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## Introduction

The Blackboard grade book has a new name. It is now called the *Grade Center*. Blackboard gave it a new name because it has been completely redesigned.

What's new in Blackboard's *Grade Center*?

- **It has a new easy-to-use web interface.** It's a lot easier to get around in the new Grade Center!
- **Easy grade entry.** You can enter grades, exemptions, and comments all in one place.
- **Directly communicate with students.** You can email students directly from the Grade Center.
- **Create calculated columns.** The new Grade Center allows you to create a *calculated column* and even drop grades!

**After you have finished reading this manual, you will be able to:**

Describe the Grade Center's ease-of-use features.

Identify the *Action Link* and describe how it functions in the spreadsheet.

Decide which key you should use to enter information in a cell (the *Tab* key or the *Enter* key).

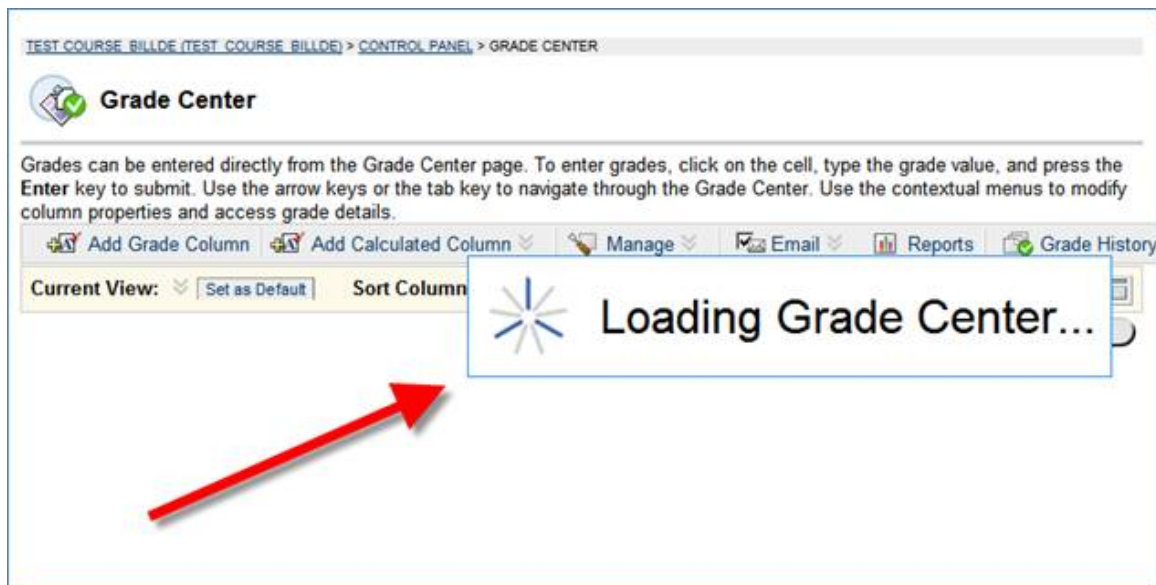
Perform basic tasks in the Grade Center.

## A New Name and a New Design

### Accessing the new Grade Center

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When you access the new Grade Center, you will notice that it takes a few seconds to load. You will see a message like the one in the image below:



Blackboard loads a lot of information in the Grade Center spreadsheet. In doing so, it creates a spreadsheet-like environment in which you can work with a wealth of grade information (without having to navigate to another page).<sup>1</sup> You will have to navigate to other pages to perform certain tasks, however. We will be looking at some of these tasks in this manual.

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<sup>1</sup> The length of time it takes for the Grade Center to open depends on the number of students enrolled in the course. The more students, the longer it will take for the Grade Center to open. Even with a lot of students, however, the Grade Center should only take a few seconds to open.

## Ease of Use

In the new Grade Center, it is easy to associate all the grades with each student. In the old Gradebook, it was difficult to keep track of students while scrolling across grades.

In the image below, the instructor is using the navigation bar (item number 1 in the image below) to scroll across the page and find a particular grade column. Notice that the student *last* and *first* name columns remain stationary (item number 2 in the image below).

Grade Center

Grades can be entered directly from the Grade Center page. To enter grades, click on the cell, type the grade value, and press the **Enter** key to submit. Use the arrow keys or the tab to navigate through the Grade Center. Use the contextual menus to modify column properties and access grade details.

Add Grade Column Add Calculated Column Manage Email Reports Grade History

Current View: Full Grade Center Set as Default Sort Columns By: Layout Position

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Last Name	First Name	Username	Student ID	Last Access	Availability	World of Christ	Book Report	Discussion 1
<input type="checkbox"/>	Milton	John	j Milton			Available	-	-	-
<input type="checkbox"/>	Steinbeck	John	steinbeck		March 31, 2008	Available	-	-	-
<input type="checkbox"/>	Johnson	Samuel	samueljohnson			Available	-	-	79.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	London	Jack	j London			Available	90.00	-	98.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Frost	Robert	r Frost		February 12, 2008	Available	67.00	7	-
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hopkins	Gerard	gerard		November 2, 2007	Available	78.00	7	-
<input type="checkbox"/>	Doyle	Arthur	a Doyle			Available	-	-94.00	-
<input type="checkbox"/>	Austen	Jane	austen1			Available	-	70.00	-
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dickens	Charles	c Dickens			Available	-	70.00	-
<input type="checkbox"/>	Shakespeare	William	w Shakespeare		May 13, 2008	Available	86.00	78.00	-
<input type="checkbox"/>	Donne	John	j Donne			Available	-	89.00	67.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chaucer	Geoffrey	g Chaucer			Available	-	90.00	-
<input type="checkbox"/>	Smith	Samuel	s Smith			Available	70.00	92.00	-

Selected Rows: 0

Grade Information Bar

This makes it a lot easier to keep track of an individual student's grades as you scroll across the page.

## Some Basic Tasks

Here are some directions for performing basic tasks in the new Grade Center. A list of the tasks (and page numbers) follows:

- Enter or Change a Grade (p. 6)
- Should I Use the Enter or the Tab Key? (p. 8)
- Group Grade Columns into Categories (p. 10)
- Edit or Delete a Column (p. 12)
- Print the Grade Center (p. 13)
- Clear an Attempt (p. 14)
- Hide a Column (p. 16)
- Display Information about Your Column (p. 17)
- Send Email to Your Students (p. 19)
- Drop a Student's Lowest Grade (p. 24)

### **Enter or Change a Grade**

To enter or change a grade on the spreadsheet:

1. Click the grade cell on the spreadsheet. An entry field will appear.


Discussion 3	Discussion 4
96.00	100.00
87.00	92.00
78.00	75.00
89.00	98.00
92.00	87.00
95.00	94.00
100.00	88.00
89.00	100.00
79.00	67.00
100.00	<input type="text"/>
100.00	100.00
76.00	-
100.00	98.00

2. Enter a new grade or edit the existing grade and press the **Tab** key.

To change a grade on the *Grade Details* page:

1. Click the *Action Link* in the grade cell.

**What is the Action Link?**  
The *Action Link* appears when you let the cursor hover over a grade cell. The link looks like this:



This is what the *Action Link* looks like in a grade cell:

83.00	82.00
89.00	87.00
99.00	99.00
100.00	90.00
98.00	100.00
100.00	100.00

Clicking the link will open a drop-down window.

2. In the drop-down window, select *Grade Details*.

87.00	89.00
99.00	92.00
9	0
1	00
1	0
8	0
98.00	100.00
100.00	100.00
78.00	76.00


> Grade Details

> Add Comment


> Exempt Grade

Close Menu

3. On the *Grade Details* page, click the *Override* button and enter a new grade.

 **Grade Details**

To view the details of another column or user, select the column or user and click Go, or click the next button. Revert an overridden grade to its previous value by clicking the **revert** button. Modify or clear an

**Current Grade** 99.00  

**User** Charles Dickens (dickens)

**Student ID**

**Column** Discussion 2 (Forum Grade)

**Grade Type** Score

### Should I use the *Enter* key or the *Tab* key?

After an instructor types a grade in a spreadsheet cell, he/she can click either the *Enter* key or the *Tab* key to submit the information. Hitting one or the other will have different effects.

- **Clicking the *Enter* key submits the grade and then opens the next cell (the one immediately below) for editing.**

In the image below, (1) the instructor entered a grade of 50 into a cell and clicked the *Enter* key; (2) the next cell (immediately below) then opened for editing.

Username	Quiz 2 - Marker	Quiz 3	Paper - Marker
student6	50.00	50.00	30.00
billde	5.00	5.00	5.00
student4	100.00	100.00	50.00
student1	100.00	100.00	100.00
student7	100.00	100.00	100.00
student5	100.00	50.00	100.00
student2	100.00	50.00	40.00
student3	0.00	50.00	90.00

This is a good method when a series of cells needs to be edited.

- **Hitting the *Tab* key submits the information but does not open the next cell.**

In the image below, the instructor entered a grade of 50 in a cell and clicked the *Tab* key. The cell immediately below did not open for editing.



Grade Center

Grades can be entered directly from the Grade Center page. To enter grades, click on the cell, type the grade value, and press the **Enter** key to submit. Use the arrow keys or the tab key to navigate through the Grade Center. Use the contextual menus to modify column properties and access grade details.

Add Grade Column Add Calculated Column Manage Email Reports Grade History

Current View: Full Grade Center Set as Default Sort Columns By: Layout Position

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Last Name	First Name	Username	Quiz 2 - Marker	Quiz 3	Paper - Marker
<input type="checkbox"/>	Besterfester	Fester	student6	50.00	50.00	30.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	DeWysockie	William	billde	5.00	5.00	5.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Eitel	Peg N.	student4	100.00	100.00	50.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hogg	Ima	student1	100.00	100.00	100.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Kadiddlehopper	Clem	student7	100.00	100.00	100.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Marks	High	student5	100.00	50.00	100.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Poppadoppalos	Paula	student2	100.00	50.00	40.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rhodes	Dusty	student3	0.00	50.00	90.00

Selected Rows: 0

Grade Information Bar: Grade Type: Override Grade | Points Possible: 100 | Displayed As: Score | Visible to Users: Yes [Icon Legend](#)

OK

This is a good method when only one cell needs to be edited.

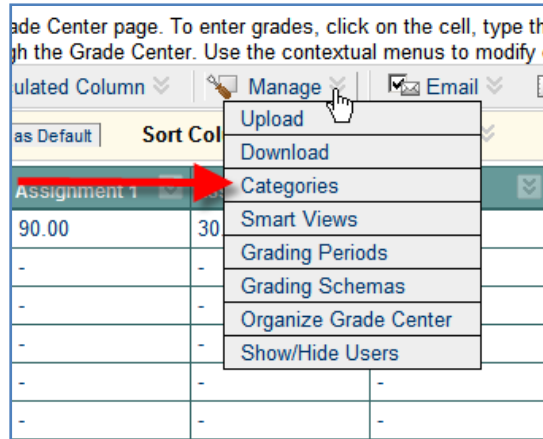
## Group Grade Columns into Categories

You can create categories to organize the Grade Center and run reports on specific types of grades. Default categories include *assignments*, *discussion*, *survey*, and *test*.

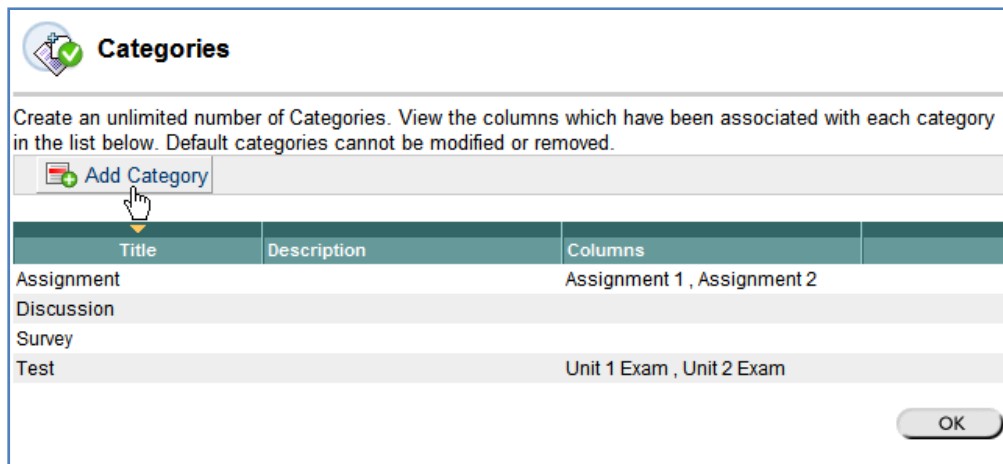
**Best practice:** Plan and create your categories before creating your grade center items.

To create a category, follow these directions:


1. Click *Manage* and click *Categories*.



2. On the *Categories* page, click the *Add Categories* button.



3. On the *Add Category* page, add a name and description and click the *Submit* button.



### Add Category

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#### 1 Category Information

\* Name

Description

---

#### 2 Submit

Click **Submit** to finish. Click **Cancel** to quit.

\* Required Field

## Edit or Delete a Column

You can modify column properties or even delete a column, including all its grades and associations.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Deleting a column is a final action and cannot be undone.

To modify a column, follow these directions:

1. Click the *Action Link* in the column header. This will open a drop-down menu.

Discussion 3	Discussion 4	Unit 2 Test
89.00		
100.00		
92.00		
100.00		
100.00		
95.00		
76.00		
100.00		
79.00		
87.00		
78.00	75.00	-

2. Select *Modify Column* or *Remove Column*. REMEMBER: Deleting (removing) a column is a final action and cannot be undone.

Unit 1 Test	Discussion 3	Discussion 4	Unit 2 Test
78.00	89.00		
89.00	100.00		
92.00	92.00		
97.00	100.00		
89.00	100.00		
67.00	95.00		
78.00	76.00		
88.00	100.00		
90.00	79.00		
97.00	87.00		
86.00	78.00	75.00	-


> Column Information  
 > **Modify Column**  
 > Hide Column  
 > Column Statistics  
 > Set as External Grade  
 > Clear Modified Indicator  
 > Remove Column  
 Close Menu

## Print the Grade Center

There are two ways you can print grades from the Grade Center.

Follow these directions to print the spreadsheet view:

1. Go to the *Action Bar* and click the *Manage* option. On the drop-down menu, click *Download*.

 **Grade Center**

Grades can be entered directly from the Grade Center page. To enter grades, click on the cell, type the grade value keys or the tab key to navigate through the Grade Center. Use the contextual menus to modify column properties a

+ Add Grade Column
+ Add Calculated Column
Manage
Email
Reports

Current View: Full Grade Center Set as Default Sort Col

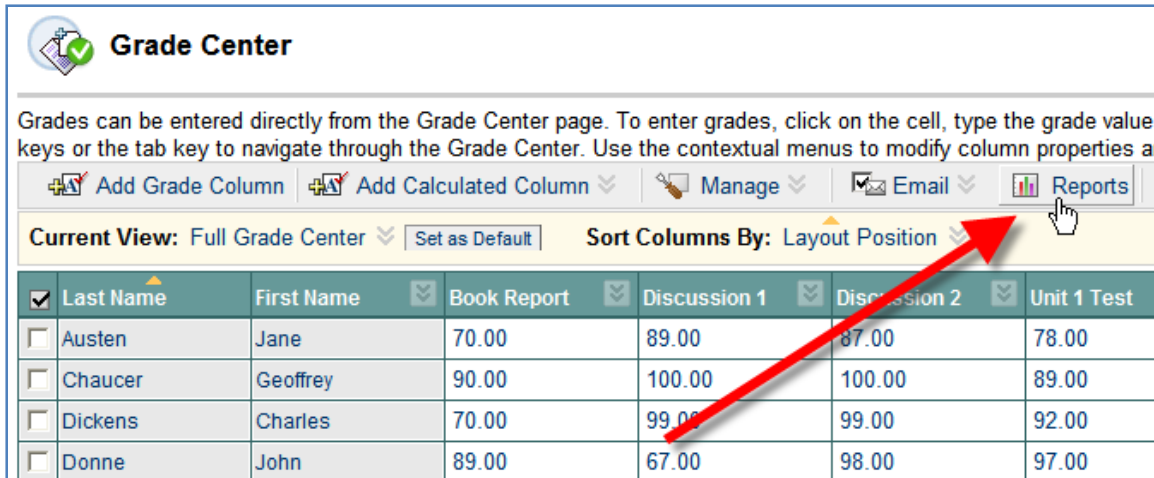
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Last Name	First Name	Book Report	Dis	2	Unit 1 Test
<input type="checkbox"/>	Austen	Jane	70.00	89		78.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chaucer	Geoffrey	90.00	10		89.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dickens	Charles	70.00	99		92.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Donne	John	89.00	67		97.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Doyle	Arthur	100.00	98.00	100.00	89.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Frost	Robert	<span style="color: green;">!</span>	100.00	90.00	67.00

Upload  
**Download**  
 Categories  
 Smart Views  
 Grading Periods  
 Grading Schemas  
 Organize Grade Center  
 Show/Hide Users

2. Download the report and open it in Excel.
3. Format the data in Excel and print.

Follow these directions to print the *Report* view:

1. Go to the *Action Bar* and click the *Reports* option.



Grade Center

Grades can be entered directly from the Grade Center page. To enter grades, click on the cell, type the grade value, keys or the tab key to navigate through the Grade Center. Use the contextual menus to modify column properties and

Add Grade Column Add Calculated Column Manage Email Reports

Current View: Full Grade Center Set as Default Sort Columns By: Layout Position

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Last Name	First Name	Book Report	Discussion 1	Discussion 2	Unit 1 Test
<input type="checkbox"/>	Austen	Jane	70.00	89.00	87.00	78.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chaucer	Geoffrey	90.00	100.00	100.00	89.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dickens	Charles	70.00	99.00	99.00	92.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Donne	John	89.00	67.00	98.00	97.00

2. On the *Generate Reports* page, generate a report and view it.
3. Select the *Print* option.

## Clear an Attempt

At times a student's connection to the Internet is broken and he is not able to finish an exam. Clearing the attempt allows the student to take the test again.



Here is how you clear an attempt:

1. Click the *Action Link* in the grade cell.

NOTE: The *Action Link* appears when you let the cursor hover over a grade cell. The link looks like this:





This is what it looks like in a grade cell:

98.00	688.00
79.00	623.00
 	482.00
84.00	595.00
92.00	631.00
-	379.00

Clicking the link will open a drop-down window.

2. In the drop-down window, select *Grade Details*.

98.00	688.00
79.00	623.00
 	482.00
8	00
9	00
-	00
76.00	651.00
86.00	662.00
-	477.00

> **Grade Details**

> Exempt Grade

Close Menu

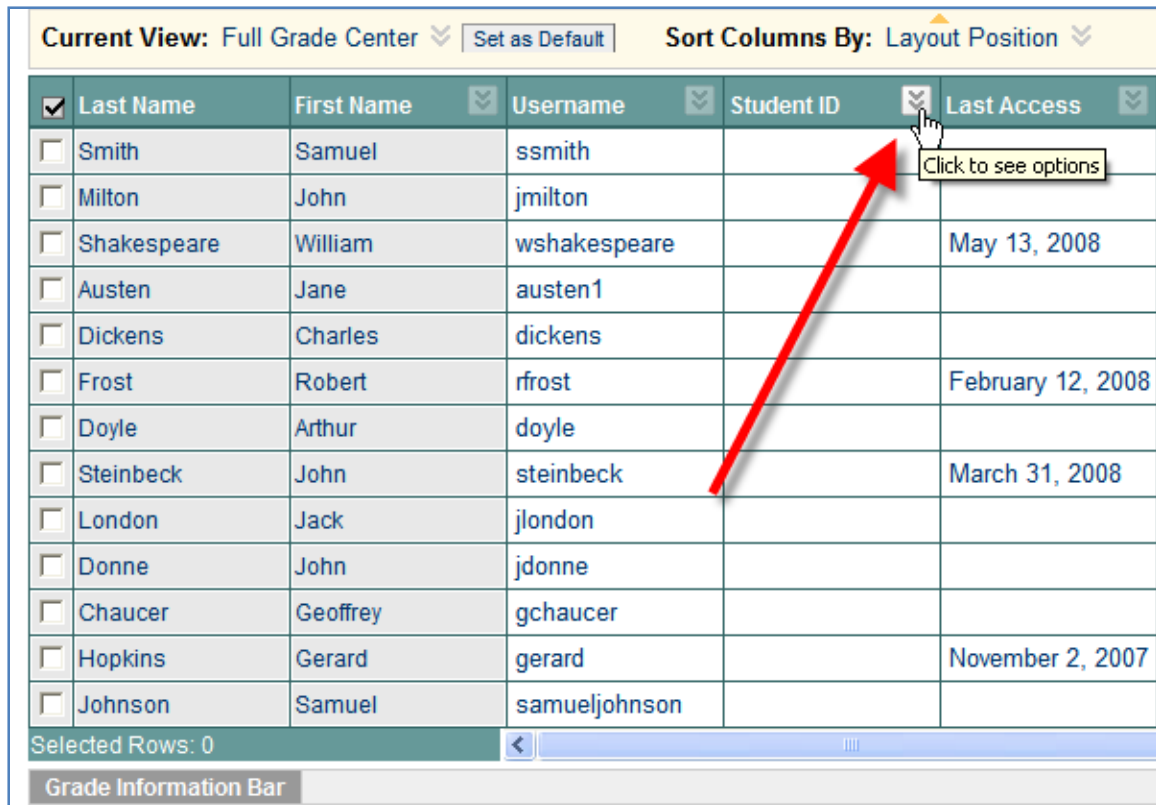
On the *Grade Details* page, click the *Clear Attempt* button.

Grading Notes	Actions
	<a href="#">View Attempt</a> <a href="#">Clear Attempt</a> <a href="#">Modify Attempt</a>

## Hide a Column

You can hide unnecessary columns.

In the image below, the instructor wants to hide the *Student ID* column. She clicks the down arrow button as pictured:



The screenshot shows the Blackboard Grade Center interface. At the top, it displays 'Current View: Full Grade Center' and 'Sort Columns By: Layout Position'. Below this is a table with the following columns: Last Name, First Name, Username, Student ID, and Last Access. A red arrow points to the down arrow icon in the Student ID column header. A tooltip says 'Click to see options'.


<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Last Name	First Name	Username	Student ID	Last Access
<input type="checkbox"/>	Smith	Samuel	ssmith		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Milton	John	jmilton		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Shakespeare	William	wshakespeare		May 13, 2008
<input type="checkbox"/>	Austen	Jane	austen1		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dickens	Charles	dickens		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Frost	Robert	rfrost		February 12, 2008
<input type="checkbox"/>	Doyle	Arthur	doyle		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Steinbeck	John	steinbeck		March 31, 2008
<input type="checkbox"/>	London	Jack	jlondon		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Donne	John	jdonne		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chaucer	Geoffrey	gchaucer		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hopkins	Gerard	gerard		November 2, 2007
<input type="checkbox"/>	Johnson	Samuel	samueljohnson		

This opens a drop-down window with a *Hide Column* option (see image below). Clicking this option will hide the column. You can always make columns visible again later if you wish. A future manual will show you how to do this.

Current View: Full Grade Center		Set as Default		Sort Columns By: Layout Position	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Last Name	First Name	Username	Student ID	Last Access
<input type="checkbox"/>	Smith	Samuel	ssmith	> Hide Column	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Milton	John	jmilton	Close Menu	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Shakespeare	William	wshakespeare		May 13, 2008
<input type="checkbox"/>	Austen	Jane	austen1		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dickens	Charles	dickens		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Frost	Robert	rfrost		February 12, 2008
<input type="checkbox"/>	Doyle	Arthur	doyle		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Steinbeck	John	steinbeck		March 31, 2008
<input type="checkbox"/>	London	Jack	jlondon		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Donne	John	jdonne		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chaucer	Geoffrey	gchaucer		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hopkins	Gerard	gerard		November 2, 2007
<input type="checkbox"/>	Johnson	Samuel	samueljohnson		

Selected Rows: 0

Grade Information Bar

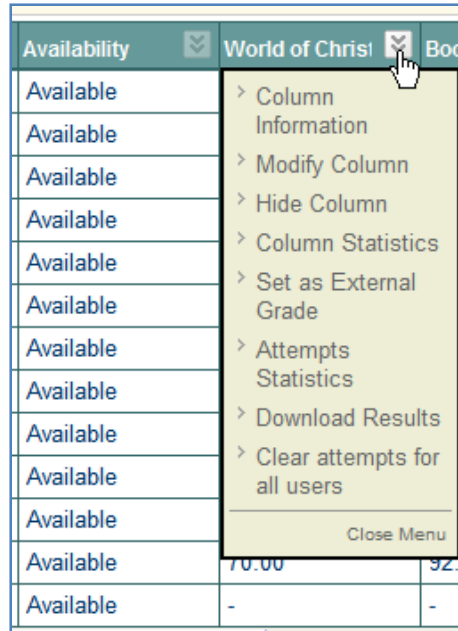


## Display Information about Your Column

You can perform other column-related tasks from the spreadsheet.

Some columns give you several options in the drop-down menu (see image below).

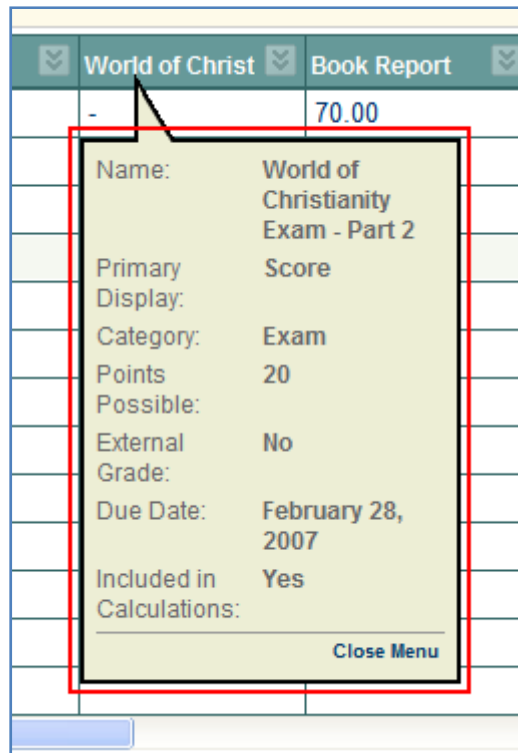




Availability	World of Christ	Boo
Available	> Column Information	
Available	> Modify Column	
Available	> Hide Column	
Available	> Column Statistics	
Available	> Set as External Grade	
Available	> Attempts Statistics	
Available	> Download Results	
Available	> Clear attempts for all users	
Available	Close Menu	
Available	70.00	92.00
Available	-	-

Notice in the above image that you can view information about the column, modify the column's properties, hide the column, and perform several other tasks from this one drop-down window. We'll look at how you can display information about your column.

When you click the *Column Information* option, a pop-up window provides information about the column:



In the above image, the pop-up Information window provides the column's full title (*World of Christianity Exam – Part 2*); the category of this assignment (*Exam*); and the due date (*February 28, 2007*). You do not need to navigate to another web page to find all this information!

## Send Email to Your Students

You can send email to one student or to a select group of students.

You can send email to a single user from the spreadsheet. Here is an example:

In the image below, the instructor wishes to send an email to the student *William Shakespeare*. She lets the cursor hover over Mr. Shakespeare's *First Name* field (this works for the *Last Name* field, as well) until the *Action Link* (the down arrow button) appears.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Last Name	First Name	Username
<input type="checkbox"/>	Smith	Samuel	ssmith
<input type="checkbox"/>	Milton	John	jmilton
<input type="checkbox"/>	Shakespeare	William	wshakespeare
<input type="checkbox"/>	Austen	Jane	austen1
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dickens	Charles	dickens
<input type="checkbox"/>	Frost	Robert	rfrost

Clicking the down arrows button opens a drop-down menu that lets the instructor send an email to the student (see image below).

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Last Name	First Name	Username
<input type="checkbox"/>	Smith	Samuel	ssmith
<input type="checkbox"/>	Milton	John	jmilton
<input type="checkbox"/>	Shakespeare	William	wshakespeare
<input type="checkbox"/>	Austen	Jane	austen1
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dickens	Charles	dickens
<input type="checkbox"/>	Frost	Robert	rfrost
<input type="checkbox"/>	Doyle	Arthur	adoyle
<input type="checkbox"/>	Steinbeck	John	jsteinbeck
<input type="checkbox"/>	London	Jack	jlondon
<input type="checkbox"/>	Donne	John	jdonne
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chaucer	Geoffrey	gchaucer
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hopkins	Gerard	gerard
<input type="checkbox"/>	Johnson	Samuel	samueljohnson

Selected Rows: 0

Grade Information Bar

You can send an email to a group of students by following these directions:

1. In the spreadsheet, select the students to whom you wish to send an email message (see image below).
2. In the *Action Bar*, select *Email* and choose the *Email Selected Users* option (see image below).

**Grade Center**

Grades can be entered directly from the Grade Center page. To enter grades, click on the cell, type the grade value, and press the Enter key through the Grade Center. Use the contextual menus to modify column properties and access grade details.

Add Grade Column  
  Add Calculated Column  
 Manage  
 Email  
 Reports

Current View: Full Grade Center   Set as Default   Sort Columns By: Layout Position

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Last Name	First Name	Book Report	Discussion 1	Discussion 2	Discussion 3
<input type="checkbox"/>	Smith	Samuel	100.00	50.00	50.00	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Milton	John	100.00	100.00	68.00	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Shakespeare	William	78.00	83.00	82.00	86.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Austen	Jane	70.00	89.00	87.00	78.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dickens	Charles	70.00	99.00	99.00	92.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Frost	Robert		100.00	90.00	-
<input type="checkbox"/>	Doyle	Arthur	100.00	98.00	100.00	89.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Steinbeck	John	99.00	100.00	100.00	88.00

Contextual menu options: Email Selected Users, Email Selected Users and their Observers, Email Observers for Selected Users, Email Other

You can send an email to *all* students by following these directions:

1. In the spreadsheet, let the cursor hover over the checkmark in the upper left-hand corner of the spreadsheet (see image below).

**Grade Center**

Grades can be entered directly from the Grade Center page. To enter grades, click on the cell, type the grade value, and press the Enter key through the Grade Center. Use the contextual menus to modify column properties and access grade details.

Add Grade Column  
  Add Calculated Column  
 Manage  
 Email

Current View: Full Grade Center   Set as Default   Sort Columns By: Layout Position

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Last Name	First Name	Book Report	Discussion 1	Discussion 2
<input type="checkbox"/>	Smith	Samuel	100.00	50.00	50.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Milton	John	100.00	100.00	68.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Shakespeare	William	78.00	83.00	82.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Austen	Jane	70.00	89.00	87.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dickens	Charles	70.00	99.00	99.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Frost	Robert		100.00	90.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Doyle	Arthur	100.00	98.00	100.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Steinbeck	John	99.00	100.00	100.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	London	Jack	56.00	98.00	87.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Donne	John	89.00	67.00	98.00

The checkmark will convert into an *Action Link* (see image below).

Grades can be entered directly from the Grade Center page. To enter grades, click on the cell, type the grade, and press Enter. Use the contextual menus to modify column properties and access grade distribution reports.

Add Grade Column   
  Add Calculated Column   
  Manage   
  Email

Current View: Full Grade Center        Sort Columns By: Layout Position

<input type="checkbox"/> Last Name	First Name	Book Report	Discussion 1	Discussion 2
<input type="checkbox"/> Smith	Samuel	100.00	50.00	50.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Milton	John	100.00	100.00	68.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Shakespeare	William	78.00	83.00	82.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Austen	Jane	70.00	89.00	87.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Dickens	Charles	70.00	99.00	99.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Frost	Robert		100.00	90.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Doyle	Arthur	100.00	98.00	100.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Steinbeck	John	99.00	100.00	100.00
<input type="checkbox"/> London	Jack	56.00	98.00	87.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Donne	John	89.00	67.00	98.00

- Click the *Action Link* to open a drop-down window. In the drop-down window, choose *Select All*.

Grades can be entered directly from the Grade Center page. To enter grades, click on the cell, type the grade, and press Enter. Use the contextual menus to modify column properties and access grade distribution reports.

Add Grade Column   
  Add Calculated Column   
  Manage   
  Email


Current View: Full Grade Center        Sort Columns By: Layout Position

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Last Name	First Name	Book Report	Discussion 1	Discussion 2
> Sort	Samuel	100.00	50.00	50.00
> <b>Select All</b>	John	100.00	100.00	68.00
> Unselect All	William	78.00	83.00	82.00
> Invert Selection	Jane	70.00	89.00	87.00
Close Menu	Charles	70.00	99.00	99.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Frost	Robert		100.00	90.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Doyle	Arthur	100.00	98.00	100.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Steinbeck	John	99.00	100.00	100.00
<input type="checkbox"/> London	Jack	56.00	98.00	87.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Donne	John	89.00	67.00	98.00






This will place a checkmark next to every student.


<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Last Name	First Name	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Smith	Samuel	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Milton	John	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Shakespeare	William	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Austen	Jane	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dickens	Charles	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Frost	Robert	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Doyle	Arthur	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Steinbeck	John	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	London	Jack	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Donne	John	


3. In the *Action Bar*, select *Email* and choose the *Email Selected Users* option (see image below).

 **Grade Center**

Grades can be entered directly from the Grade Center page. To enter grades, click on the cell, type the grade value, and press Enter through the Grade Center. Use the contextual menus to modify column properties and access grade details.

 Add Grade Column
  Add Calculated Column
  Manage
  Email
  Reports

Current View: Full Grade Center  Set as Default Sort Columns By: Last Name

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Last Name	First Name	Book Report	Discussion 1	Discussion 2	Discussion 3
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Smith	Samuel	100.00	50.00	50.00	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Milton	John	100.00	100.00	68.00	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Shakespeare	William	78.00	83.00	82.00	86.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Austen	Jane	70.00	89.00	87.00	78.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dickens	Charles	70.00	99.00	99.00	92.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Frost	Robert		100.00	90.00	-
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Doyle	Arthur	100.00	98.00	100.00	89.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Steinbeck	John	99.00	100.00	100.00	88.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	London	Jack	56.00	98.00	87.00	90.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Donne	John	89.00	67.00	98.00	97.00

Contextual menu options:

- Email Selected Users
- Email Selected Users and their Observers
- Email Observers for Selected Users
- Email Other

## Drop a Student's Lowest Grade

You can now drop a student's lowest grade(s). Just follow these directions:

1. Make sure your columns are properly categorized. (See the section *Group Grade Columns into Categories* above).
2. Let your cursor hover over *Add Calculated Column* on the *Action Bar*. A drop-down window will appear (see image below). In the drop-down window, choose the *Weighted* option.

Grades can be entered directly from the Grade Center page. To enter grades, click through the Grade Center. Use the contextual menus to modify column properties.

Add Grade Column
  Add Calculated Column
  Manage

Current View: Full Grade Ce ort Columns By: Layo

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Last Name	First Name		Discussion 1
<input type="checkbox"/>	Smith	Samuel		50.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Milton	John	100.00	100.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Shakespeare	William	78.00	83.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Austen	Jane	70.00	89.00

3. Give the column a name and description. Then choose how you want the grade to display (as a score, percentage, etc.).

### Add Weighted Column

**1 Column Information**

\* Column Name:

Grade Center Display Name:

Displays as the column header in the Grade Center and cannot exceed 15 characters

Description:

*This column will drop the lowest grade from the Assignments category.*

Path: [body](#) » [font](#)

Primary Display:

Calculated grades will display in this format in the Grade Center and My Grades.

Secondary Display:

This is an additional display option which will be shown in the Grade Center only.

NOTE: The *Grade Center Display Name* field allows you to create a short column title for display within the Grade Center. For example, if your



official column name is *Life of Shakespeare the Playwright Exam*, then you can create a short title (e.g., *Playwright Exam*) that will display neatly at the top of the column in the Grade Center spreadsheet.

4. Scroll down the page to the *Select Column* section (section 3). In this section, we will select the categories that we want to include in our calculated column. We will then move the categories over to the *Selected Columns* box.

In the *Categories to Select* box, choose the categories that you want to move (step 1 in the image below). To move multiple items, select them with your cursor while keeping a finger pressed down on your keyboard's *Ctrl* key. Now click the arrow link (step 2) to move the categories over to the *Selected Columns* box.

In the image, notice that both the *Assignment* and *Discussion* categories have been selected and are ready to be moved over to the *Selected Columns* box.

### 3 Select Columns

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

**Include in Weighted Grade**

**Columns to Select:**

- Assignment 1
- Assignment 2
- Unit 1 Exam
- Unit 2 Exam
- Total
- Drop Grade

Column Information

**Categories to Select:**

- Assignment
- Survey
- Test
- Discussion

Category Information

**Assignment:** Assignment 1, Assignment 2

**Discussion:**

**Selected Columns:**

Enter the weight percentage for each item.  
Percentages should add up to 100%.

---

**Total Weight:** 0%

Calculate as running total  Yes  No

A running total only includes items that have grades or attempts. Selecting No for this option includes all items in the calculations, using a value of 0 for the item if there is no grade.

5. Look at the image below. Notice that both the *Assignment* and *Discussion* categories have been moved over to the *Selected Columns* box.

You must now enter a weight percentage for each item. In the example, the instructor has granted the *Assignment* category 40% of the student's total grade and the *Discussion* category 60% of the total. Next, enter a number reflecting how many lowest grades should be dropped. In the example, the instructor has chosen to drop the lowest score in the *Assignment* category.

**Selected Columns:**

Enter the weight percentage for each item. Percentages should add up to 100%.

\*40 % **Category:** Assignment

Weight Columns:  Equally  Proportionally

Drop Grades **OR**

Drop  highest grades  Use only the

Drop  lowest grades  Lowest value to calculate \*

Highest value to calculate

60 % **Category:** Discussion

Weight Columns:  Equally  Proportionally

Drop Grades **OR**

Drop  highest grades  Use only the

Drop  lowest grades  Lowest value to calculate

Highest value to calculate

**Total Weight:** 100%

NOTE: You can decide whether or not you want your column to calculate grades as a running total.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> A running total only includes items that have grades. If you decide to *not* calculate as a running total, the column will include all items in the calculations, using a value of 0 for the items if there is no grade.

Calculate as running total

Yes  No

A running total only includes items that have grades or attempts.  
calculations, using a value of 0 for the item if there is no grade.

6. In accordance with the parameters that we set, the following calculations will occur:
- For each student, the lowest *Assignment* grade will be dropped. The dropped grade will not count toward the final grade.
  - 40% of the total grade will come from the *Assignment* category (minus the lowest grade).
  - 60% of the total grade will come from the *Discussion* category.

Notice that you can drop more than one lowest grade. For example, in another scenario you could drop the two lowest grades of 5 assigned quizzes.

The image below shows you how this weighted column works. The weighted column is the column titled *Drop Grade*.

Assignment 1	Assignment 2	Unit 1 Exam	Unit 2 Exam	Total	Drop Grade
100.00	30.00	100.00	100.00	330.00	100.00

Notice that the student's *Assignment 2* grade has been dropped because it is the lowest grade. Since the student has scored 100 in all her other assigned tasks, her final grade is 100 (as reflected in the calculated column *Drop Grade*).

These are just some of the many enhancements  
you will discover in Blackboard's new *Grade Center*.