

# How to Set Up Your Gradebook in Sakai

Instructors can set up the Gradebook in Sakai to organize, manage, and distribute students' grades and to automatically calculate final grades.

This handout covers how to perform the initial set up of your Gradebook, so you'll be able to add students' grades later. (A separate handout covers how to enter students' grades.)

We will work with Sakai's newest Gradebook tool, which is called simply – **Gradebook**. (An older Gradebook tool was available, called Gradebook Classic.)

## Step 1: Consider your grading system

How you set up your Gradebook depends on your course grading system you've outlined in your Syllabus. The Sakai Gradebook works best if your grading structure consists of categories and percentages, similar to these examples:

Discussion Forums	25 %
Research Paper	15 %
Tests	60 %

Homework (Drop 1 lowest HW grade)	30 %
Project	20 %
Quizzes	10 %
Exams	40 %

In-class writings	25 %
Quizzes*	15 %
Tests	30 %
Final Exam	10 %
Final Paper	20 %
*Lowest quiz grade will be dropped	

Some instructors use a **total points system**, with final grades based on points accumulated throughout the semester. Though Sakai's Gradebook wasn't specifically designed for this, Instructors can use a total points system with the Sakai Gradebook and can display students' final course grades in points.

**TIP:** Instructors are encouraged to use a simple grading system of categories and percentages, if possible, as Sakai's Gradebook was designed to calculate grades using categories and weights.

Whatever you do, make sure your Gradebook in Sakai is consistent with what you put in your syllabus.

## Step 2: Set up your gradebook

By default, the Gradebook is available in your course sites.

1. In your Sakai site, click on **Gradebook**, then click the **Settings** tab along the top. There are five Gradebook Settings sections.
2. In the first section **Grade Entry**, make sure **POINTS** is selected.

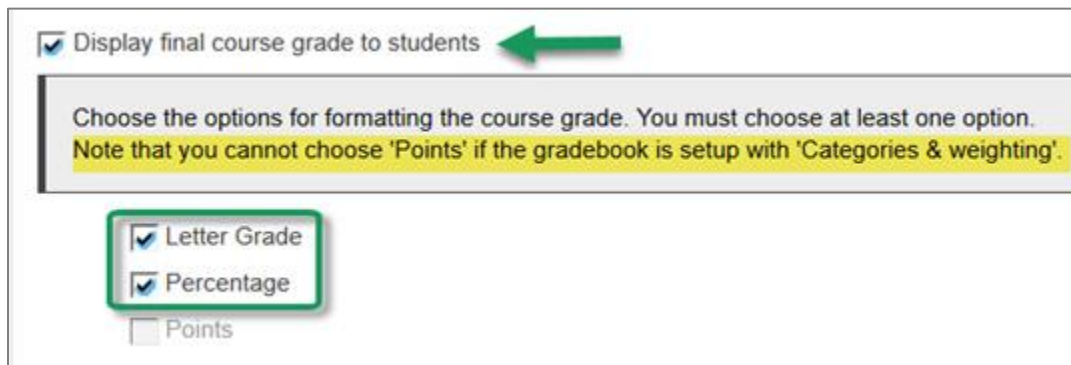
**TIP:** This selection refers to how you **enter** grades for individual assignments. For example, if a student scores 40 on an assignment that is worth 50 points, will you enter *40 points* or *80 percent*? We've found that choosing "percentages" here often creates problems for instructors and students; therefore choosing "POINTS" is strongly recommended.

3. In the second section, in **Gradebook Release Rules**, make sure the box is checked to **Display released Gradebook Items to students**. If you uncheck this box, your students will not be able to see any grades!

**TIP:** Grades for individual assignments can be hidden from students or released to students later when you set up gradebook items or edit them.

4. Also in **Grade Release Rules**, you can check the box to **Display final course grade to students**. You may want to check this after students have completed several assignments. When you check this box, your students will see their overall course grade (as calculated by Sakai), based on the work they have submitted and that you have graded so far in the class.

You can also choose how the final grade displays to students. Most instructors select both **Letter Grade** and **Percentage** for the grade display, as shown below.



The screenshot shows a form with a checkbox labeled "Display final course grade to students" which is checked. A green arrow points to this checkbox. Below it is a section titled "Choose the options for formatting the course grade. You must choose at least one option. Note that you cannot choose 'Points' if the gradebook is setup with 'Categories & weighting'." This section contains three checkboxes: "Letter Grade" (checked), "Percentage" (checked), and "Points" (unchecked). A green box highlights the "Letter Grade" and "Percentage" checkboxes.

**TIP:** If you use a total points system for determining course grades (rather than categories and weights), we recommend you select only the **Points** box above.

### What does the "course grade" look like to students?

The sample below shows how the **Course Grade** appears to students (if you choose to display it and if you select letter grade and percentage as pictured above).



The screenshot shows a "Grade Summary for Jane East (jane)" interface. It has two tabs: "Grade Summary" and "Student Review Mode". The "Student Review Mode" tab is active. Below the tabs, a green box highlights the text "Course Grade: B (80%)".

5. In the third section, **Statistics**, *don't do anything*. Otherwise, your students would be able to view aggregated assignment and course grade distributions:
  - a. For each assignment, students could find out how well other students performed on the assignment. Students could see approximately how many students scored in each grading tier (for example, between 0-50, 50-60, 60-70, and 90-100).
  - b. Also, students could discover how many students received each possible course grade, based on your Grading Schema, such as A, B, C, D, and F.

6. In the next section, choose **Categories & Weighting**, if your grading system consists of categories and percentages, as described earlier. (Otherwise, choose "No categories" or "Categories only.")

- a. Click **Add a Category** and use your grading structure to enter categories and percentages (%) in the boxes. As you add categories and percentages, the Running Total will change. The Running Total must be 100% before you can save and exit.

The screenshot shows the 'Categories & Weighting' section of a form. At the top, there are three radio buttons: 'No categories', 'Categories only', and 'Categories & weighting'. The 'Categories & weighting' option is selected and highlighted with a green box. Below these are three checkboxes: 'Drop highest', 'Drop lowest', and 'Keep highest'. A table follows with columns: 'Category', '%', 'Extra Credit', and 'Gradebook Items'. The table contains two rows: 'Tests' with 40% and 'Homework' with 60%. Below the table, a 'Total:' label shows '100%', which is circled in blue. A blue arrow points from a text box 'Running total must be 100%' to this '100%'. A green box highlights the 'Add a category' button at the bottom left. A green arrow points from a text box 'Click Add a category and use your grading structure to enter Categories and percentages (%) in the boxes' to the 'Add a category' button.

Category	%	Extra Credit	Gradebook Items
Tests	40	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Homework	60	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Total: 100%			

- b. **Drop Lowest** (optional) - To drop the lowest grade(s) in a category, check the box beside **Drop Lowest** as shown below. A new column will appear in the category list. To the right of any category, you can enter how many low grades to drop. For example, enter 1 to drop the single lowest grade in the category, or 2 to drop the two lowest, etc.

**IMPORTANT:** To drop a grade, all items in the category must have the same point value!

For example, if dropping a low grade in the Homework category, all assignments in that category must have the same "points possible." If some Homework assignments are worth 10 points and others worth 100, DO NOT attempt to drop the lowest grade.

This screenshot shows the same form as before, but with the 'Drop lowest' checkbox checked. A new column, 'Drop Lowest', has been added to the table. The 'Tests' row shows '0' in the 'Drop Lowest' column, and the 'Homework' row shows '1'. A green box highlights the 'Drop lowest' checkbox. A green arrow points from a text box 'Select the Drop Lowest check box' to this checkbox. Another green arrow points from a text box 'In the Drop lowest box to the right of the category, enter the number of grades to drop' to the '1' in the 'Drop Lowest' column for Homework. At the bottom, a green box highlights the 'Save Changes' button. A green arrow points from a text box 'Click Save Changes' to this button.

Category	%	Extra Credit	Gradebook Items	Drop Lowest
Tests	40	<input type="checkbox"/>	5 items(s)	0
Homework	60	<input type="checkbox"/>	0 items(s)	1
Total: 100%				

- c. When finished, click **Save Changes**.

**Important!** Categories may not be visible after setting up your Gradebook. Why?

Categories will not display in the Gradebook until you have added one or more items (i.e., assignments) to the Gradebook. The next handout in this series covers adding items to your Gradebook.

### Step 3: Select Grading Schema options

Your last step is to make sure that you've assigned the correct letter grades for your final course grades.

1. In the **Gradebook**, in **Settings**, click on **Grading Schema**.
2. In the **Grading Schema** section is a scale that tells Sakai the letter grade to assign to students based on their overall (numeric) course grade.
  - The default **Grade Type** (grading scale) is **Letter Grades**, a 10-point grading scale.
  - If your course grading scale is not a 10-point scale, click on the Grade Type **drop-down menu** and select a different **grading scale** from the list. Check the **letter grades** and **numbers** displayed.
  - If the **letter grades** and **numbers** are correct, click **Save Changes**. If not, you can manually adjust the numbers to match your grading scale, and then click **Save Changes**.

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For Gradebook videos and handouts, and info about Extra Credit, visit [Sakai Gradebook resources](http://courses.durhamtech.edu/wiki/index.php/Sakai:_Gradebook)  
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