

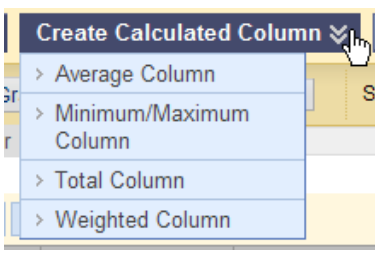


Calculated Columns & Weighting Grades

December 2009

Create Calculated Column

Allows you to create a column that will calculate a value for you. You can create a column to calculate averages, minimum/maximum values, totals or weighted grades.



You can name the column and determine which columns/categories to include in the calculation. The columns can be displayed to students or not — depending on the way you set them up.

Average Column

An Average Column calculates and displays the numeric average for a selected number of Columns. Columns with text as the primary display cannot be averaged.

An Average Column can include the following options:

- All Grade Columns:** All Grade Columns added to the Grade Center.
- All Grade Columns in Grading Period:** All Grade Columns that have been added to a Grading Period.
- Selected Grade Columns:** Any individual Grade Columns.
- Selected Categories:** Any or all Categories.

Columns and Categories that are not set to **Include in Grade Center Calculations** are ignored when calculating the Average.

Minimum/Maximum Column

A Minimum/Maximum Column calculates either the minimum or maximum grade for a selected number of Columns. Columns with text as the primary display cannot be displayed as a minimum or maximum grade. A Minimum or Maximum Column can include the following options:

- All Grade Columns:** All Grade Columns added to the Grade Center.
- All Grade Columns in Grading Period:** All Grade Columns that have been added to a Grading Period.

Selected Grade Columns: Any individual Grade Columns.

Selected Categories: Any or all Categories.

Columns and Categories that are not set to **Include in Grade Center Calculations** are ignored when calculating the Average.

Total Column

A Total Column calculates the total points for a number of Columns related to the total number of points allowed. Total Columns are useful for generating a final score. Columns with text as the primary display cannot be totaled. A Total Column can include the following options:

- All Grade Columns:** All Grade Columns added to the Grade Center.
- All Grade Columns in Grading Period:** All Grade Columns that have been added to a Grading Period.
- Selected Grade Columns:** Any individual Grade Columns.
- Selected Categories:** Any or all Categories.

Weighted Column

A Weighted Column calculates and displays a grade based for a selected number of Columns based upon each column's respective worth of the total grade. Columns with text as the primary display cannot be displayed as a weighted grade. A Weighted Column can include the following options:

- All Grade Columns:** All Grade Columns added to the Grade Center.
- All Grade Columns in Grading Period:** All Grade Columns that have been added to a Grading Period.
- Selected Grade Columns:** Any individual Grade Columns.
- Selected Categories:** Any or all Categories. Columns in Categories that are set to not be included in Grade Center calculations are ignored when calculating the Average.

Weighted Column Examples

Quarterly Grade Example

An Instructor may create a Weighted Grade column that calculates a grade for one quarter of the year, in which each Category, such as Test, Survey, and Assignment are given a certain percentage of the quarter grade.
(Quiz = 20%) + (Homework = 10%) + (Participation = 20%) + (Exam = 50%) = (Quarter Grade)

Final Grade Example

An Instructor may create a Weighted Grade that is the final grade, with the quarters included in the Weighted Grade. Instructors can create any number of Weighted Grade columns, including Weighted Grade columns that include other Weighted Grade columns. For example:

$$(Quarter 1 = 25\%) + (Quarter 2 = 25\%) + (Quarter 3 = 25\%) + (Quarter 4 = 25\%) = (Year Grade)$$

Note: When creating a calculated column you will be prompted to include the column in Grade Center calculations. If you choose to include the calculated column, do not include the columns that are used in the calculation.

Column Information

Each of the calculated columns offers the same features for setup. *Column Name* is a required field. Column Name is displayed in the Grade Center if no Grade Center Display Name is entered. This field only displays the first 15 characters in the Column header.

1. Column Information

* Column Name

Grade Center Display Name
Displays as the column header in the Grade Center. Cannot exceed 15 characters.

Description
Visual Editor: ON

Grade Center Display Name appears as the Column header in the Grade Center. This field displays 15 characters in the Column header. The Grade Center is the only place where this name is used. A *Description* is optional but helps Instructors and other graders identify the Column.

Primary Display is the grade format shown in the Grade Center and to Students. Options include Score, Text, Percentage, Letter, and Complete/Incomplete. The *Secondary Display* option shows the grade format in the Grade Center only. The Secondary Display is denoted by parentheses.

Primary Display
Calculated grades display in this format in both the Grade Center and My Grades.

Secondary Display
This display option is shown in the Grade Center only.

Select Columns

Grade Columns that have been set to **No** for the setting *Include this column in Grade Center Calculations* do not display in the selection list. Highlight a column and click the arrow to move it to the list of *Selected Columns*.

To remove a selected Category or Column from the calculation, click

3. Select Columns

Choose All Grade Columns to include all grade columns in the average. If Grading Periods exist, limit the columns included in the average by choosing All Grade Columns in Grading Period. To include specific columns or categories in the average, choose Selected Columns and Categories.

Include in Average All Grade Columns
 Selected Columns and Categories

Calculate as Running Total Yes No
A running total only includes items that have grades or attempts. Selecting No includes all items in the calculations, using a value of 0 for an item if there is no grade.

the red "x".

Calculate as a Running Total

A Running Total calculates the average by including only the Grade Columns that have been graded. Selecting **No** for this option includes all Columns in the calculations, using zero (0) for Columns that have not been graded. This can make grades appear artificially low.

Weighted Column Specifics

A weighted column can be created to give some items or categories more value than others.

Options

Include this Column in Other Grade Center Calculations makes it possible to include this Column in other calculated Columns.

Show this Column in My Grades and Show Statistics (average and median) for this Column in My Grades control what information Students can see.

4. Options

Select No for the first option to exclude this Grade Center column from calculations. Select No for the second option to hide this column from Students in My Grades. Select Yes for the third option to show column statistics to Students in My Grades.

Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations Yes No

Show this Column to Students Yes No

Show Statistics (average and median) for this column to Students in My Grades Yes No

Weighted Column Specifics

Anytime a grade book is created in Blackboard a *Weighted Total Column* and a *Total Column* are included. This weighted column can be used to weight grades for the entire course. If that is what you want to do you do not have to create a calculated column -- you can use the one provided. If you do not want to weight the grades, you can hide or delete the Weighted Total Column.

Column Name is a required field. Column Name is displayed in the Grade Center if no Grade Center Display Name is entered. This field only displays the first 15 characters in the Column header.

1. Column Information

* Column Name

Grade Center Display Name
Displays as the column header in the Grade Center. Cannot exceed 15 characters.

Description
Visual Editor: ON

The weighted sum of all grades for a user based on item or category weighting.

Grade Center Display Name appears as the Column header in the Grade Center. This field displays 15 characters in the Column header. The Grade Center is the only place where this name is used.

A *Description* is optional but helps Instructors and other graders identify the Column.

Primary Display
Calculated grades display in this format in both the Grade C

Secondary Display
This display option is shown in the Grade Center only.

Select a *Primary Display* category from the drop-down menu. A *Secondary Display* can also be included. Select that from the Secondary Display drop-down menu. An example of how the two work together would be to set Primary Display to Score and the Secondary Display as Letter, which would look like this for a 100 point item: Score = 90 and Letter = A.

Select Columns/Categories

Either items (columns) or categories (groups of columns) can be weighted. Highlight the item to weight and click on the > next to the group to add it to the list.

Options for Weighting

Grades can be weighted by selected individual items (columns) from the grade book or by selecting categories of items. A combination of the two can also be used. Be careful when combining items and categories -- make sure that none of the grades are counted twice.

- The Weight by Category is used to weight grades by the category assigned to each column. To use categories as the weighting criteria each column that is to be included in the calculation needs to have a category assigned to it. For example, all Assignments can have the same weight and all Quizzes can have the same weight. Enter the percentage to weight each category in the Selected Columns area.
- Grades can also be weighted by item -- select the individual column items from the grade book to use in the weighted calculation.

Determining Weighted Values

- The weight for each item is calculated by taking the weight for the category and dividing that by the number of items in the category when equal weighting is used.
- Each item in a category can be worth the same weight, regardless of total points. For example, if quizzes are worth 25% as a category, a quiz worth 50 points will not be weighted more than a quiz worth 15 points—**unless proportional weighting is selected**.
- The number of items in the category is counted as the number of items the instructor has created in that category. Therefore, if Quizzes have a 100% weight and a student takes an exam and gets a perfect score, his or her weighted total will be 100%. If the instructor adds a second quiz, the students weighted total will drop to 50%, since the weight for each item is divided by two. Since, the student has not taken the second exam yet, their score for it is zero.

Select Columns

Grade Columns that have been set to **No** for the setting **Include this column in Grade Center Calculations** do not display in the selection list. Highlight a column and click the arrow to move it to the list of **Selected Columns**.

To remove a selected Category or Column from the calculation,

A weighted column can include both columns and categories.

When columns are selected you must enter the percentage value for the item.

When categories are selected you must enter the percentage and determine how the column is to be weighted —

- **Equally** applies equal value to all columns within a Category.
- **Proportionally** values each Column based on its points possible compared to other Columns in the Category.
- **Drop Grades** removes a number of either the highest or lowest grades for the Category from the calculation.
- **Use Only the Lowest or Highest Value to Calculate** removes all grades from the calculation except for the best or worst score.

Remember — the Total Weight % must be equal to 100.

A Running Total calculates the weighted total by including only the Grade Columns that have been graded. Selecting **No** for this option includes all Columns in the calculations, using zero (0) for Columns that have not been graded. This can make grades appear artificially low.

Options

Include this Column in Other Grade Center Calculations makes it possible for this Column to be included in other calculated Columns.

Show this Column in My Grades and **Show Statistics (average and median) for this Column in My Grades** control what information Students can see.

Options

Select **No** for the first option to exclude this Grade Center column from calculation for the third option to show column statistics to Students in My Grades.

Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations Yes No

Show this Column to Students Yes No

Show Statistics (average and median) for this column to Students in My Grades Yes No

Questions?

Contact the Teaching & Learning Center
tlc@icc.edu
(309)694-8908

Important Information

It is important to note when weighting grades that: The Grade Center items that have not been completed by students can still be calculated in the weight. Instructors may choose to exclude items from calculations by clicking on the Weighted Column drop down menu (the double down arrows located to the right side of the column name) and choosing *Edit Column Information*.

The percentages in the selected option, either Weight by Category or Weight by Item, must add up to 100 percent. An error message will appear if the percentages do not add up to 100 percent.

If an item has a weight of 0 percent, the item will not be calculated in the grade weight. This will occur if a new Grade Center item is added and a percentage for the item is not added to the *Selected Columns* area.

Sample Weighted Grade Flow

The following diagram displays the workflow for using the final Weighted Grade column in Blackboard. This example is based on the following:

- Mid-term Exam is worth 20% of the final grade
- Final Exam is worth 30% of the final grade
- Assignments (anything in the Assignments category) is worth 25% of the final grade
- Quizzes (anything in the Quizzes category) is worth 25% of the final grade

