

# Blackboard

Grade Center

## Grade Center Planning

This document will step you through a points based and a weights based grade center.

### *Understanding Your Grade Center*

When Blackboard Courses are created, the columns below are created by default. Some columns you can delete and some you can hide from your view. You will be able to see the full column name.

#### To access the Grade Center:

1. Navigate to <https://blackboard.towson.edu>
2. Log in with your TU **NetID and Password**
3. Enter the desired course
4. On the left hand menu, under **Control Panel**, click on **Grade Center**
5. Click on **Full Grade Center**

Grade Information Bar				Sort Columns By: Layout Position		Order: ▲Ascending		
<input type="checkbox"/>	LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	USERNAME	STUDENT ID	LAST ACCESS	AVAILABILITY	WEIGHTED TOTAL	TOTAL
<input type="checkbox"/>	Green	Aimee	aimeegreen	0482783		Available	--	--

Figure 1

### Default Layout

**Create Column** – create a graded item that is not a Blackboard tool (an assignment that was given outside the Blackboard environment, i.e. an in-class quiz or a paper turned in face to face)

**Create Calculated Column** – create a calculated column. Calculated columns combine data from multiple columns to attain performance results

**Manage** – most commonly used features:

Smart Views – used to separate students by section or group

Categories – used in weighted grades

Column Organization – allows you to see all columns in your course, reorder them, and show, hide, or delete columns from the course

**Reports** – grade center history, individual student reports, and student submission receipts

**Work Offline** – allows you to download your grade center to Excel or upload your Excel document into your grade center

**Expand button** – multi-directional arrow in the top right corner of the grade center. Clicking this allows you to work in full screen mode, allowing more columns and rows to be visible at once.

## Default Columns

**Last name** – student’s last name

**First name** – student’s first name

**Username** – student’s username

**Student ID** – student’s TU ID number

**Last Access** – date the student last accessed your specific course

**Availability** – if the student is available or unavailable in the course

**Weighted Total** – used to configure weighted total for the course

**Total** – sum of points a student has in the course

***Please Note:** The columns listed above cannot be deleted. To hide unwanted columns from your view, click the drop down arrow next to the column name and select **Hide from Instructor View***

## *Grading by Total Points or Weighted Total*

Blackboard allows you to calculate grades via total points or assign weights to specific columns or categories.

### Total Points

When calculating by total points, your grade center will equal a preset amount of points. The total points in your grade center should match what you have in your course syllabus.

### Weighted Total

When calculating by weighted total, you can weight by category or by individual column. Weighting by category allows you to have multiple columns in one category (i.e. multiple quizzes in a “Quizzes” category). Categories also have a “drop lowest score” feature. Weighted by individual column allows the instructor to give individual points for the item, but then select a percentage value for that item in the final grade.

## *Setting Up the Grade Center*

When setting up your grade center, you will want to have all of your graded items added to the grade center first. It is important to understand that graded tools in Blackboard (Assignments, Tests, Discussion Boards, Blogs, Wikis, and Journals) will automatically add columns to your grade center. If you are grading items that are not a graded Blackboard tool, you will need to create a column for them in the grade center.

### Creating Manual Columns

As mentioned above, if you are not using a graded Blackboard tool, you will need to manually create columns in your grade center.

1. Enter your **Full Grade Center**
2. Click on **Create Column** in the top menu
3. Enter the **Column Name**
4. The **Grade Center name** is not needed. Only you will see this name
5. **Description** is not needed

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6. **Primary Display** should be score
7. **Secondary Display** is not needed. Only you can see the secondary display
8. Select a **Category** if you are weighted your grade center
9. You must enter **Points Possible**
10. You may add a **rubric**, but it is not needed
11. **Due Date** is not needed
12. Leave **Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations** set to Yes
13. **Show this column to students** should be set to Yes
14. **Show Statistics** should always be set to No

### *Grading by Points*

Once all of your columns are created, your Total column will show how many points the entire class is out of. As you add grades to each column, the total points will automatically be calculated in the Total column. You may choose to delete the automatically created Weighted Total column, since you are not weighting grades.

It is important to make sure you enter a grade of 0 for any assignment not submitted. If you do not, the missing assignment will not count for the student, so their final grade will be calculated out of less total points.

For example:

Class is worth 100 points overall and a student misses one assignment worth 10 points. Instead of the points possible for this student being 100 points, the student can only earn a 90/90. If you give them a 0 instead of leaving the column empty, the student will only be able to earn a 90/100.

### *Grading by Weighted Total*

It is important your grade center is set up first with all of the graded columns. See “Setting Up the Grade Center” before continuing on.

### **Adding Categories**

You will first need to add categories to your grade center columns if you haven’t already.

1. Enter the **Full Grade Center**
2. Click on **Manage** on the top bar
3. Select **Categories**. You will see that some categories already exist. These categories are graded Blackboard Tools. Notice that any graded Blackboard Tool you’ve created is already associated with the corresponding category. If you do not need to create any new categories, click **OK** to return to the full grade center.
4. Click **Create Category** to add a new category that is not a graded Blackboard Tools
5. Give the category a **Name** and click **Submit**

### **Assigning Categories**

Once categories have been created, you need to assign each column a category.

6. Enter the **Full Grade Center**
7. Click on **Manage**

8. Select **Column Organization**
9. You will now see all of your grade center columns. You can use the four headed arrows to move your columns to a different order. To assign a category to a column, select the column by clicking the **check box** to the left of the column name. Then, mouse over the **Categories** button at the top or bottom, and select the category. If you are assigning one category to multiple columns, you can select more than one column at a time. Once all categories are assigned, click **Submit**.

### Assigning Weights to Categories and Columns

10. Enter the **Full Grade Center**
11. Mouse over the **Weighted Column** and click on the drop down arrow
12. Select **Edit Column Information**
13. Scroll down to the **Selected Columns** area
14. Under **Categories to Select**, choose your categories and click the arrow at the right to move them into the **Selected Columns** box. If you are weighting individual columns, you can move the individual columns from the **Columns to Select** box in the same way. You can weight both categories and columns at the same time.
15. Once you have moved over all the necessary columns or categories, click in the **Percentage** box and add the percent of the final grade for the corresponding column or category
16. At this time, if you want to **drop the lowest score** for an item in this category, type in how many grades should be dropped
17. Your **Percentage** is shown at the bottom. It should equal 100%. You may need to click outside the percentage box in order for it to fully calculate.
18. Click **Submit**
19. Your weighted total column should now reflect the new weighted grade total. This column may be empty until you start entering grades for the students.