



Grade Center -- Starting a Semester

July 2011

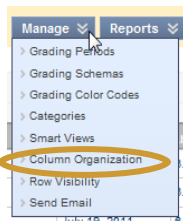
Settings and columns in your **Grade Center** should always be checked prior to the start of a semester.

Column Organization

From the **Manage** menu, select Column Organization.

Look closely at the columns listed.

- Check for assignments you are no using anymore and make a note to delete them.
- Check the due dates -- make a note to change them as needed.
- Look for hidden columns -- remember that they are hidden only in **YOUR** view of the Grade Center. *Students still see hidden columns.*



Name	Grading Period	Category	Due Date	Date Created	Points
⊕ About Me	Not in a Grading Period	Discussion	None	May 28, 2010	6
⊕ Assignment 1 - Word Processing	Not in a Grading Period	Assignment	Dec 14, 2010	Dec 9, 2010	18
⊕ Thoughts on BB 9.1	Not in a Grading Period	Blog	None	Dec 9, 2010	25
⊕ Quiz 1	Not in a Grading Period	Test	None	Dec 14, 2010	17
⊕ Term Paper	Not in a Grading Period	SafeAssignment	None	Jul 12, 2011	25
⊕ Unit 1 Climate Survey	Not in a Grading Period	Survey	None	Dec 14, 2010	0
⊕ Using the Peer Assessment Feature	Not in a Grading Period	Self and Peer	None	Jul 19, 2011	0
⊕ Blog for Teachers (hidden)	Not in a Grading Period	Blog	None	None	15

- Look at the categories for each column. If you are using **Smart Views** or **Calculated Columns** that use categories you need to make sure that each column is assigned correctly.
- The columns will be displayed for your students in the order they are displayed here. If that is not the order you want then to see, use the handles to the left of the column name to drag and drop them in a new order. Remember that preventing students from accessing parts of the course site does not keep them from seeing a grade column in their grade books.

Changing Column Information

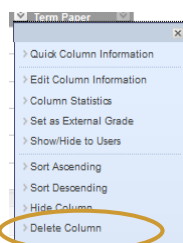
Information in the columns for assignments, tests and graded blogs, wikis, journals, or discussion boards should be changed in the content areas where they are deployed. Changes made to titles, point values and due dates will be reflected in the Grade Center.

Deleting Old Columns

Only columns with no graded content deployed can be deleted in the Grade Center. For example, if you are using the assignment feature in your course to gather materials from students and you decide you no longer want to use the assignment, you must go to the content area where the assignment is used and **Delete** it. Once you select delete you will be prompted to remove the column from the grade center.

Making an assignment unavailable does not delete the grade column or prevent your students from seeing the column in their grade book view.

You are able to delete any columns that you manually add to the Grade Center at any time.



Checking Weighted Grades

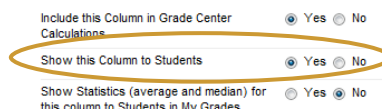
If you choose to use weighted grades in your course make sure your column is set up correctly at the beginning of the course.

1. Determine if you want to weight grades by including columns or by selecting categories or both. Be careful when using both columns and categories that no grade column is included more than once.
2. Decide the percentage value to assign to each column/category -- remember the total must be 100%.
3. Decide how you want the value calculated -- do you want each of the items in category to count equally or do you want them to be figured proportionately based on their point values.
4. Check to make sure that each of items you want in the total grade is being included.
5. Do not calculate the total as a running total -- this will make grades very low for most of the semester because it considers anything that is blank in the Grade Center a zero.
6. Do not use any extra credit columns with weighted grades.

Hiding Columns from Students

If there are columns you want to have access to in the Grade Center, but you do not want the students to see them you need to set that value at the column level.

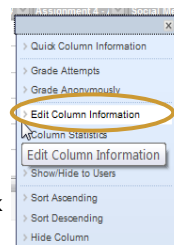
Select **Edit Column Information** from the drop-down list in the column heading. Scroll to the bottom of the screen and click **NO** next to



Show this Column to Students.

A symbol indicating the column can not be seen by students will be displayed in the column heading.

Remember, selecting **Hide Column** only hides the column in your view of the Grade Center -- not for the students.



Why use weighted grades?

If you want all items in a category to have the same value in the final grade regardless of the point value assigned to them. For example, two papers are worth 50 points each and one is worth 75 points. You want them to count as 30% of the final grade. With weighting each would count as 10% if you weight the category equally.

If you want a category to be worth a specific percentage of the grade but you don't want to set the number of points and number items at the beginning of the semester. For example, you know you want to have quizzes worth 30% of the final grade, but you don't know yet if there will 4 quizzes or 5 in the semester, you can use weighting and they will calculate correctly.