

Five Steps to Setting Up the Blackboard Grade Center

Pre-Step: Have the content area built out with the graded items that will be used for the term (graded items can be added after setting up the gradebook – just don't forget to verify it ends up in the correct category).

Step 1: Points or Percentages

There are two final grade columns provided by default; **Total for points gradebooks** and **Weighted Total for percentage gradebooks**. Total is the preset external grade (green check mark icon).

If you are **creating a percentage gradebook** click the contextual menu to the right of the column title and choose *Set as External Grade* then delete the Total column (click the contextual menu to the right of the column title and choose *Delete Column*).

If you are **creating a point based gradebook** delete the Weighted Total column (click the contextual menu to the right of the column title and choose *Delete*).

Step 2: Verify Categories

Blackboard has seven default categories it automatically assigns graded items to as you build. You can add any categories that you need and it is very easy to reassign items to the new categories in bulk.

To add Categories go to the Full Grade Center and choose *Manage* and then *Categories*. Use the *Create Category* button to add any categories that are needed.

Step 3: Add Manually Graded Items (OPTIONAL)

Once you have all the possible categories that you might need you will want to create grade columns for any items that are manually submitted/graded and do not have a digital representation in the course content area.

To create a manually graded item go to the Full Grade Center and choose *Create Column*; enter the column name, assign the primary display, assign the category, assign the points possible value, and assign a due date (if needed for the item to appear on the calendar).

Create a manually graded column for all items that you will need throughout the term that are not already in the grade book.

Step 4: Arrange Items in Categories

Now that all the categories are verified it's time to check and make sure the graded items you created are in the correct category.

The easiest way to verify is to go to the Full Grade Center and choose *Manage* and then *Column Organization*. Scroll down to the lower section that displays all the graded items in the Grade book.

Here you can sort by category (or any other column header) then select the checkbox for each item you want to change to a specific category then use the *Change Category To* button to set the new category.

Step 5: Setup Details for Final Grade Column

Lastly, setup the math for your final grade column.

If you are using the **Total** column click the contextual menu to the right of the column title and choose *Edit Column Information*. Under *Select Columns* decide if you will use all columns in the grade book or just a certain set and then decide if you want to use a running total.

If you are using the **Weighted Total** column click the contextual menu to the right of the column title and choose *Edit Column Information*. Under *Select Columns* move to the right any specific items or categories that are needed and enter their weight as part of the 100% overall course total; then decide if you want to use a running total.

NOTE: Running Total. *Yes* - is like having an A at the start of the term, the instructor enters zeros for all missed items. *No* - is like having an F at the start of the term, zeros are assumed for all items (including future items) and are replaced once the student's submission is graded.

Step 6: Verify Default Grading Schema (OPTIONAL)

Your college has set a default grading schema, named **Letter**. To view the schema go to the Full Grade Center and choose *Manage* and then *Grading Schemas*. Point to the title **Letter** then click the contextual menu and choose *Edit*. Scroll to schema mapping to view details.

NOTE: Keep in mind that if you add a graded item it will auto assign to one of the seven default categories. If it needs to go into another category you will need to go into the Grade Center and reassign the category (*similar to Step 4*).