Instructors can add gradable items to the Grade Center automatically, manually, or through uploading. Gradable items that are added to the Course Content such as an exam or an assignment automatically generate a column in the Grade Center. Gradable items that are not added from the Course Content need to have a column created manually in Grade Center. Instructors can manually create Attendance, Quizzes, and Class Participation columns, for example. Once created, columns and their parameters can be modified by the Instructor. Instructors also control which columns are displayed to Students.

**Automatically Generated Grade Center Columns**

All gradable items created for a Course through Blackboard automatically generate columns in the Course’s Grade Center. These columns are eligible for use in all of the Grade Center operations. The following gradable items automatically generate a column:

- **Assessments**: Assessments can be automatically scored online, in which case the grade is automatically entered in the Grade Center column. Assessments may also contain questions that need to be scored manually, such as an essay question, and require the grade to be entered manually.

- **Assignments**: Assignments are added to content areas and are graded manually.

- **Blogs**: Blackboard’s blogging tools can be set up to interface with the Grade Center to easily grade student participation in the course discussions. Blogs are graded manually.

- **Discussion Boards**: Must have the forum settings set to grade the forum or forum thread. Forums and threads are graded manually.

- **Surveys**: Surveys are NOT graded in the Grade Center, even though a column is created. All a Grade Center column for a survey will tell an instructor is if a student has completed the survey or not. Survey responses are anonymous.

- **Wikis**: As with blogs, wikis can be set up to interface with the Grade Center for easy grading of student participation. Wikis are also graded manually.
MANUALLY CREATED GRADE CENTER COLUMNS

To manually create a column in the Grade Center, follow these steps from the Grade Center page:

1. Click **Create Column** in the Action Bar of the Grade Center.

2. *(Required)* Type in a **Column Name**. This is a formal name for the column and is displayed in the Grade Center if no **Grade Center Display Name** is entered. **NOTE:** Short names are recommended (15 characters or less).

3. *(Optional)* Type in a **Grade Center Display Name**. This appears as the column header in the Grade Center. **NOTE:** Short names are recommended (15 characters or less).

4. *(Optional)* Type in a **Description**. A description will help Instructors and other graders identify the column.

5. *(Optional)* Select a **Primary Display** option from the drop-down menu. The default choice is Score (i.e. number of points awarded out of total points possible). The format chosen is the primary or only format displayed (if no Secondary Display is selected) for this Grade Item in the Grade Center.

**NOTE:** Simply entering a Score for Grade Column that uses the Primary Display of Percentage will not calculate the Percentage. To calculate a Score’s Percentage select Score from the Primary Display drop-down menu and select Percentage from the Secondary Display drop-down menu.
6. *(Optional)* Select a **Category** from the drop-down menu. This associates the column to a Category. Default categories include Assignment, Test, Discussion, and Survey. Instructors can create additional categories (e.g. Lab, Quiz, Final, etc.) that will then show up in the list.

7. *(Required)* Type in **Points Possible**. Denote the number of points assigned to this column.

8. *(Optional)* Select a **Grading Period**. This will associate the column to a Grading Period if a Grading Period has been established.

9. **Creation Date**: This system-added field displays the date the Grade Item was created and cannot be edited.

10. *(Optional)* Select a **Due Date**. Select from the following:

    - **None**: No due date for the Grade Item – this is useful for participation grades, attendance grades, or other non-time-sensitive grades.
    
    - **Due On**: Specify the due date for the Grade Item, including month, day and year. 

      **NOTE**: You cannot specify in the Grade Center a due time. However, when an assignment is created using the Assignment tool, you can specify the due date and time. Students can submit items after the due date, but they will be marked as “Late” in the Grade Center when it is time to grade them.

11. Set additional Options for the column by selecting the **Yes** or **No** radio button for the following:

     - **Include Column in Grade Center calculation**: The column is included in the possible selections of items when creating Calculated Columns, such as Weighted Grades Columns or Total Points Columns.

    - **Show this Column in My Grades**: Grades will appear in My Grades, View Grades, and the Report Card module when available.

    - **Show Statistics (average and mean for this column) in My Grades**: Includes statistical information with the grade value when shown to students.

12. Click **Submit** to save.
MODIFYING GRADE CENTER COLUMNS

Once created, Grade Center columns can be modified to reflect any desired changes. Columns added to the Grade Center from an external file must be modified from a text column to another type and have a number of points possible entered in order to be used to calculate grades.

To modify a Grade Center column, follow these steps:

1. Click on the Action Link in the desired column header.
2. Click **Edit Column Information**.
3. Make desired changes.
4. Click **Submit** to save changes.