Part 1: Getting to know the Grade Center

The highlighted items above will be explained in more detail in the coming sections, however a quick overview of these items is as follows:

1. Action Bar: allows you to manually add new columns, manage aspects of the Grade Center, email student directly, create Reports or view Grade History.

2. View Toolbar allows you to change the information displayed in the Grade Center.

3. Main Grade Center shows student information (per row) and assignment information (per column)

   Grade Information Bar provides information for a given assignment such as points possible, visible to users, etc.

   Extra Options provides a drop-down list of extra options to the instructor.

   Non-Interactive View provides a view with less interactivity which can be easier for screen reader technology.

   Icon Legend provides a key to the icons you will see in the Grade Center.
### 1. Action Bar:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Add Grade Column</td>
<td>Manually add a column, for example for Attendance, Participation etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add Calculated Column</td>
<td>Provide weights to column and then display the weighted total of columns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weighted</td>
<td>Provide weights to column and then display the weighted total of columns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Choose to display the total of all columns or select columns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Automatically display the average of chosen columns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum/Maximum</td>
<td>Automatically display the average of chosen columns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weighted</td>
<td>Provide weights to column and then display the weighted total of columns.</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Upload**: upload grades to the Grade Center
- **Download**: download the Grade Center
- **Categories**: create categories for assignments such as Homework, Mid-Term, Participation etc.
- **Smart Views**: add 'smart view' or modify default smart views for the Grade Center
- **Grading Periods**: create grading periods such as start of semester to mid-term, or mid-term to final exam.
- **Grading Schema**: add a 'grading schema' or modify the default “Letter” grading schema
- **Organize Grade Center**: re-arrange the layout of the Grade Center
- **Show/Hide Users**: choose which students to see in the Grade Center

The email options are quite self-explanatory with the exception of the Observer role. NYU does not allow observer access to Blackboard course sites.

This option allows you to create documents which resemble Report Cards for each student or select students. These reports can then be printed for distribution to students.

Allows you to clearly see when the grade for a specific assignment was changed and by whom.
2. **View Toolbar:**

![Current View: Full Grade Center](image)

- Full Grade Center is set as default but you can choose to set another view as default.
- Allows you to see a preview of the “My Grades” tool (i.e. how the students see their grades in Blackboard).
- Allows you to see the grades for only one group.

**Tip:**
In the above example, a group has been set up for each section of a merged course site. This way Teaching Assistants can focus on just their sections in the Grade Center.

![Amend layout of columns](image)

Amend the layout of the columns based on criteria such as Categories, Due Date, Points Possible, etc.

- This icon switches between interactive and non-interactive view, where the latter provides less functionality and is more compatible for screen-readers.

3. **Main Grade Center**

![Grade Center spreadsheet](image)

The Grade Center follows a spreadsheet format and has a row for each student and a column for each assignment, test, total etc. As we have already seen the icon signifies extra options per column.

**Tip:**
Once you choose the “Set as External Grade” option for an assignment, it cannot be undone! Choosing this option, displays the grade information in the Report Card section of the NYU Blackboard Tab for students.
Other important icons in the Grade Center include:

- The orange icon above the Last Name column will allow you to re-order the Grade Center.
- The orange icon in the top left hand corner of a grade cell indicates that the grade has been manually changed. To track these changes you can use the Grade History option in the Action Bar as seen earlier in this handout.

Displays information for a given assignment.

The Icon Legend in the bottom right hand corner of the Grade Center screen provides a useful key to the instructor.

Part 2: How do I enter, delete or exempt grades?

To enter grades in the new Grade Center double click on a cell and enter the grade. Use the arrow keys to navigate through the cells or enter grade to move down one cell in the column.

To delete grades double click on a cell and hit the Delete or backspace keys on your keyboard.

To exempt a grade click on the icon for a specific cell and choose the Exempt Grade option.
Part 3: How do I create a Grading Schema?

In the Action bar of the Grade Center, choose **Grading Schemas** from the Manage drop-down list.

You will notice that a **Letter** grading schema appears by default. You can modify this schema to your grading schema of what percentage an A represents etc.

In this screen you can also **Modify** an existing schema or **Copy** an already created schema and then edit the copied version.

Alternatively, you can create a totally new schema by clicking on the **Add Grading Schema** button.

In the next screen you can **insert** or **remove** rows as desired to provide the correct number or grade percentages. Next type in the percentages for each letter grade, for example 90% - 100% = A, etc. Lastly, type in the corresponding **calculation** for each manually added letter grade, for example a manually added A = 95% etc.

Once you have created a specific grading schema, you can then apply that schema to one or many assignments in the Grade Center. To do this, click on the icon for the assignment you wish to amend and choose the **Modify Column** option.

Scroll down to the Display options for the assignment and click on the drop-down list for **Secondary Display** and choose the schema you just created to apply same.

**Tip:** Secondary Display options are only shown in the Grade Center, not in the My Grades area or Report Card module in NYU Blackboard Tab.
Part 4: How do I download Assignment Submissions?

Click on the icon for the assignment and choose the Assignment File Download option.

Next, place a check mark next to the students who’s submission you wish to download or simply choose the Select All option and click OK.

In the next screen, right-click on the Download Assignments now link and choose Save Target As and choose a location on your personal computer for this file.

Part 5: How do I download Test or Survey Results?

Click on the icon for the test and choose the Download Results option.

Next choose Comma or Tab delimiter type.

Choose the Format of Results from the following options:

- By User: will include all of the questions for a user in one row
- By Question and User: will list each question for each user in a separate row (recommended option for assessments longer than 40 questions)

Choose the Attempts to Download from the following options:

- Only Valid Attempts: will only use the attempt that is being graded. For e.g. if the grading option is Last Attempt then only the last attempt will be provided. If the Grading option is Average, all attempts will be provided.
- All Attempts: will download all attempts for that assessment.

Finally, choose the Click to download results option to save a copy of the results to your personal computer.

Tip:
Bb 8.0 provides more flexibility in the question types it can download, such as Essay type answers can now be downloaded similar to true/false answers.
Part 6: What will my students see?

Students can see their grades in Blackboard 8.0 in one of two ways.

Firstly, they can choose to turn on their **Report Card** module in the NYU Blackboard Tab (which display only grades set as "show as external grade").

**Tip:** There appears to be a delay between the setting of the My Grades tool as available or unavailable in a course site and the reflection of same in the Report Card module!

Secondly students can view their grades from within a course using the **My Grades** tool in the Course Tool area of the course menu.

The students also have an icon legend option in the bottom right hand corner of their screen:

If you do not wish students to view their grades via Blackboard you can make the **My Grades** Tool unavailable. To do so click on the **Manage Tools** option in the Course Options area of the Control Panel.

Click on the **Tool Availability** link and scroll down to the **My Grades** option and **uncheck** that option. Finally, click **Submit** to save your changes.