BT 103-9 – PART 1
THE GRADE CENTER
GRADE CENTER BASICS

2009/2010
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Overview

“The Grade Center is made up of rows and columns of student information and gradable items. Cells in the grid contain data specific to corresponding students.”

*From Blackboard Manual*
1. In the Control Panel, expand **Evaluation** (by selecting the double-down arrows)

2. Select **Grade Center**

**HINT:** Select the expand button to hide the **Main Course Panel**.

Now the **Grade Center** is expanded so you can see more columns. (To show the Main Course Panel again, select the right-pointing arrow.)
The **Action Bar** allows you to

Create a **Grade Column**

Create a **Calculated Column**. A Calculated column allows you to calculate grades by combining multiple columns. By default two calculated columns appear in the **Grade Center**:

- **Weighted Total** column
- **Total** column

You can **Manage** your **Grade Center**. Using **Manage** one can, among other things,

- create **Grading Periods, Categories** and **Smart Views**
- organize (move, freeze and unfreeze) columns
- hide students from view
- send **Email**

You can create **Reports** or view **Grade History**. The **Grade History** is a log of all grade changes.
The View Bar

The **Current View** drop down menu allows you to select the desired **Grade Center** view. The **Full Grade Center** view is the default **Grade Center** view.

From the **Current View**, one can also see

- **Smart Views** and
- **Grading Periods** (if created).

“**Smart Views** are views of the **Grade Center** based on a variety of student criteria. This enables instructors to create certain views of the Grade Center based on performance criteria for gradable items such as Assessments or Assignments that quickly track Students.”

*From Blackboard*

The **Grade Center** has two default **Smart Views,**

- **Final Grade View** and
- **Preview of My Grades**

**NOTE:** You may create as many **Smart Views** as you wish.

The **Sort Columns By** drop down menu provides several sort column choices.
There are two main Grade Center Views: The **Screen Reader** view and the **Interactive View** (default view)

### Screen Reader view

Select **Screen Reader view** to view the **Grade Center: Screen Reader Mode**.

The view being shown is the **Screen Reader view/ Screen Reader Mode**

In the **Screen Reader view/ Screen Reader Mode**,
- All columns scroll together
- Grades have to be entered by selecting **Grade Details**
Interactive View (Default view)

In the Interactive View, the view being shown, the **Interactive View**, is the default view.

In the **Interactive View**,
- Some columns are scrollable and some are fixed (You decided which columns are fixed and which columns are scrollable)
- Grades can be directly entered in the **Grade Center** page or in **Grade Details**

**Icon Legend**

The **Icon Legend** provides definitions of the icons used in the **Grade Center**. Select the **Icon Legend** button to see the legend.
Grade Information Bar

When you select a grade, the details for that cell are shown in the Grade Information Bar.

Column and Cell Menus

Each column heading and each cell, when selected, displays a drop down menu. To view the menu, select the double down arrows next to the column name or cell data.
Adding a Grade Column

There are two ways to add a column to your Grade Center:

- **Create Assignment** (in a Content Area) (preferred)
- **Create Column** (in the Grade Center)

Creating an assignment using **Create Assignment**

- Automatically creates a Grade Column in the Grade Center
- allows students to submit the assignment directly to the Grade Center (They no longer have to submit it by email)

We are going to show you both methods.

First we will (briefly) show how to use **Create Assignment** in a Content Area. For more information see the tutorial located in **eCampus 101 Manage Content** named **Adding an Assignment Using the Create Assignment Option**.

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**Create Assignment**

1. In the Course Menu, select the desired content area. You can use any content area. In this example we are using the content area called **Content**.
2. From **Evaluate**, select **Create Assignment**.
3. Fill out the **Create Assignment** form.

**Reminder:** Using this method you can create an assignment (grade) column that will automatically appear in the Grade Center.
Create a Grade Column

This example will show how to create a grade column in the Grade Center (e.g., Special Project).

1. Select **Create Column**
2. Type the **Column Name**
NOTE: Create Grade Column has two grade display options. The **Primary Display** will appear in the Grade Center and My Grades. The **Secondary Display** will only appear in the Grade Center (Instructor View only.)

3. Select the desired **Primary Grade Display** format.

4. Select the **Secondary Display** if desired.

5. Assign a **Category** if desired. For information about **Categories** see the Categories and Running Weighted Totals section.

6. Type the possible points for this assignment.
7. If desired input a **Due Date** using the **mm/dd/yyyy** format. The date, September 16, 2009 would be formatted as **09/16/2009**.

**HINT:** You can also use the calendar icon to select a date.

8. Select **Submit**.
### Create Grade Column

Grade Columns represent any student effort that is measured. Columns are added to the Grade Center automatically for work done on the system in Discussion Boards, Assignments, and Tests and Surveys. Work done that is not automatically graded can be measured in the Grade Center by creating a Grade Column. [More Help](#)

1. **Column Information**
   - **Column Name**: Special Project
   - **Grade Center Display Name**: 
   - **Description**: (Visual Editor: ON)
   - **Primary Display**: Score
     - Grades must be entered using the selected format. Grades display in this format in both the Grade Center and My Grades.
   - **Secondary Display**: Letter
     - This display option is shown in the Grade Center only.
   - **Category**: Assignment
   - **Points Possible**: 100

2. **Dates**
   - **Date Created**: Sep 1, 2009
   - **Due Date**: None
     - 09/16/2009
     - Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy

3. **Options**
   - **Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations**: Yes
   - **Show this Column to Students**: Yes
   - **Show Statistics (average and median) for this column to Students in My Grades**: Yes

4. **Submit**

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**Completed Form**
You may have to scroll to the right to see the newly created **Grade Column**. To change the placement of the new **Grade Column** (or any grade column) scroll over **Manage** and select **Column Organization**. For more information see the **Organize Grade Center Columns** section.
To access **Column Organization**, in the Grade Center, scroll over **Manage** and select **Column Organization**.

Using the Manage / **Column Organization** option, the Columns in Grade Center (seen as rows in **Column Organization**):

- Can be re-arranged
- Made visible or hidden from instructor view (but **NOT** students’ view), and
- Made fixed or scrollable

**NOTE**: These are just a few of the available options.
Column Organization Views

In Column Organization, there are two main panels (more can be added):

- **Shown in All Grade Center Views** *(see image above)*
- **Not in a Grading Period** *(shown on the next page)*

The items in **Shown in All Grade Center Views** will show up in all **Grade Center Views**.

Notice that some items are **Frozen**, i.e., not scrollable, and some items are **Hidden**, i.e., *not visible to the instructor*.

**NOTE**: Columns that are **hidden** from the instructor may still be visible to students. To hide a column from students, select, in the Grade Center page,

- the column’s double down arrows
- **Edit Column Information**
- **Show this Column to Students**: No
Not in a Grading Period contains rows (rows representing the Grade Center columns) that will show up in the Full Grade Center view and in selected Current Views.

One can move any row (a row = a Grade Center column) up or down within the Column Organization page by dragging the move arrow to the left of the name ( ). In this example, we are going to move a row from the Not in a Grading
Period section to the Shown in All Grade Center Views section, by clicking and dragging the move arrow to the desired location.

1. Using the move arrow next to Weighted Total, drag and drop the item in Shown in all Grade Center Views. Repeat the steps for any other items.

The Total and Weighted Total columns now appear in Shown in All Grade Center Views.

2. Select Submit.
Freeze and Unfreeze Columns

You can **Freeze** (make stationary) or **Unfreeze** (make movable) columns by grabbing and dragging the dark grey row up or down.

In this example we will drag the dark grey row above **Weighted Total** so the **Weighted Total** column and the **Total** will scroll with the rest of the columns in the Grade Center.

To change the Total and Weighted Total columns from Frozen to Unfrozen:

1. Select the arrow next to the dark grey bar.
2. Drag and drop it above the **Weighted Total** column.
3. Select **Submit**.

The **Weighted Total** and **Total** columns still appear in **Shown in All Grade Center Views**, but are now in the unfrozen / scrollable section below the gray bar.
Before moving the grey bar:

The **Weighted Total** and **Total** columns are in the section that does **NOT** scroll.

After moving the grey bar:

The **Weighted Total** and **Total** columns are now in the scrollable area.
Hide/unhide a Column from Instructor View

You can easily hide and unhide a column from Instructor View. In this example we will hide the **Username** and **Last Access** items.

1. Select the check box next to the desired items in **Column Organization**.
2. Select **Hide Selected Columns** from **Show/Hide**.
3. Select **Submit**.

**Username** and **Last Access** no longer appear in the **Grade Center**.

Reminder: To hide a column from students’ view, use, in the **Grade Center**, the column’s **Edit Column Information** tool and select, for **Show this Column to Students**, **No**.
The next example will unhide **Last Access**.

1. Select the check box next to the desired items in **Column Organization**.
2. Select **Show Selected Columns** from **Show/Hide**.
3. Select **Submit**.

**Last Access** now shows in the **Grade Center**.
Moving Grade Columns

When you add a new Grade Column, it is placed as the last column. As shown previously, you can arrange a grade column by selecting the move tool and (keeping it selected) dragging it to the desired location.

In this example we will move Ch 1 Question and Special Project by clicking and dragging the move arrow up or down to the desired location.

1. Select the arrow next to the desired item.
2. Click and drag it to the new location.
3. Select Submit.

Ch 1 Questions and Special Project are now in the desired position.
Use the scroll bars to view all students and all columns.
Grade a Submitted Assignment or Test

When a student submits an assignment or a test requiring grading, the Needs Grading ( licensee ) icon will appear.

To view and attempt/submission:

1. Select the double-down arrows / drop down menu ( licensee ) to the right of the Needs Grading icon.
2. Select View Grade Details.  

[Diagram of Grade Center interface]
3. Select **Open Attempt**.
4. View the submission.
5. Enter a Grade and (optional) Comments.
6. Select Submit.
We can see all the information about the grade including the Grade History. We can see when the student submitted the assignment and when it was graded.

7. Select Ok to return to the Grade Center.
The new grade can now be seen.
**Entering Grades Directly in the Grade Center**

The Grade Center works like Excel and other spreadsheets. You can enter the grade directly.

In this example, the student has submitted the assignment by email. We will directly enter the grades for **Ch 1 Questions** directly in the Grade Center.
1. Select the desired cell.
2. Input the Grade.
3. Press the Enter key on the keyboard.

**NOTE**: As the grades are entered, the Total column automatically updates.
Grade One Student at a Time

You can grade one student at a time by hiding the other rows. In this example we will hide all the rows except for Maria Chavez’s row.

1. Select the double-down arrows /drop down menu ( ) next to the desired name and select Hide Other Rows.

Only Maria Chavez’s row is showing. You can now easily enter her grades. To return to all students select the double-down arrows /drop down menu ( ) next to the name and select Show All Rows.
To email a student:

1. Select the check box next to their name.
2. Select Email.
3. Select Email Selected Users.
4. Compose your email.
**Grade History**

*Grade History* provides a wealth of information.

To see the *Grade History* page:

1. Select **Reports**.
2. Select **View Grade History**.
The **Grade History** shows:

- When the assignments were submitted.
- The grade given.
- Any grade changes.
- Everything you would want to know about a given grade.

**NOTE:** Even if a student is removed from the course, all grades for that student are permanently recorded in the **Grade History**.
You can generate reports. In this example we will generate an average for all columns for all students.

1. Select **Reports**.
2. Select **Create Reports**.
3. Enter the **Report Name**.
4. Scroll down to **Column Information**.
5. Select **Statistics**.
6. Select **Average** from the drop down menu.
7. Select **Submit**.
The reports are ready to print. The report displays one student per page. When you select the print button, it prints each report on a separate page.
Smart Views

**Overview**

Smart Views are views of the Grade Center based on a variety of student criteria. This enables the instructors to create certain views of the Grade Center – based on performance criteria for gradable items such as Assessments or Assignments that quickly track Students.

The **Current View** is the **Full Grade Center**. There are two default **Smart Views**, **Final Grade View** and **Preview of My Grades**.
Create a Smart View

We will create a **Smart View** that contains: **Names** and **Grades** of students that made <70 on Test 1.

1. Select **Smart Views** from **Manage**.
2. Select **Create Smart View**.
3. Enter a **Name**.

4. (Optional) Enter a **Description**.

5. Select **Type of View**. In this example we will use **Benchmark**. When we select **Benchmark**, it provided us with some **Criteria** to select.

6. Use the drop down arrows to select
   a. **User Criteria**: Grade on Test 1
   b. **Condition**: Less than
   c. **Value**: 70

7. Under **Filter Results** select **Selected Columns Only** then **Test 1**.

8. Select **Submit**.
The new Smart View has been created.

To switch to the new **Smart View** select **Current View** then **Test <70**.

Our **Current View** is now our new **Smart View**, and we see the two students that made below a 70 on Test 1.
To email the students:

1. Select the **Check All** check box.
2. Select **Email**.
3. Select **Email Selected Users**.
4. Compose your email message
5. Select **Submit**.
Grading Periods

Overview

A Grading Period allows instructors to create a Grade Center “Current View” by:

1. Selecting columns by Start and End dates or
2. By simply selecting certain columns.

Create a Grading Period

In our example, we are going to create a Grading Period named First Six Weeks. Our First Six Weeks Grading Period will contain Ch 1 Assignment, Ch 1 Questions, Special Project, and Test 1 columns.

1. Select Manage.
2. Select Grading Periods.
3. Select **Create Grading Period**.

4. **Name** the **Grade Period**.

5. Select **Submit**.

6. Select **OK** to return to the **Grade Center**.
7. Select **Manage** then **Column Organization**.
8. Select the columns you wish to be in the **First Six Weeks Grading Period**.
9. Select **Change Grading Period to**, then **First Six Weeks** (top of the page)
10. Select **Submit**.
The selected columns are now in the **First Six Weeks** grading period.
To view the newly created **First Six Weeks Grading Period**, select **Current View** then **First Six Weeks**.

View of the **First Six Weeks** Grading Period columns