

The Center for Teaching, Learning, & Technology

Instructional Technology Workshops



**Blackboard 9.1 SP 13
Grade Center**

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THE GRADE CENTER INTERFACE

The Grade Center resembles a spreadsheet. Each row is populated by a user in your course and each column includes information for an item, such as an assignment, test, graded blog entry, or survey. You can also use columns to calculate grades. You can provide grades and comments directly on the Grade Center page, on the **Grade Details** page, and from a tool, such as the discussion board.

You are able to customize your view of the Grade Center and create grading schemas, grading periods, categories, and columns to present and gather the information you need.

Grade Center : Full Grade Center ▼

Create Column
Create Calculated Column ▼
Manage ▼
Reports ▼

Filter
Discover Content
Work Offline ▼

Move To Top
Email ▼
Sort Columns By: Layout Position ▼
Order: ▲Ascending ▼

Grade Information Bar
Possible: 50 | Discussion | Wave Assignment: Energy
Last Saved: January 17, 2013 12:57 AM

	Last Name ▼	First Name ▼	✔ Total	Weighted Total ▼	Participation ▼	Chapter 1 Wor ▼
<input type="checkbox"/>	Akbar	Mina	118.00	--	24.00	29.00 !
<input type="checkbox"/>	Brown	Tony	104.50	--	22.00	!
<input type="checkbox"/>	Casper	Chris	174.00	--	21.00	28.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dubois	Alyssa	66.00	--	--	26.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Farrell	Andy	25.00	--	--	--
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gonzales	Monica	50.00	--	--	--
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hernandez	Juan	20.00	--	--	!

GRADE CENTER INTERACTIONS WITH OTHER TOOLS AND COMPONENTS

The Grade Center interacts with several tools and components in Blackboard Learn. Understanding how and where these interactions happen provides a comprehensive view of the Grade Center and helps users take full advantage of this tool.

The following table explains how the Grade Center interacts with other tools and components.

Tool/Component	Interaction
Course Content	<p>When you create gradable items in your course, such as gradable journals, blogs, wikis, discussion posts, tests, and assignments, a grade column is created automatically in the Grade Center.</p> <p>For example, when you create a journal, you can select the grading option. A grade column is created automatically in the Grade Center with the name of the journal.</p>
Retention Center	<p>The Retention Center provides an easy way for you to discover which students in your course are at risk. Based on preconfigured rules and rules you create, students' engagement and participation are visually displayed, quickly alerting you to potential risk. From the Retention Center, you can communicate with struggling students and help them take immediate action for improvement.</p> <p>For example, you can create a rule to list students who score below 60 percent on an exam. Then, you can send an email to each student to offer help or set a meeting time.</p> <p>Your institution controls whether this tool is available.</p>
Observers	<p>Observers can log in and access their observed students' released grades. Examples of observers might include a student's parents or guardians, or a tutor.</p> <p>Your institution controls observer access. If allowed institution-wide, you can determine observer access on a course-by-course basis.</p>
My Grades	<p>Students view their course grades in My Grades. Grades are available by default, but you may choose to make a grade or grades unavailable in the settings for each column.</p>
Report Card module	<p>Students can include the Report Card module on their My Institution tabs. The module displays each course's external grade in the Grade Center. The external grade is the grade column chosen by an instructor to use for the final grade, such as the total column. External grades are shared with your institution to report students' grades for your course.</p> <p>Your institution controls which modules are available to select from.</p>

Tool/Component	Interaction
Performance Dashboard	The Performance Dashboard tool provides an up-to-date report with pertinent information about all users and their progress and activity in your course. Your institution controls whether this tool is available.
Email tool	You can use the email tool in the Grade Center to send messages to students and, if applicable, their observers.
External data from other grading systems	You can export and import data to the Grade Center by uploading and downloading delimited files.

ACCESSING THE GRADE CENTER

You access the Grade Center from the **Control Panel**. Expand the **Grade Center** section to display the links to the **Needs Grading** page, the **Full Grade Center**, and the **Smart Views**. Click the right-pointing arrow next to the **Grade Center** heading to go directly to the **Full Grade Center**.

The screenshot displays the Blackboard interface. On the left is the 'COURSE MANAGEMENT' sidebar with a 'Control Panel' section. Under 'Control Panel', 'Grade Center' is expanded, and a right-pointing arrow is visible next to its heading. The main area shows the 'Grade Center : Full Grade Center' view. At the top, there are buttons for 'Create Column', 'Create Calculated Column', 'Manage', and 'Reports'. Below these are 'Filter', 'Discover Content', and 'Work Offline'. A 'Grade Information Bar' shows 'Last Saved: January 17, 2013 12:57 AM'. The main table has the following data:

Last Name	First Name	Total	Weighted Total	Participation	Chapter 1 Work
Akbar	Mina	118.00	--	24.00	29.00
Brown	Tony	104.50	--	22.00	29.00
Casper	Chris	174.00	--	21.00	28.00
Dubois	Alyssa	66.00	--	--	26.00
Farrell	Andy	25.00	--	--	--
Gonzales	Monica	50.00	--	--	--

The **Needs Grading** link allows you to view individual assignment, group assignment, and test attempts, as well as blog and journal entries, wiki page saves, and discussion posts ready for grading or review.

The **Full Grade Center** link displays all columns and rows in the Grade Center and is the default view of the Grade Center.

The smart view links appear as an indented list in the **Full Grade Center** section. A smart view is a focused look at the Grade Center and shows only the data that matches a set of criteria. You can use smart views to quickly find data when the Grade Center includes a great number of students and columns. For example, the default **Tests** smart view displays only test columns. You can create customized smart views and remove unneeded smart views. Click a smart view link to open the Grade Center using that view.

THE NEEDS GRADING PAGE

You can view individual assignment, group assignment, and test attempts, as well as blog and journal entries, wiki page saves, and discussion posts ready for grading or review on the **Needs Grading** page. For courses with many enrolled students and gradable items, you can use the information and functions on the **Needs Grading** page to determine and organize your grading tasks. If you have a designated turnaround time set for all gradable items, the **Needs Grading** page allows you to customize the view of items with a needs grading status. You can sort and filter the list, allowing you to grade the most urgent items first. For example, you can sort by due date to ensure your final tests are graded by your institution's deadline.

The **Needs Grading** page also displays attempts for SafeAssignments.

Access the **Needs Grading** page in the **Grade Center** section of the **Control Panel**.



The 'Needs Grading' page interface includes a 'Grade All' button (A), a 'Filter' button (C), a summary of '12 total items to grade' (D), a table of items with columns for Category, Item Name, User Attempt, Date Submitted (B), and Due Date, a context menu for a row with options like 'Grade All Users (3)' and 'Grade Anonymously (3)' (E), and a 'Show All' button (F) at the bottom right.

Category	Item Name	User Attempt	Date Submitted	Due Date
Discussion	Wave Assignment: Energy From Waves and Tides	Sarah Spooner	June 20, 2012 5:15:52 PM	
Discussion	Wave Assignment: Energy From Waves and Tides	Henry Wagner	June 21, 2012 10:38:15 AM	
Discussion	Wave Assignment: Energy From Waves and Tides	Ryan Johnson	June 21, 2012 3:36:39 PM	
Discussion	Wave Assignment: Energy From Waves and Tides	Monica Gonzales	June 22, 2012 10:04:40 AM	
Assignment	Monday Night Moon Viewing	Bruce Lopez	June 22, 2012 5:14:03 PM	
Assignment	Monday Night Moon Viewing	Cott	June 22, 2012 5:24:12 PM	
Assignment	Monday Night Moon Viewing	pooper	June 22, 2012 5:27:48 PM	
Test	Unit 1 Quiz	Mark Tsai	June 17, 2012 4:55:33 PM	
Test	Unit 1 Quiz	Javier Perez	June 17, 2012 7:14:02 PM	
Test	Unit 1 Quiz	Tony Brown	June 21, 2012 7:44:03 PM	
Test	Unit 1 Quiz	Porter Durand	June 21, 2012 8:12:05 PM	
Test	Unit 1 Quiz	Henry Wagner	June 22, 2012 10:12:40 AM	

- A. Click **Grade All** on the action bar to begin grading and reviewing immediately. The **Grade All** function places all attempts in a queue for easy navigation among items. The items in the queue appear in the order they appear on the **Needs Grading** page.

Tests with a grading status of **Attempt in Progress** do not appear on the **Needs Grading** page.

- B. Sort columns to organize your list. To sort a column, click the column heading or caret. The sorted list remains in effect until you change it or log out. The following columns appear on the **Needs Grading** page:

- **Category:** Sort attempts to group all assignments or tests together.
- **Item Name:** Sort attempts by alphabetical order or reverse alphabetical order.
- **User Attempt:** Sort attempts by a student's name. The number of attempts for the item is listed in parentheses. For example: "Mary Johnson (Attempt 1 of 2)." Click a user's name to go directly to the attempt.
- **Date Submitted:** Sort attempts by the date and time students submitted the attempts. You may find this useful when a large number of attempts must be graded by a specific deadline.
- **Due Date:** If you provided a due date when the item was created, sort attempts by due date and grade items that are due first.

- C. Apply filters to narrow the list by **Category, Item, User, and Date Submitted**. If you apply a filter, only the filtered items appear in the list and in the queue. For example, make selections in both the **Category** and **User** drop-down lists to display tests submitted by a particular user. Click **Go** to display the filtered items on the **Needs Grading** page. The filtered list remains in effect until you edit the filter choices or log out. Click the **X** to collapse the **Filter** field.

- D. The total number of items to grade appears above the list of items. After you grade attempts, they do not appear on the **Needs Grading** page and the number of items updates to reflect the current number that needs to be graded. If you filter the list, the number reflects how many items match the current filter settings. For example, "12 of 17 total items match current filter."

- E. Access an item's contextual menu and make a selection. For assignments, you can select **Grade All Users** or **Grade Anonymously**. For tests, you can also select **Grade by Question** and **View Attempts**. Interactive items such as blogs, journals, wikis, and discussion posts, which can be set to go into needs grading status after a certain number of activities, also have the option to **Reset All**, which clears that activity counter and moves the item out of Needs Grading status. A total number of attempts for the selected item is listed in parentheses. For interactive tools such as blogs, journals, wikis, and discussions, you can determine how many entries or posts users must make before an item goes into needs grading status. For these items, you can **Reset All** to clear the activity counter and move the item out of needs grading status. The total number of attempts for the selected item is listed in parentheses.

- F. Click **Show All** to display up to 1,000 items on one page. Click **Edit Paging** to change the number of items to view per page.

THE GRADE CENTER INTERFACE

The Grade Center consists of rows and columns of student information and gradable items. Cells in the grid contain data specific to corresponding students.

The appearance of the Grade Center is completely configurable.

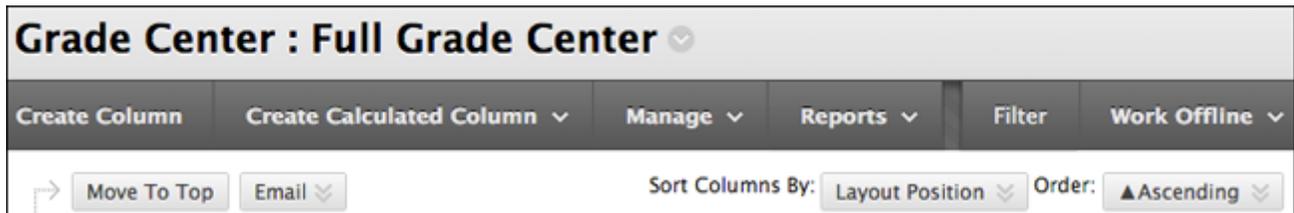
The screenshot shows the 'Grade Center : Full Grade Center' interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with buttons for 'Create Column', 'Create Calculated Column', 'Manage', and 'Reports'. Below this is a secondary bar with 'Filter', 'Discover Content', and 'Work Offline'. The main area features a 'Grade Information Bar' with 'Possible: 50 | Discussion | Wave Assignment: Energy' and a 'Last Saved' timestamp. A table with columns for 'Last Name', 'First Name', 'Total', 'Weighted Total', 'Participation', and 'Chapter 1 Wor' displays student data. A vertical scroll bar is on the right, and a horizontal scroll bar is at the bottom. Callouts A-F point to the top navigation bar, the Grade Information Bar, the table grid, the vertical scroll bar, the 'Icon Legend' button, and the 'Edit Rows Displayed' input field, respectively.

Last Name	First Name	Total	Weighted Total	Participation	Chapter 1 Wor
Akbar	Mina	118.00	--	24.00	29.00
Brown	Tony	104.50	--	22.00	!
Casper	Chris	174.00	--	21.00	28.00
Dubois	Alyssa	66.00	--	--	26.00
Farrell	Andy	25.00	--	--	--
Gonzales	Monica	50.00	--	--	--
Hernandez	Juan	20.00	--	--	!
Katril	Sunil	--	--	--	--
Lopez	Bruce	50.00	--	--	--
Lucern	Leo	--	--	--	--

- A. **Action bar:** Rows preceding the grid information containing functions and drop-down lists specific to the current page, such as **Create Column, Manage, Filter, Email, Sort Columns By,** and **Order.**
- B. **Grade Information Bar:** Information about a selected column, such as type of grade 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.
- C. **Grid/spreadsheet:** Columns, rows, and cells that make up the current view of the Grade Center data.
- D. **Scroll bars:** Use the horizontal and vertical scroll bars to navigate through the Grade Center columns and rows. When you navigate to another course area and return to the Grade Center, you will see the same rows and columns on the page from the last visit. The view remains in effect until you use the scroll bars again or log out.
- E. **Icon Legend:** Explanation of the symbols used in the columns and cells.
- F. **Edit Rows Displayed:** You can change the number of rows appearing in the grid. In the box, type a number between 5 and 50, and click **Go.**

About the Grade Center Action Bar

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



The following functions appear in the *first row* of the action bar.

- **Create Column:** Click to create a grade column.
- **Create Calculated Column:** Access a drop-down list with options for creating calculated columns.
- **Manage:** Access the drop-down list with options for managing the Grade Center. The options include:
 - **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:** The **Send Email** page appears.
- **Reports:** Create reports from Grade Center data and access the grade history for all students.
- **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. For example, after selecting the **Assignment** category, you can select the **Needs Grading** status and only view the columns and users containing assignments that need to be graded. The category or status you choose to view in the grid remains in effect until you change it or log out.

Click the **X** to close the **Filter** field.

- **Current View:** Includes the **Full Grade Center** view, **Smart Views**, and **Grading Periods**. You can select one of the views to use as the default view by clicking the **Set Current View as Default** icon next to the **Current View** drop-down list. When you log out and return to your course later and click the right-pointing arrow in the **Grade Center** section of the **Control Panel** to access the Grade Center, the view you selected as the default appears in the grid. You can select other views from the **Current View** drop-down list at any time.
- **Category:** Includes all default categories and any you have created.
- **Status:** Includes the following grading statuses:
 - **All Statuses**
 - **Completed**
 - **Edited Manually**
 - **Exempt**
 - **In progress**
 - **Needs Grading**
 - **Not attempted**



Work Offline: Access features that allow you to work with Grade Center data outside of Blackboard Learn.

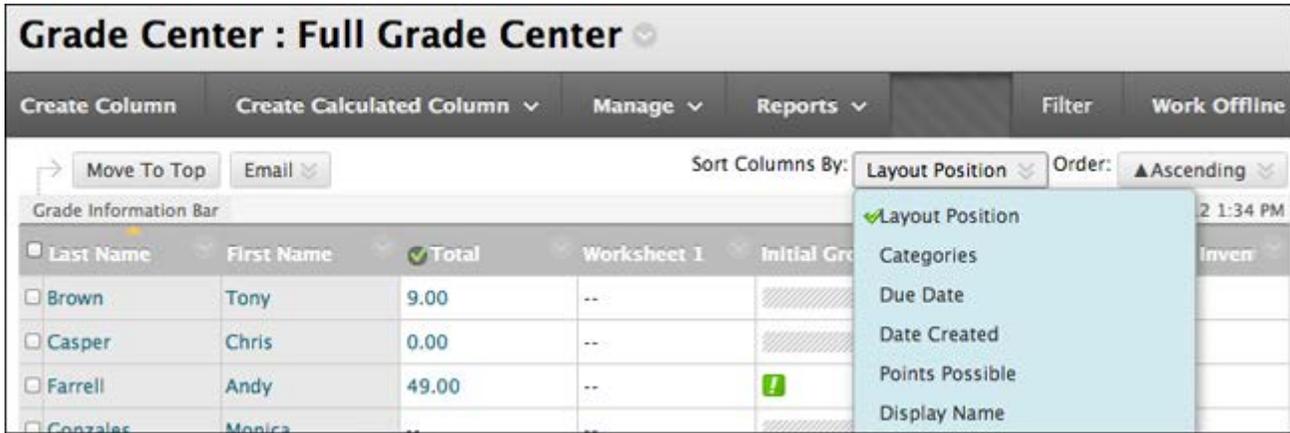
The following functions appear in the **second row** of the action bar.

- **Move to Top:** Select one or multiple check boxes for users and click **Move to Top** to move the rows to the first positions in the grid.
- **Email:** Select one or multiple check boxes for users and click **Email** to display the options of sending to users, observers, or users and observers. After selecting an option, the **Send Email** page appears.
- **Sort Columns By:** Access a drop-down list that allows you to sort the Grade Center items. You can sort by:
 - **Layout Position** (default)
 - **Categories**
 - **Due Date**

- **Date Created**
- **Points Possible**
- **Display Name**

Order: Sort the data in **Ascending** or **Descending** order.

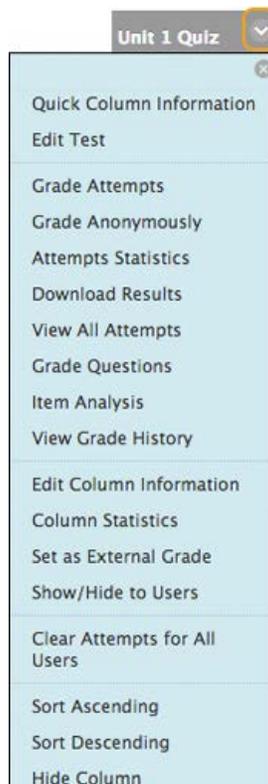
The view remains in effect until you sort columns again or log out.



ACCESSING GRADE CENTER MENUS USING ACTION LINKS

Throughout Blackboard Learn, items that are acted upon by users have contextual menus associated with them. A contextual menu displays options that are available and specific for that item.

In the Grade Center, all cells and column headers have a contextual menu. For example, a test column's contextual menu includes options for **Column Statistics** and **Grade Questions**. For a non-grade column, such as **First Name**, you only have the options of hiding the column and sorting the cells. If an option does not appear in the contextual menu, you cannot perform the action on that column, row, or cell.



Contextual Menu Options for Columns

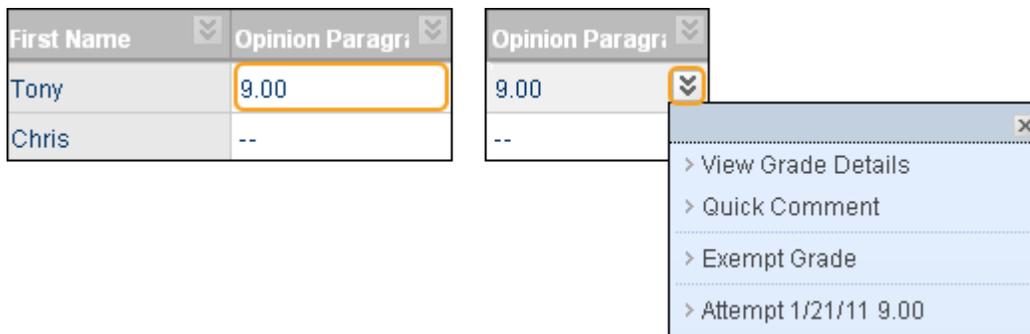
Each column's contextual menu displays options that are available and specific for that column. The following options are just some that may be available.

Option	Description
Quick Column Information	Displays information about the column in a pop-up window.
Grade Attempts	Provide a grade for an attempt made for this item.
Grade Anonymously	Provide grades for this item without knowing the identity of each user.
Item Analysis	Provides statistics on overall test performance and individual test questions. This data helps you recognize questions that might be poor discriminators of student performance. Use this information to improve questions for future test administrations or to adjust credit on current attempts.
Attempts Statistics	Displays the Statistics page for tests and surveys. Each question for a test or survey appears, along with its score information for tests or percent answered for surveys. On the Survey Statistics page, you can view the survey results. The percentage of students who selected each answer appears. You cannot view individual results for surveys.
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 the View All Attempts page for tests. From this page, you can grade the attempts, grade them anonymously, or grade by question.
Grade Questions	Provide grades for all of the responses for a specific question at one time.
Assignment File Download	Allows you to select and download files students have attached to their assignments.
Assignment File Cleanup	Allows you to select and delete the files attached to an assignment.
Edit Column Information	Displays the Edit Column page for this column.
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.

Option	Description
Set as External Grade	The results in the External Grade column are shared with your institution as your students' grades for your course. You decide which column is set as the external grade. In new courses, the default Total column is the default external grade column, and the external grade icon () appears in the column header.
Show/Hide to Users	Show or hide this column from users. 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.
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 Column	Hides the column from view in the Grade Center. To 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. Click the arrow icon to access the contextual menu.



When you access the contextual menu for a user's name cell, you have options to hide a user's row, hide other rows to focus your attention on one row, or email a user. You can view which items are visible to a user based on availability and adaptive release rules or which items a user marked reviewed. You can also view the **User Statistics** page which provides statistical information related to a user's performance.

The screenshot shows the 'User Statistics' page for Tony Brown (tbrown). A context menu is open over the 'View User Statistics' option. The main page displays the following information:

User Statistics

User: Go Show Statistics For: Refresh

User **Tony Brown (tbrown)**

Student Details

User: Tony Brown (tbrown)

Student ID

Contact: Phone (Home), Phone (Work), tbrown@myschool.edu

Items Completed: 21% (6 of 28)

Category Statistics

Category	Average	Graded	In Progress	Needs Grading	Exempt
Test	30.00%	1	-	1	-
Assignment	99.00%	1	-	1	-
Survey	0%	1	-	-	-
Discussion	8.00%	1	-	-	-
Journal	0%	-	-	-	-
Blog	0%	-	-	-	-
Wikis	0%	-	-	-	-
Self and Peer	0%	-	-	-	-

HOW TO CREATE GRADE COLUMNS

If a grade column is not created automatically, you can create grade columns for any student work you want to grade. For example, you can create a column to record participation grades.

	Last Name	First Name	Participation	Chapter 1 Tes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Akbar	Mina	24.00	-
<input type="checkbox"/>	Brown	Tony	22.00	50.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Casper	Chris	19.00	40.00

In the preceding image, two grade columns are shown:

- Participation: Created manually by an instructor to record participation grades.
- Chapter 1 Test: Created automatically by the system when an instructor created and deployed the test.

The data in the "Participation" column is populated when an instructor manually assigns the grades. The data in the "Chapter 1 Test" column is populated when students complete their tests and the test is scored automatically by the system. If the test includes questions that an instructor must grade, such as an essay or short answer question, the needs grading icon—the exclamation mark—appears in the students' cells after the tests are submitted.

When you create Grade Center columns, you can do the following:

- Choose how the grade appears. You can display the grades in the Grade Center grid and on students' **My Grades** pages as a score, letter, text, percentage, or as complete/incomplete.

- Associate it with a category and grading period.
- Exclude or include the column in any potential Grade Center calculations, such as when creating a calculated column.
- Determine whether the column’s results appear on students’ **My Grades** pages.

Use the following steps to create a grade column.

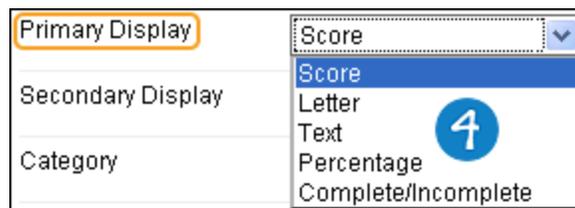
1. In the Grade Center, click **Create Column** on the action bar.
2. On the **Create Grade Column** page, type a brief, descriptive **Column Name**. This name becomes the column name in the Grade Center and on students’ **My Grades** pages. If this name is too long to display clearly in the Grade Center, you can type a short, descriptive name in the **Grade Center Name** box.

Only the first 14-15 characters typed in either name box appear in the column heading in the Grade Center grid. If you point to the column heading, you can see its full name on the **Grade Information Bar**.

3. Optionally, type a **Description**. You can use the content editor functions to format the text. Information provided here appears to students when they click the item name in **My Grades**.
4. Make a selection in the **Primary Display** drop-down list. The selection is the grade format shown in the Grade Center and to students in **My Grades**. If you created any custom grading schemas, they appear in the list. Five default options appear:
 - **Score**: A numeric grade appears in the column. This is the default setting. If you do not make a selection, the score appears in the grid.
 - **Letter**: A letter grade appears in the column. The default grading schema is used to assign letter grades. For example, a score of 21/30 equals 70% and appears as a C.
 - **Text**: Text appears in the column when you create a custom text grading schema. Examples of text values include: Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, and Poor –OR- Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory. If you create no custom text grading schema, and the **Text** option is selected, you are allowed to type text in the column’s cells. If you choose to share the column results with students in **My Grades**, they will see the text values for their grades.

When you convert a numeric score to text without creating a custom text grading schema, and then return to numeric scoring, values that cannot be converted display a zero after conversion. Therefore, if you want to include text as grades, Blackboard recommends creating a custom text grading schema and associating it with the columns.

- **Percentage**: A percentage appears in the column. For example, a score of 21/30 appears as 70%.
- **Complete/Incomplete**: When a student submits an item, a check mark (✓) appears in the column, regardless of the score achieved.



5. Optionally, make a selection in the **Secondary Display** drop-down list. The default setting is **None**. The same options appear except for the option chosen as the **Primary Display** and **Text**. The

default **Text** option does not appear as you cannot edit a secondary value from a column's cell. If you create a customized grading schema based on text and have not used it as the **Primary Display**, it appears in the list. In the Grade Center column, the secondary value appears in parentheses. The secondary value does not appear to students.

The screenshot shows a configuration window for a Grade Center column. The 'Primary Display' dropdown is set to 'Score'. The 'Secondary Display' dropdown is set to '5'. Below these, the 'Category' dropdown is open, showing options: 'None', 'Letter', 'Percentage' (highlighted), and 'Complete/Incomplete'. There is also a 'Points Possible' field with an asterisk icon.

If you choose **Percentage** as the **Primary Display** and type the achieved numeric score into the Grade Center grid directly, the number you type is interpreted as a percentage and not the score. Therefore, if you want the system to calculate percentages when you type a score, select **Score** as the **Primary Display** and select **Percentage** as the **Secondary Display**. Scores you type directly in the grid will display a percentage in parentheses.

- Optionally, you can associate the column with a category by making a selection in the **Category** drop-down list. The default setting is **No Category**. You can use categories to filter Grade Center data, create smart views that focus the view of the Grade Center data, and create calculated columns.

The screenshot shows the 'Category' dropdown menu open. The 'Category' label is highlighted. The dropdown list includes: 'No Category' (selected), 'No Category', 'Assignment' (highlighted), 'Survey', 'Test', 'Discussion', 'Blog', 'Journal', and 'Self and Peer'. A blue circle with the number '6' is overlaid on the 'Test' option.

- In the **Points Possible** box, type the total points. Entries must be numeric.
- If grading periods exist, you can associate the column with a grading period by making a selection in the **Grading Period** drop-down list. If no grading periods exist, the drop-down list does not appear. You can use grading periods to filter Grade Center data and create calculated columns.
- Optionally, select the option next to **Due Date** and type a date (mm/dd/yyyy) or use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar**. Columns that you assigned a due date to are associated automatically with a grading period if the due date falls within the date range of the grading period. The option to automatically associate columns with a grading period is set when creating or editing a grading period. You can use due dates with the Retention Center to generate an alert if a test or assignment is not submitted on time.
- Select the **Options**.
 - Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations:** Select **Yes** to make the column available for potential inclusion when creating calculated columns.
 - Show this Column to Students:** Select **Yes** to display the column to students in **My Grades**.
 - Show Statistics (average and median) for this Column to Students in My Grades:** Select **Yes** to include statistical information with the grade value when shown to students.

When editing the Grade Center column for a test, the options to **Include this Column in Other Grade Center Calculations** and **Show Statistics (average and median) for this Column to Students in My Grades** are not available if you select the option to **Hide Results for this Test Completely from Instructor and the Grade Center** on the **Test Options** page.

11. Click **Submit**.

The screenshot shows the Blackboard Grade Center column settings page. The page is divided into several sections:

- Primary Display:** Score (dropdown)
- Secondary Display:** Percentage (dropdown)
- Category:** No Category (dropdown)
- Points Possible:** 100 (input field) with a blue circle '7' next to it.
- Dates:**
 - Grading Period:** None (dropdown) with a blue circle '8' next to it.
 - Date Created:** Mar 2, 2011
 - Due Date:** None (radio button) or 03/23/2011 (radio button, selected) with a blue circle '9' next to it.
- Options:**
 - Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations:** Yes (radio button, selected) or No (radio button).
 - Show this Column to Students:** Yes (radio button, selected) or No (radio button) with a blue circle '10' next to it.
 - Show Statistics (average and median) for this column to Students in My Grades:** Yes (radio button) or No (radio button, selected).

A calendar pop-up is visible over the Options section, showing the month of March 2011. The date 23 is highlighted in yellow. The text 'Today is: Wednesday, March 2, 2011' is displayed at the bottom of the calendar.

After you create a grade column, you can:

- Associate a rubric with it to make grading easier and less subjective.
- Assign grades.
- Include the column when creating calculated columns.

HOW TO CREATE WEIGHTED COLUMNS

The weighted column is a type of calculated column that generates a grade based on the result of selected columns and categories, and their respective percentages. When you create a weighted column, you can include other calculated columns or other weighted columns. You can change your selections at any time and the calculation updates automatically.

A weighted total column is created by default and appears in new courses. You can rename, change the settings, or delete this default column. The default weighted total column displays no results until you select the columns and categories to include in the calculation.

When you create a weighted column, you can include:

- **All Grade Columns:** Include all individual grade columns in the Grade Center.
- **Selected Columns and Categories:** Include specific grade columns and categories (and the associated columns).
- **Selected Columns from a Grading Period:** If grading periods exist and you have chosen a category, include only the grade columns that have been associated with a specific grading period.

Columns with text as the grade display are not included in a weighted column's calculation. For example, if you set a grade column to display text, such as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory, you cannot use it in calculations.

Simple Weighted Column for First Quarter

You create a weighted column based on two columns and two categories:

- Assignments Category = 25%
- Chapter Quizzes Category = 25%
- Midterm Test = 20%
- Final Test = 30%

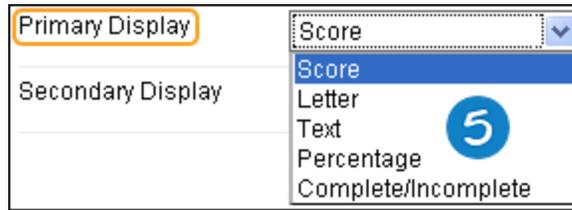
Use the following steps to create a weighted column.

1. In the Grade Center, point to **Create Calculated Column** on the action bar to access the drop-down list.
2. Select **Weighted Column**.
3. On the **Create Weighted Column** page, type a brief, descriptive **Column Name**. This name becomes the column name in the Grade Center and on students' **My Grades** pages. If this name is too long to display clearly in the Grade Center, you can type a short, descriptive name in the **Grade Center Name** box.

Only the first 14-15 characters typed in either name box appear in the column heading in the Grade Center grid. If you point to the column heading, you can see its full name on the **Grade Information Bar**.

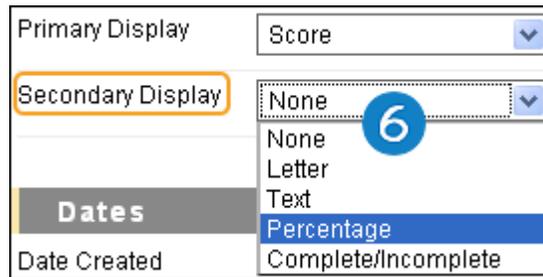
4. Optionally, type a **Description**. You can use the content editor functions to format the text. Information provided here appears to students when they click the item name in **My Grades**.
5. Make a selection in the **Primary Display** drop-down list. The selection is the grade format shown in the Grade Center and to students in **My Grades**. The default setting is **Percentage**. If you created any custom grading schemas, they appear in the list. Five default options appear:
 - **Score:** A numeric grade appears in the column.
 - **Letter:** A letter grade appears in the column. The default grading schema is used to assign letter grades. For example, a score of 21/30 equals 70% and appears as a C.
 - **Text:** This default display option does not display text for a weighted column or allow you to type directly in the column's cell to edit it. If you select **Text**, the numeric score appears in the column. If you want to display text values, you must create a custom text grading schema. Examples of text values include: Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, and Poor -OR- Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory. If you choose to share the column results with students in **My Grades**, they will see the text values for their grades.

- **Percentage:** A percentage appears in the column. For example, a score of 21/30 appears as 70%. If you do not make a selection, the percentage appears in the grid.
- **Complete/Incomplete:** When a student submits an item, a check mark (✓) appears in the column, regardless of the score achieved.



6. Optionally, make a selection in the **Secondary Display** drop-down list. The default setting is **None**. The same options appear in this drop-down list except for the option chosen as the **Primary Display**. In the Grade Center column, the secondary value appears in parentheses. The secondary value does not appear to students, and you cannot manually edit the secondary value from a column's cell.

If you select the default **Text** option, text will not appear. If you want text values to appear, create a custom text grading schema.



7. If grading periods exist, you can associate the weighted column with a grading period by making a selection in the **Grading Period** drop-down list. If no grading periods exist, the drop-down list does not appear. You can use grading periods to filter Grade Center data and create calculated columns.
8. In the **Select Columns** section, select what to include in the weighted column's calculation and assign percentages for each column or category.

- Select the columns in the **Columns to Select** box and click the right-pointing arrow to move the selections to the **Selected Columns** box. When you select a column, you can view information about the column in the **Column Information** area below the **Columns to Select** box.

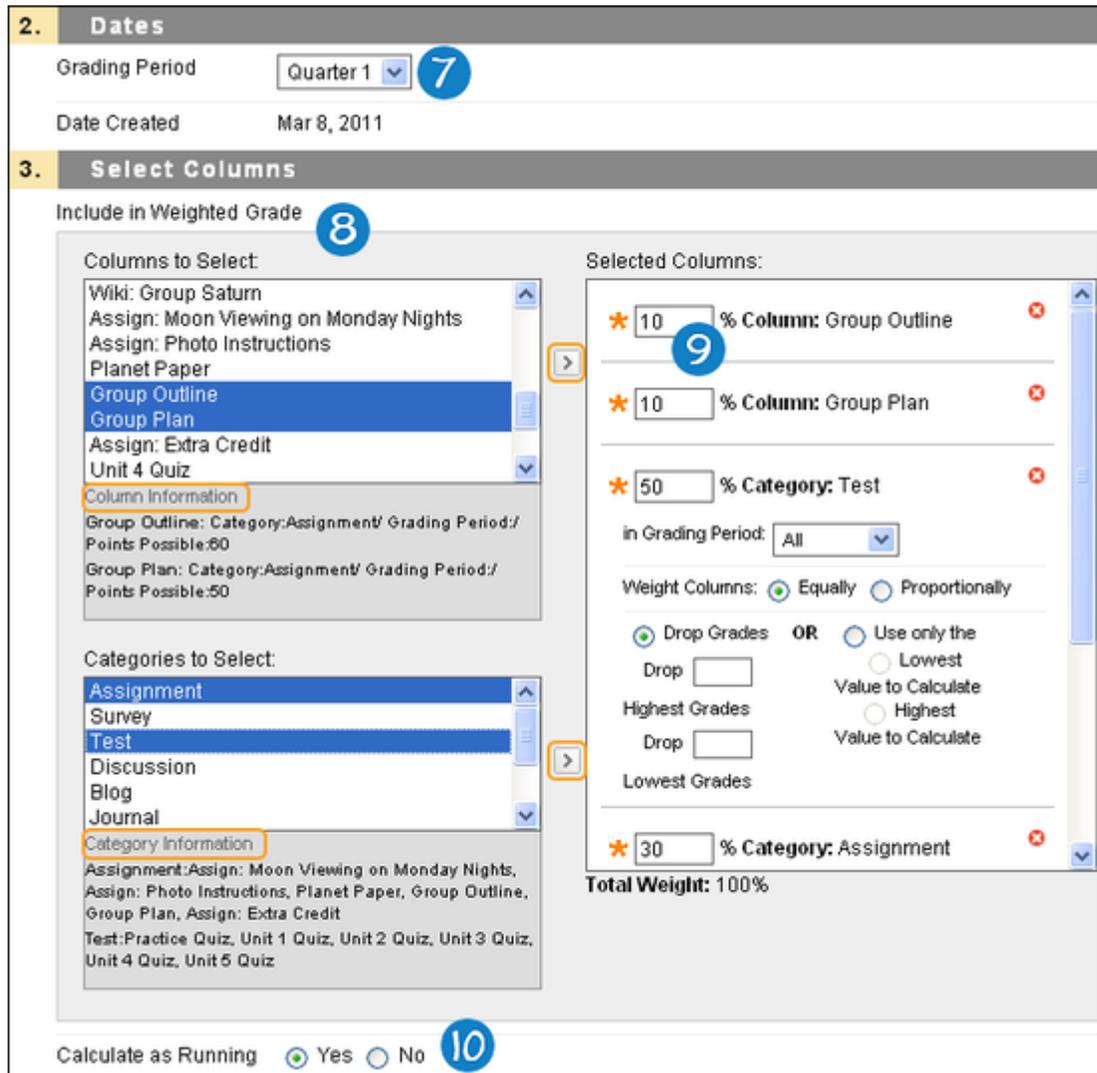
A column that is set to **No** for **Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations** does not appear in the selection list.

For Windows, to select multiple items in a list, press the SHIFT key and click the first and last items. To select items out of sequence, press the CTRL key and click each item needed. For Macs, press the COMMAND key instead of the CTRL key.

- Select the categories in the **Categories to Select** box and click the right-pointing arrow to move the selections to the **Selected Columns** box. When you select a category, you can view which columns are included in the category in the **Category Information** area below the **Categories to Select** box. The following table lists the options that appear after you move a category to the **Selected Columns** box.

Option	Description
Grading Period drop-down list	If you created no grading periods, the drop-down list does not appear. If you selected a category for the calculation, you can limit the columns used by selecting a particular grading period.
Weight Columns	Select how to weigh columns within the category. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select Equally to apply equal value to all columns within a category. • Select Proportionally to apply the appropriate value to a column based on its points compared to other columns in the category.
Drop Grades	Removes a number of either the highest or lowest grades for each category from the calculation. If you do not type numbers in the boxes, no grades are dropped.
Use only the Lowest -OR- Highest Value to Calculate	Removes all grades from the calculation except for the best or worst score.

- To delete a selection in the **Selected Columns** box, click the red **X**.
9. Type a percentage for each selection. The percentages of all columns added together must equal 100 percent. After assigning the last percentage, click anywhere in the box to update the percentage below the **Selected Columns** box in the **Total Weight** field.
 10. **Calculate as Running Total:** Select **Yes** to calculate as a running total. Running totals exempt cells that do not contain data. Select **No** to include all selected columns in the calculation, using a value of 0 if no grade exists. This can make grades appear artificially low.



2. Dates

Grading Period: Quarter 1 (7)

Date Created: Mar 8, 2011

3. Select Columns

Include in Weighted Grade (8)

Columns to Select:

- Wiki: Group Saturn
- Assign: Moon Viewing on Monday Nights
- Assign: Photo Instructions
- Planet Paper
- Group Outline
- Group Plan
- Assign: Extra Credit
- Unit 4 Quiz

Column Information:

- Group Outline: Category:Assignment/ Grading Period:/ Points Possible:60
- Group Plan: Category:Assignment/ Grading Period:/ Points Possible:50

Categories to Select:

- Assignment
- Survey
- Test
- Discussion
- Blog
- Journal

Category Information:

- Assignment:Assign: Moon Viewing on Monday Nights, Assign: Photo Instructions, Planet Paper, Group Outline, Group Plan, Assign: Extra Credit
- Test:Practice Quiz, Unit 1 Quiz, Unit 2 Quiz, Unit 3 Quiz, Unit 4 Quiz, Unit 5 Quiz

Selected Columns: (9)

- * 10 % Column: Group Outline
- * 10 % Column: Group Plan
- * 50 % Category: Test

in Grading Period: All

Weight Columns: Equally Proportionally

Drop Grades OR Use only the

Drop Lowest Value to Calculate

Highest Grades Highest Value to Calculate

Drop

Lowest Grades

* 30 % Category: Assignment

Total Weight: 100%

Calculate as Running Yes No (10)

11. Select the Options.

- **Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations:** Select **Yes** to make the column available for potential inclusion when creating calculated columns.
- **Show this Column to Students:** Select **Yes** to display the column to students on their **My Grades** pages.
- **Show Statistics (average and median) for this Column to Students in My Grades:** Select **Yes** to include statistical information with the grade value when shown to students.

12. Click **Submit**.

The new weighted column appears last in the Grade Center grid unless you associated it with a grading period. All grading period columns appear together in the grid until you reorder them.

You can change the column's settings at any time and change which columns are included. Be sure the percentages total 100%. Once edited, the calculation updates automatically.

You are not allowed to type directly in a weighted column's cell to edit the calculated grade. Therefore, no contextual menu appears when you move your mouse pointer over an individual cell in a weighted column.

Quarter 1 Weigl	Quarter 1 Weigl
100.00%	100.00%
--	--
100.00%	100.00%
83.33%	83.33%
66.67%	66.67%
33.33%	33.33%
53.57%	53.57%

If you delete a column that is included in the calculation for a weighted column, the percentage assigned to the deleted column is removed. In the **Selected Columns** box, the **Total Weight** will no longer equal 100%. The calculation does balance itself, but it will not necessarily be based on the percentages you assigned because a column is missing. The system does not update percentages in the **Selected Columns** box, but the grade that appears in the weighted column in the Grade Center is based on 100%.

To keep a weighted column in view, despite the addition of other columns, move the column and freeze it on the **Column Organization** page.

You can assign a grade to a maximum of four decimal places, but the Grade Center displays only to a maximum of two decimal places. Grades to three or four decimal places are rounded up. For example, 45.4357 is rounded up to 45.44. Calculated columns also display to a maximum of two decimal places.

OVERRIDING GRADES

The roles of instructor, teaching assistant, and grader are allowed to change grades in a course. When you change grades, the new data is automatically figured into existing weighted, total, or calculated grade columns. Each time you change a grade, an entry is made in the grade history log.

Sometimes a grade change results in an override grade. A **true** override grade is applied to attempt-based Grade Center items only, which are tests, assignments, and SafeAssignments. An override grade for a test or an assignment takes precedence over all other grade entries, including attempts a student submits **after** an override grade is assigned. For example, if a grade is based on the average of multiple assignment attempts, but you want to be sure that the grade for a certain student is one other than the average, you can assign an override grade that takes precedence over all other grades and future attempts.

You can remove an override grade for a test or an assignment with the **Revert** function. Grades for the interactive tools—journal and blog entries, wiki page saves, and discussion posts—are not attempt-based, but rather activity-based. For these tools, you can edit an override grade to change it from the grading panel of the tool.

When you override a grade, an orange triangle appears in the Grade Center cell.

Unit 2 Quiz
20.00
20.00
30.00

When you assign a grade to a cell with **no** attempt for an assignment or a test, it is an override grade, and the override icon appears in the grade cell. If you assign a grade for an interactive tool's gradable activity, but no activity exists, no icon appears in the grade cell because it behaves as if you are assigning a grade in the grading panel of the tool.

You can assign an override grade in two ways:

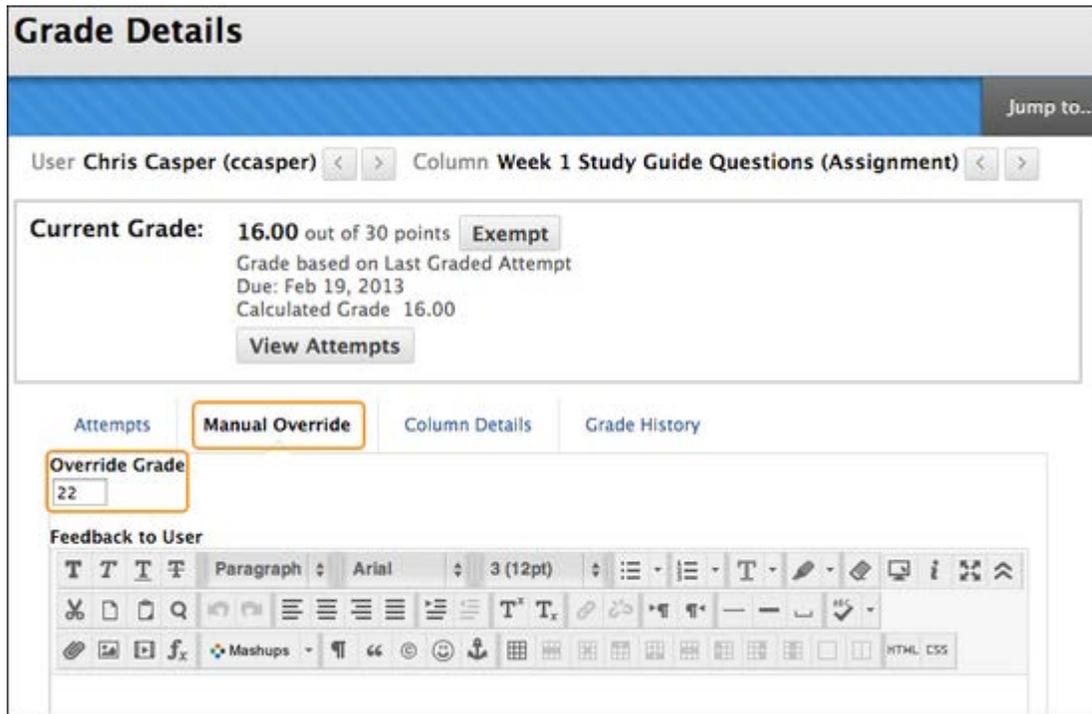
- Use the **Manual Override** tab on the **Grade Details** page. This is the recommended way to assign an override grade. After assigning the grade, you can add feedback for the user and notes for yourself explaining the grade change. You will have a record of why you chose to override any future attempts. The only way to assign an override grade for gradable journal and blog entries, wiki page saves, and discussion posts is on the **Manual Override** tab. However, the interactive tools allow you to edit an override grade from the tool's grading panel and disallow its precedence.
- Type directly in a Grade Center cell to assign an override grade for a test attempt or for an assignment attempt where multiple attempts are allowed. If an assignment only has one attempt, you can type directly in the Grade Center cell and that is **not** an override grade. However, if you allow two attempts and have assigned a grade for the first attempt, and then decide to ignore the second attempt by typing directly in the cell, that is an override grade. If you go on to grade the second attempt from the **Grade Assignment** page, the override grade still supersedes the second attempt grade you assign. Therefore, avoid assigning grades directly in Grade Center cells for assignments and tests without considering the ramifications first.

How to Override a Grade from the Grade Details Page

1. In the Grade Center, locate the cell containing the student's graded test or assignment grade to override.

You may also assign override grades to graded activity in the interactive tools, but you can edit the override grade from the tool's grading panel to remove it.

2. Move the mouse pointer over the cell to access the contextual menu.
3. Select **View Grade Details**.
4. On the **Grade Details** page, select the **Manual Override** tab.
5. Type a new grade in the **Override Grade** text box.
6. Optionally, provide **Feedback to User** that explains the grade change and **Grading Notes** for yourself. Use the content editor functions to format the text and include files, images, links, multimedia, and mashups.

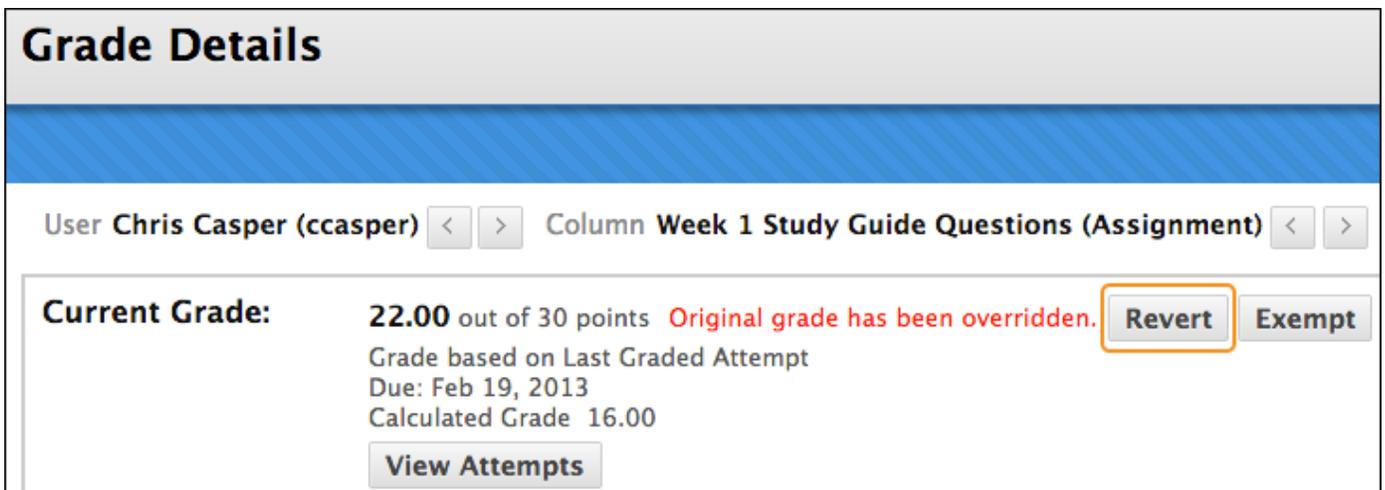


7. Click **Save**.
8. Click **Return to Grade Center** to go back to the main Grade Center page.

How to Revert an Override Grade

You can use the **Revert** function to clear an override grade and display the previously assigned grade, if one exists -OR- the needs grading icon.

1. In the Grade Center, locate the cell containing the student's override grade to revert.
2. Move the mouse pointer over the cell to the contextual menu.
3. Select **View Grade Details**.
4. On the **Grade Details** page, click **Revert** in the **Current Grade** section. A warning message appears asking you to confirm the action.



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5. Click **OK**. The override grade is cleared. The action is recorded on the **Grade History** tab on this page. Whatever was in the Grade Center cell before assigning the override grade appears again: the previously assigned grade -OR- the Needs Grading icon.
6. Click **Return to the Grade Center** to go back to the main Grade Center page.