

Troubleshooting Blackboard's Grade Center

ISSUE: Instructor cannot see many of their grade columns; cluttered view.

By default, the grade center is setup so that the first five columns include student information such as *Student ID*, *Last Access*, etc. Because there is so much information, instructors have to scroll to see actual grade columns.

SOLUTION: Reduce student information columns so that only *Last Name*, *First Name*, and possibly *Username* appear.

- Click **Manage** → **Column Organization**.
- Click the checkbox next to items you wish to hide.
- Under the **Show/Hide** dropdown menu, select **Hide Selected Columns**.
- **Submit**.

ISSUE: Total & Weighted Total columns may show students a grade of '0.'

In all new courses, the grade center shows two columns by default, *Total* and *Weighted Total*, but they have a default value of '0' since grades have not yet been added (i.e. there's nothing to calculate as a total). Until grades are entered, students may see '0' when they view their grades, which is misleading.

SOLUTION for instructors who use the Grade Center:

First delete one of the two columns since they are redundant (instructors use one or the other but not both grading scenarios), then hide the remaining column from students until grades have been entered.

To delete a column:

- Select **Delete Column** using the down arrow dropdown menu next to the column label.
- Select **OK** when prompted.

To hide a column from students:

- Select **Hide from Students (on/off)** in the drop down menu
- There will be a *red horizontal line* next to the title of the column.

SOLUTION for instructors who do not use the Grade Center:

Hide the two default columns so students can't see them when they click on *My Grades*.

To hide a column from students:

- Select **Edit Column Information** from the down arrow menu next to the column label.
- Scroll down to Options and select **No** for **Include this column in Grade Center calculations**.
- Click **Submit**.

ISSUE: Instructor can't remove column with green checkmark (External Grade).

The External Grade, which is identified by a green checkmark in the header, is a function used with the Blackboard portal, which the University does not have implemented. By default, one column in the Grade Center must have this checkmark, but the instructor can never remove a column that is marked as the External Grade.

SOLUTION: Create a 'null' column, make it the External Grade column, and then hide it.

- From the ribbon menu in the Grade Center, select **Create Column**.
- Fill in Points Possible to be 0, leave it set to *No Category*, and set "No" for all choices in Options (which excludes the column from calculations, and hides it from My Grades). Now it is a 'null' column.
- Select **Submit**.
- From the full Grade Center view, select the down arrow menu in your 'null' column.
- Select **Set as External Grade**.
- Select the down arrow dropdown menu again and select **Hide from Instructor View**.

ISSUE: Too many "Total" Columns

Instructors often add their own calculated column for final grades *in addition to the two default total columns*, with the result that students see three columns, two of which have the same name, but differing values.

SOLUTION: Remove one or both of the pre-made *Total* or *Weighted Total* columns, so that only one remains.

- Using the down arrow dropdown menu next to the column label, select **Delete Column**.
- Select **OK** when prompted.

ISSUE: Blackboard letter grades don't match what instructor uses.

Blackboard 'translates' letter grades into scores when it calculates grades. Since these may or may not correspond to the instructor's own translation, total grades and total weighted grades may not be what the instructor expects.

NOTE: The Blackboard Grade Center has the default letter schemas set to the approved University of Hartford grading schema; however, you may want to change this as needed for your department or college.

SOLUTION: Create a custom grade schema and use it instead of Blackboard's default schema.

- From the ribbon menu in the grade center, select **Manage → Grading Schemas**.
- Next to *Letter*, select **Copy**.
- Select **Edit**, and give it a name.
- Change both sides of the column to reflect customized grading.
- Click **Submit**.

- Return to the Full Grade Center; click the down arrow next to the **Weighted Total** or **Total** column.
- Click **Edit Column Information** and change the **Primary/Secondary Display** to Letter Grade.

ISSUE: “View Final Grade” or “Preview of My Grades”, Smart Views do not work.

Some courses have default Smart Views. The *Final Grade View* no longer works if we remove the calculated columns as stated above, and *Preview of My Grades* requires choosing options and does not appear to do what it purports to do.

SOLUTION: Remove these Smart Views.

- From the ribbon menu in the Grade Center, select **Manage → Smart Views**.
- From the list of Smart Views, select the items you want to remove, then press **Delete**
- Click OK when prompted.

Getting Help with Technology at the University of Hartford

Faculty Center for Learning Development (FCLD)

FCLD provides consulting and instructional support to faculty and staff who are using technology in teaching and learning. The FCLD Faculty Lab in Mortensen 203a is available for faculty support and use and is equipped with instructional technology- related equipment including: PCs, Macs, scanners, and projectors as well as support staff. Faculty and Staff needing support with Blackboard or other instructional technologies, should contact FCLD.

Phone: (860) 768-4661 **Email:** fcl@hartford.edu

Website: <http://www.hartford.edu/fcl>

Student Blackboard Support

The following is student support for Blackboard only. All other support technical support issues need to be addressed to the Office of Technology Services (below).

Phone: (860) 768-4636 **Email:** bbsupport@hartford.edu

FAQ/Submit a Ticket: <http://www.hartford.edu/studentbbsupport>

Information Technology Services (ITS) Help Desk

For general computer and Internet/network support questions (not directly related to the classroom but rather passwords, Internet/email problems, Banner/Self-Service, campus Facebook).

Phone: (860) 768-4357 **Email:** helpdesk@hartford.edu

Website: <http://hartford.edu/ots>

Media Technology Services (MTS)

Faculty should contact MTS for assistance scheduling or implementing classroom technology (2-Way interactive video classrooms, Smart Podiums, laptops, etc.), for setting up WebEx accounts, or for scheduling and instruction for a wide variety of media equipment and resources like LCD data projectors, CD/cassette players, TVs and VCRs, digital video, and more.

Phone: (860) 768-4357 **Website:** <http://www.hartford.edu/mts>