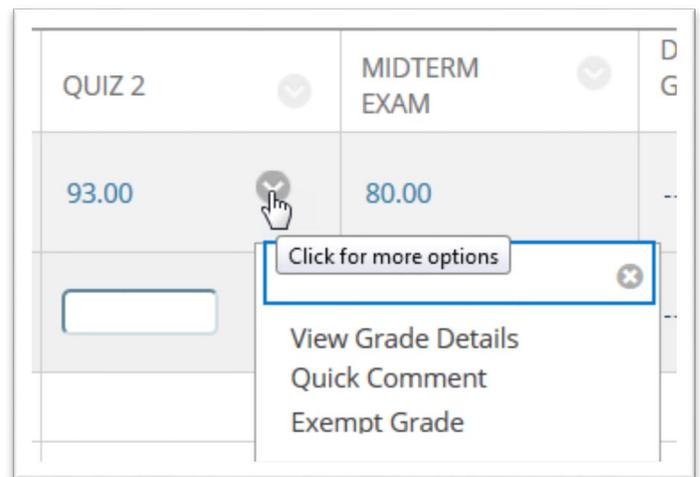
Sort Ascending: Display the items in the column in an ascending order.

Sort Descending: Display the items in the column in a descending order.

Hide from Instructor View: Hides the column from your view in the Grade Center. To re-show the column, point to **Manage** on the action bar to access the drop-down list and select **Column Organization**.

CONTEXTUAL MENU OPTIONS FOR CELLS

To see the contextual menu for a cell in the Grade Center grid, move your mouse pointer over the cell and click the chevron to the right of the cell. From this menu, you have options for viewing and changing a user's grade on an assignment.



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