

What's New: Blackboard 8 Grade Center

With the upgrade to Blackboard version 8, the Gradebook has been replaced by the Grade Center, which offers similar functions but with different ways of carrying out procedures.



Here is a listing of some common Grade Center tasks you may need while getting used to the new system:

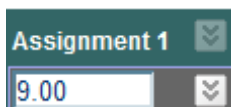
Enter grades manually

To enter a grade from the Grade Center, follow these steps:

1. Move the cursor over the desired cell and click:



2. Type in the desired value:



3. Press Enter.
4. The cursor will automatically move down to the next row in the column, ready for you to type in the next student's grade.

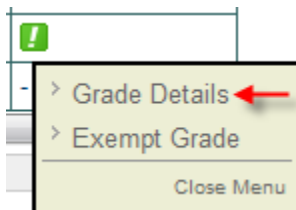
Grade or clear a test attempt

To grade or clear a test attempt, follow these steps:

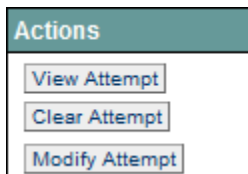
1. Move the cursor over the desired cell and click the double chevron to the right.



2. From the menu that appears, choose **Grade Details**.








3. On the **Grade Details** page, choose **View Attempt** to grade the test or **Clear Attempt** to clear the attempt.



Interpreting the Grade Center icons

With the new Grade Center come some changes in the icons used to represent information. A full **Icon Legend** can be found linked in the lower right-hand corner of the Grade Center, but several important icons have changed:

-  **In Progress** – previously a padlock icon, this indicates that a test or assignment is currently being used by a student but has not been submitted for grading yet.
-  **Needs Grading** – previously a red exclamation point, this indicates that work has been submitted by a student which must be evaluated and graded by the instructor.
-  **Grading Error** – previously a red question mark (and seldom seen) this indicates that an item is causing an error, and the instructor should investigate the situation. Contacting technical support about such an issue would probably be a good idea.
-  **Grade Modified Manually** – previously not indicated, this icon overlays a score, indicating that the score has been manually overridden by the instructor.
-  **Column Not Visible to Users** – previously indicated by an asterisk, this icon shows up next to a column header to indicate that the column is not set to display in the student My Grades view.



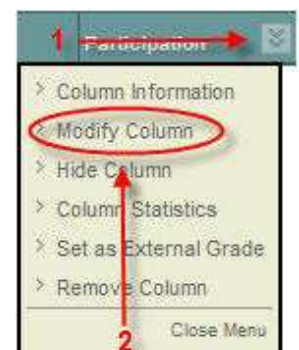
Although there are more icons in the legend, they are either no different than in the previous Gradebook, or are icons representing functions never before available.

Manage details of an existing column

1. To change the details of an existing column, so as to modify the points possible or change the grade display option (score, percentage, letter, etc.), first click the double chevron button next to the column name.
2. Next click the **Modify Column** choice from the menu that appears.

Depending on the type of column you are modifying, some different choices may be available.

For example, a manually added column will have different options than a column displaying results from an online test or a TurnItIn assignment. Change the options on the Modify Column screen to match whatever your need is, then click the **Submit** button in the lower right corner of the screen and your changes will be applied to the Grade Center.



Match student names with totals

Often it is useful to match up student names with their totals, and the Grade Center makes this easy. By default the **Total** column is to the left of all the other grade columns in the grid:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Last Name	First Name	Username	Student ID	Last Access	Availability	Total
<input type="checkbox"/>	Armstrong	Elaine	earmstrong		May 19, 2007	Available	0.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Davis	Haydn	hdavis		November 7, 2007	Available	12.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Valencia	Myrna	mvalencia		July 3, 2007	Available	0.00

By clicking the double chevron button at the top of each column instructors can select the **Hide Column** menu choice:



Hiding the **Username**, **Student ID**, **Last Access**, and **Availability** columns make it very convenient to match up student names with their totals in the Grade Center:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Last Name	First Name	Total
<input type="checkbox"/>	Armstrong	Elaine	0.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Davis	Haydn	12.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Valencia	Myrna	0.00

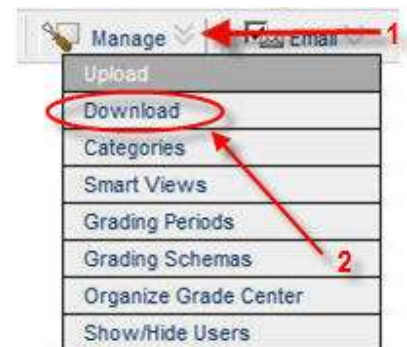
These hidden columns can be later restored using the **Organize Grade Center** controls. This process is described in the **Organize the Grade Center columns** section of this document.

Download grades for backup purposes

1. To make a backup of your grades, start out by pointing at the **Manage** menu near the top of the Grade Center screen.
2. Next, select the **Download** item.

Although there are several choices on the next screen that will allow you to do a partial backup of grades, to download everything just leave the choices for the **Select Data to Download** at the default setting of **Full Grade Center**.

You may leave the **Delimiter type** set to **Tab**, but may want to change the **Include Hidden Information** option to **Yes**. Click the **Submit** button in the lower right corner, then on the next screen right-click (or Control-click on a Mac) the **Download** button and choose to **Save As** from the pop-up menu.

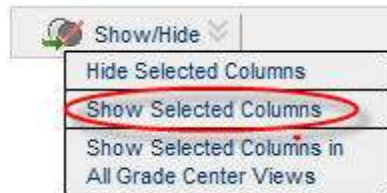


You should then be able to choose where to save the file on your local computer, and when this is done your grades are backed up.

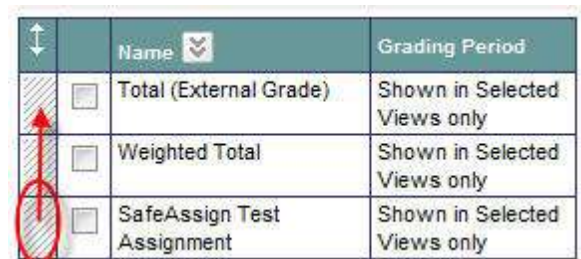
Organize the Grade Center columns

To re-order the columns in the Grade Center, click the **Manage** button near the top of the Grade Center and select **Organize Grade Center** from the drop-down menu.

At the top of this area, note that you can check items you already hid, and select the **Show Selected Columns** option from the **Show/Hide** menu to restore these items to the Grade Center.



To actually change the order in which items appear, hold down the mouse button while pointing to one of the grey boxes to the left of a grade item, and drag the item to a new position in the list. Release the mouse button when the item reaches the position you want it at, and the item will now appear at that point.

A screenshot of the Grade Center table. The table has three columns: 'Name' and 'Grading Period'. The first column contains three items: 'Total (External Grade)', 'Weighted Total', and 'SafeAssign Test Assignment'. Each item has a grey box to its left. A red arrow points to the grey box for 'Total (External Grade)'.

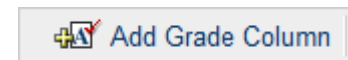
	Name	Grading Period
<input type="checkbox"/>	Total (External Grade)	Shown in Selected Views only
<input type="checkbox"/>	Weighted Total	Shown in Selected Views only
<input type="checkbox"/>	SafeAssign Test Assignment	Shown in Selected Views only

After all the items are positioned as desired, scroll down to the bottom of the item list, and click the **Submit** button in the lower right corner of the Organize Grade Center screen. Upon re-entering the Grade Center main screen the items will be ordered as specified.

Add a new column

To create a column in the Grade Center, follow these steps from the Grade Center page:

1. Click **Add Grade Column** in the Action Bar at the top of the Grade Center.
2. Enter a **Column Name**. This field will only accept 15 characters.
3. Enter **Points Possible**. Denote the number of points assigned to this column. Non-numeric entries are not accepted.
4. Enter optional information as desired
5. Click **Submit** to save.



Getting more help with the Grade Center

There are many new functions available in the Grade Center which the old Gradebook was unable to accommodate, such as dropping the lowest of a series of test scores and having grade columns show up differently depending on the date. To learn how to use these new functions, please contact the Professional Development office and ask them about taking the **Using the Blackboard Grade Center** workshop, available both in a self-paced online format as well as a traditional on-campus workshop setting.

And, as always, feel free to contact Blackboard Technical Support for assistance by emailing onlineclasses@palomar.edu or calling 760-744-1150 x2862.