Weighting Grades by Category in the Blackboard Grade Center

When weighting grades in the new Blackboard Grade Center, we recommend weighting grades by category. Weighting grades by category gives instructors more weighting options, including dropping a grade.

**1. Set up your course grading structure, keeping the structure as simple as possible.**

> In this example we will use the following grading structure:
> - Attendance = 25%
> - Weekly Assignments = 45% (drop the lowest grade)
> - Test = 30%

2. Set up your Categories
Add or modify Grade Center categories to match your grading structure by going to **Manage > Categories**. Here you can add new categories, remove and modify existing categories.
Note: Blackboard creates four default categories for you (Assignment, Discussion, Survey, Test). Default categories cannot be modified or removed.
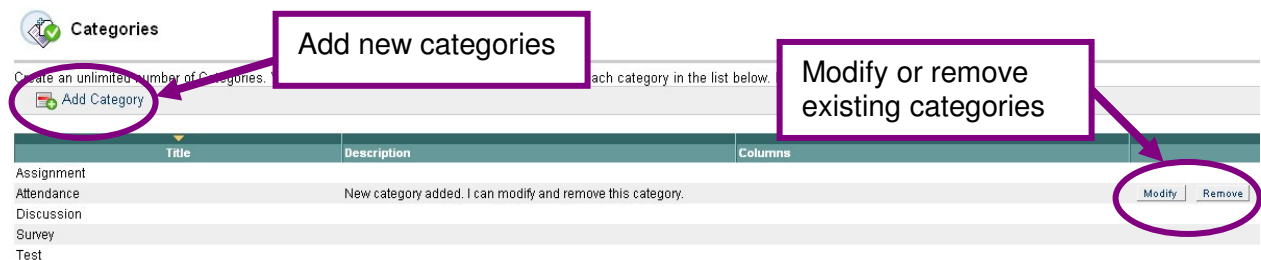
3. Add columns to your Grade Center
There are two ways to add columns to your Grade Center: (see table below)
1. **Columns automatically created by Blackboard** (Blackboard will automatically assign a default Bb category to these items. Instructors can change the category.)
2. **Columns manually created by the instructor** (Instructors must manually assign a category to these items.)
   Note: It's a good idea to categorize your Grade Center items as you create the columns. If you forget do this now, no problem, it's easy to do later! Just see the **Quick Tip** on page 2.

Columns automatically created by Bb	Default Bb category assigned
Assessments (tests or quizzes)	Test
Assignment Manager or SafeAssignment	Assignment
Graded Discussion Forum	Discussion
Survey	Survey

Columns manually created by instructor	Instructor must manually assign a category

Quickly and Easily Categorize Several Items at Once!

Quick Tip: After creating several columns in your Grade Center, categorize several items at a time quickly by going to **Manage > Organize Grade Center.**

Note: You cannot create columns on this screen.

2. Choose your category

1. ✓ Check off one or more items

4. **Add or Modify your Weighted Column in the Grade Center**
   Set up weighting of your grades by going to your existing "weighted" column or create a new one if you are starting from scratch. Weighted categories must equal exactly 100%. Check out Grade Center Columns explained handout for more info:
   http://courses.durhamtech.edu/wiki/images/8/8f/Bb8GC_columns.pdf

Enter your column information

Note: The Column Name is required and can be different from the Display Name.

The Display Name is visible in the Grade Center.

Set your primary display to Percentage

Select your columns for weighting by category

In this example we will use the following grading structure:
- Attendance = 25%
- Weekly Assignments = 45% (drop the lowest grade)
- Test = 30%

❸ **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:

DB1
DB2
DB3
DB4 (20 pts)
DB5
Word1
Word2
Word3

Column Information

4. Enter a percentage for each category

Selected Columns:

Enter the weight percentage for each item. Percentages sh...

* 45 % Category: Weekly Assignments

Weight Columns: ⊙ Equally ○ Proportionally

⊙ Drop Grades
Drop ___ highest grades
Drop 1 lowest grades

* 25 % Category: Attendance

Weight Columns: ⊙ Equally ○ P...

⊙ Drop Grades
Drop ___ highest grades
Drop ___ lowest grades

* 30 % Category: Test

Weight Columns: ⊙ Equally ○ P...

Total Weight: 100%

1. Go to Categories to Select
2. Highlight the Categories you want to include
3. Click the arrow to send the categories to the Selected Columns area for weighting

Categories to Select:

Discussion
Assignment
Survey

Category Information

Weight Columns:
~ Choose **Equally** if all of the items within a category are worth the same number of points. (**default setting**)

~ Use **Proportionally** **only if** the items within a category are worth a different number of points and you want to weight the items accordingly.

~ If dropping a grade click **Drop Grades** and enter a number.

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.

Total Weight MUST equal 100%

Set your Options

❹ **Options**

Select **No** for the first option to exclude this Grade Center column from calculations. Select **No** for the second option to display column statistics in My Grades.

Include this column in Grade Center calculations   ⊙ Yes ○ No

Show this column in My Grades   ⊙ Yes ○ No

Show Statistics (average and median) for this column in My Grades   ○ Yes ⊙ No

❺ **Submit**

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

* Required Field

The settings listed here are the defaults.
Notes:
- **Grade Center** refers to the instructor view
- **My Grades** refers to the student view

Click Submit

Cancel   Submit

Things not adding up? Here are a few suggestions:
- Make sure all your Grade Center items are categorized correctly by going to the Manage > Organize Grade Center area.
- Check your weighted grade structure for errors.
- Check to make sure your total weight equals 100%.
- If all else fails, remove your weighted grade column and start over.
- Enroll a fake student in your course to test out your weighting structure.