



Creating and Communicating Grading Schemes

Because students may base their expectations and develop strategies for success based on a course's assessment items, it is important for instructors to write clear and useful grading schemes, and to communicate the elements of those schemes to students in a clear and detailed manner, in the syllabus and in class. Always articulate how your grading scheme is directly tied to the students' learning; you can then emphasize the learning process over the mere acquisition of points, with the implication that learning will lead to points.

Here are some tips on writing grading schemes:

- Categorize your course assessment items, and weigh each category in terms of its importance in terms of student learning, e.g., Papers: 20%; Exams: 20%; Projects: 40%; Quizzes: 14%; Participation: 6%.
- Break each assessment category into individual items, each worth a set amount of points based on their importance compared to other items in the category. Working with a sum of 1000 points, makes the weight of items in different categories relative, e.g., 2 Papers, 1 @ 50pts, 1 @ 150pts; 2 Exams @ 100pts ea.; 10 projects @ 40pts ea.; 14 quizzes @ 10pts ea.; participation, worth 5pts per week, not to exceed 60pts total.
- If you choose to drop items from a category, such as the lowest quiz, try to make such drops simple and intuitive, and explain why it is necessary.
- If you provide extra credit items, ensure that they are comparable to other assessed items in the course, and that they are equitable to students who have been succeeding without extra credit.

--Jared Stein, Instructional Designer & Director of Development

WebCT Tip of the Day: Grade Book Columns

WebCT's Manage Students tool allows you to manage and enter students' scores. The Manage Columns feature allows you to setup new or modify existing columns.

Inside your WebCT course:

1. Click **Control Panel**, then, under **Manage Course**, click **Manage Students**.
2. Inside the Manage Students tool select **Manage Columns** from the **Organize** pull-down menu.
3. **Each column is identified by type:** alphanumeric, numeric, letter grade, selection box, calculated, text, quiz.
4. **New columns may be added** from the **Actions** menu on the right. You can also choose to delete columns, convert a column's type, etc.
5. **Columns may be hidden** from both your and students' view.
6. **Columns may also be released;** be sure to release all columns that you want your students to see.

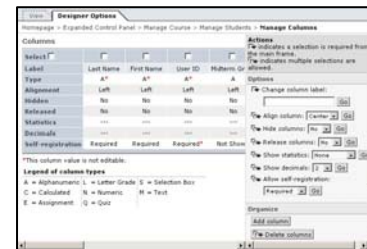


Figure 1 The Manage Columns screen.

Be sure that your course also includes a link to the My Grades tool if you want students to check their scores!

This Month's Workshops and Trainings

Title	Date	Time	Place
Excel in a Nutshell I & II	3/14	3-5pm	CS615B
Digital Images: Scanning	3/21	3-4pm	CS615B
Digital Images: Photoshop Basics	3/21	4-5pm	CS615B
WebCT Intro	3/28	3-5pm	CS615B
WebCT Review + Q&A	3/29	12-1pm	CS633

To sign up for these workshops and more, visit our website:
www.uvsc.edu/disted/tetc/workshops

Drop By the TETC in CS633

We offer an open-access curriculum development technology lab for all UVSC faculty. Our normal hours are 10am-4pm, M-F. You can drop in and use the equipment, or **make an appointment to receive some one-on-one training and help**. We've got slide, print, and document scanners, audio/video equipment, a DVD↔VHS converter, and more!



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For more information on this newsletter or how you can contribute:

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Did You Know?

Authentic assessment is a term applied to assessment activities that are tied to practical, real-world situations, apply knowledge, and reflect the desired learning outcomes.

On Topic...

Davis, B.G. Tools for Teaching. Jossey-Bass; San Francisco, 1993.

Svnicki, Marilla. *Helping Students Understand Grades*. College Teaching, 46:3 (Summer 1998), pp. 101-105.