



# Weighting Grades in Blackboard 6

## A Blackboard Learning Services Tip Sheet

### Introduction

Blackboard's Gradebook contains a grade weighting feature that allows an instructor to determine how the software calculates the final grade for a student. There are two options: Weight by Item and Weight by Category.

This overview is designed for course Instructors, TAs, and Graders whose courses use the Gradebook in the [Blackboard Learning System \(Release 6\)](#).

### Getting Started

From the Instructor's Control Panel, click on **Gradebook**. Across the top of the spreadsheet view are several icons and options, click **Weight Grades**. The *Weight Grades* screen allows you to decide to Weight by Item or Weight by Category.



**Note:** The categories listed here include default categories created by Blackboard. You do not need to use any or all of these categories in your course. To create new categories, go back to the **Gradebook** and click **Gradebook Settings** and then click **Manage Gradebook Categories**.

### Weight Grades

**1 Weighting**

Choose either category or item.

**Weight by Category**

Assignment	40.0	%
Attendance	10.0	%
Essay	0.0	%
Exam	20.0	%
Extra Credit	0.0	%
Final Exam	20.0	%
Group Project	0.0	%
Homework	10.0	%
Journal	0.0	%
Lab	0.0	%
Midterm Exam	0.0	%
Other	10.0	%
Paper	0.0	%
Presentation	0.0	%
Problem Set	0.0	%
Quiz	0.0	%
Survey	0.0	%

**Weight by Item**

Attendance	0.0	%
Participation	0.0	%
Ch1 Test	0.0	%
Ch1 Disc.	0.0	%
Ch3 Disc.	0.0	%
Ch7 Self-check	0.0	%
Ch. 7 Essays	0.0	%
Test Assignment	0.0	%
Paper_1	0.0	%
Paper_2	0.0	%
	0.0	%

**2 Submit**

Click "Submit" to finish. Click "Cancel" to abort this process.

Cancel Submit

**Weight by Item** Weighting by Item allows the instructor to determine the value of a grade at a very granular level, based on each item in the Gradebook. For example, in your course, Test One may be worth 15% of a student's final grade, Test Two is worth 10%, Lab One is worth 5%, Lab Two is worth 5%, the Final Exam is worth 50%, etc.

You may wish to choose Weight by Item if your assessments don't easily fall into categories or if you want to emphasize a particular item for grading.

**Weight by Category** Weighting by Category allows the instructor to group multiple assessments into one category, and assign a value to the entire category. For example, an instructor may decide that all Tests *together* are worth 15% of a student's final grade, all Labs *together* are worth 20%, the Final Paper is worth 30%, etc.

The Weight by Category feature uses the following formula:

$$\text{Sum} (( \text{category weight} / \text{number of items the category} ) * (\text{item score} / \text{points possible} ))$$

In other words, the weighted total for each item is calculated by taking the weight of the category and dividing that by the number of items in that category.



**Note:** Because of the way the Weight by Category formula works, your students' final grades may appear to be incorrect if they have not yet completed all of the assessments that you have assigned to a particular category. To work around this problem, but still use the powerful Weight by Category feature, we suggest either of the following methods:

- Wait to assign a category to an assessment until you make it available to your students. If you Weight by Category, any uncategorized assessment will not count in the Gradebook calculation.
- Categorize all of your assessments, but instruct Blackboard not to include the assessment in the Gradebook calculations. You can do this by clicking on the name of the Gradebook Item, selecting **Modify**, and selecting **No** next to "Include Item in Gradebook Score Calculations?"

In both of these cases, when the assessment is ready for students to complete (and, therefore, to include in their grading scheme), you will need to remember to undo this change!

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**End**