USING BLACKBOARD AT DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY:

A FACULTY GUIDE

Part Five: Assessment (including using the Gradebook)
(pages 91-126)
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ASSESSMENT

The Assessment area of the Blackboard Control Panel is where you can not only create online tests and surveys, but also record student grades—even for items that are not online. In fact, the online Gradebook feature of Blackboard has proven to be extremely popular for faculty and students alike at Dominican. Faculty can keep input grades at any time, and (if faculty allow the grades to be seen) students can view their grades on an ongoing basis throughout the semester. The Assessment area features six choices:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Gradebook</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test Manager</td>
<td>Gradebook Views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey Manager</td>
<td>Course Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pool Manager</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interested Only in an Online Gradebook?
If you only want information on the online Gradebook, skip ahead to page 102. The next few sections deal with creating purely online tests and surveys. You can indeed use Blackboard's online Gradebook feature without using ANY online tests at all.

Test Manager and Survey Manager

Both of these functions work in a similar manner, which is why we have grouped them together here. So far as Blackboard is concerned, a test is a graded exercise that will be automatically placed into the online Gradebook upon completion. A survey can look much like a test, but is not graded. Once a test or survey is created, they may be posted in any content area of Blackboard that you choose.

Clicking on the Test Manager link within the Assessment area of the Control Panel will bring you the following screen:

Obviously, the only choice here is Add Test, where you are prompted to select a name for the test and give instructions to students:
After clicking the Submit button, you will be brought to the Test Canvas screen, where you can begin creating your questions. Note that Blackboard has seven types of questions that can be posted. Only one of them (Essay) will require grading on your part. The others will all be graded automatically by Blackboard based on the correct responses that you provide during the creation process:

Remember, you are creating instructions for the ENTIRE test. This is NOT the place to start asking questions for the test proper!
The **Creation Settings** button (circled above) provide additional options that you can set while creating questions on a test. The **Random Block** and **From a Question Pool or Assessment** choices are dependent upon you having existing pools (of questions) on Blackboard. All other choices have fairly similar options.

After setting any of these and clicking **Submit**, you are back at the preceding screen. Click a question type (such as **Multiple Choice**) and click the **Go** button. The resulting screen is too long to show here, but the method of filling in the text boxes is fairly self-explanatory.

**Hey, Where's My Text Box Buttons--and the Ability to Create Equations???

For whatever reason, by default the text box editor in the test creation area of Blackboard does not display all toolbars possible. To "enable" them, simply click the down arrow to the left of the uppermost toolbar:

Whenever you can't see all the toolbars in the text box editor that you've seen before, click this little down arrow over here to display them.
Here is an example of a completed multiple choice question where we checked the option to **Provide feedback** and **Add images** in the Test Creation Settings:

For a multiple choice question, Blackboard allows you to create anywhere from 4 to 20 answers. Here, we stuck with the default of 4. The checkmark indicates which one we've flagged as the correct choice.

Providing feedback is up to you, and an option you can set in the Test Creation Settings screen shown on the previous page. You *probably* only want to employ it for practice quizzes unless everyone in the class is taking the quiz at the same time.
Posting a Test in a Content Area

One thing not evident from the screen above is what you want to do when you are finished creating a test. "Posting" a test, interestingly, is not done from the Test Management area of Blackboard, but rather than within a Content Area. You may recall that there were four buttons available in each Content Area. Here, for example, is our view within the Control Panel area for Assignments:

You may recall we covered all of the buttons in the Add category except one: the one marked Test (circled above). Clicking the Test button in the Content Area of your choice will retrieve a screen listing all of the tests you have created thus far:

Simply click on the test name and click Submit button. Unlike other Blackboard acknowledgement screens, you do not simply click OK and move on with your life. In this case, you will get another screen giving you two choices:
The **Modify the test** option is self-explanatory. But in order to ensure your students will be able to see and take the test, you *must* click **Modify the test options**. This brings up an extremely long list of choices on the screen shown on the following page. Most of these options are self-explanatory, but a few are detailed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you want to make the link visible?</th>
<th>Assuming you want your students to take the test, you absolutely must change this from the default setting of No to Yes. However, leaving this set to No does give you the ability to create several tests and one time, without making all of them available yet.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you want to create an announcement for this Quiz?</td>
<td>Setting this to <strong>Yes</strong> automatically generates a message on the Announcements page. The Announcement typically takes the following form: <strong>An assessment has been made available in Assignments</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow multiple attempts</td>
<td>Good for &quot;practice&quot; quizzes, but probably not for the mid-term!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Force completion</td>
<td>Students must complete it once the test is launched. When students take a test, there is a <strong>Save</strong> button available that allows them to save their progress in a test up to the point they click it. When you have force completion enabled, the <strong>Save</strong> button basically returns them to the page with a message that the test must be completed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Display After/Display Until</td>
<td>For whatever reason, our experience has shown that the <strong>Display Until</strong> checkbox is enabled by default, with a date and time set that equals the date you are posting the test! In other words, students would have exactly one minute after you post the test to take it! This is likely NOT a good idea. Set it to a reasonable date, or (in the case of practice quizzes) just uncheck this box altogether.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you need assistance on the other options, an explanation is available in the online **Manual** (in the **Support** section of the Control Panel) in **Chapter 2 (Content Areas)** in the section called **Add Test**.
If you have the test launch in an external window, BE SURE to tell your students to disable any pop-up blockers they may have!

Careful! The Display Until setting is enabled by default, and usually has a time and date that matches the date of posting! Look carefully at this date—or simply uncheck the box.
Create First, Then Post
In this version of Blackboard, you can create a test almost everywhere. In addition to the Control Panel link Test Manager as we demonstrated here, you can add a test to any content area by clicking the Add Test button within that area. You will notice from the screenshot on page 95 there is a Create button available even when you want to modify an existing test. In fact, adding it from the content area is probably the preferred method for test creation.

What we find not always intuitive, however, is posting the test so your students can take it. That's where modifying the test options come into play, as outlined above. To post it, you must modify the test by going into the Content Area where you created it. Clicking the Modify button while in Test Manager accomplishes nothing so far as posting it is concerned--it only allows you to modify the test itself! You must instead click the Modify button within the Content Area where the test was created in order to post it!

No Copying of Tests!
No, we don't mean your students copying from tests--we mean you! Remember when we demonstrated how you can copy material from one folder or content area to another back on page 44? This does NOT apply to tests. Tests and surveys can not be copied, though if you are interested in using the same questions in different tests, that's where the Pool Manager comes into play.

Pool Manager

This feature allows you to store questions for repeated use or to simply have a large number of questions ready to add to tests in the future. You can also add questions to a Pool that you have already created for tests or even add questions from other Pools! Creating a Pool is a bit like creating a test in that you first create the Pool and name it, and then add questions to the Pool.

Pool Management 101
Managing Pools can truly be a sink or swim affair. (Ha! . . . had to get that one in there.) It is a bit trickier than managing tests, because once students have started taking a test that draws questions from a created Pool, you should NOT modify that Pool--other than for minor typographical errors in a question.

The Pool Management link brings up a familiar looking screen, this time with an option we have not seen before, namely Import:
You can import an existing pool that you've saved from another course using a special export function.

To start working on a new Pool, click the Add Pool button:

We have NO idea why there are instructions here! Pools are a management tool for the instructor to add questions to tests; students do NOT see pool questions until they are included on a test. So, in theory, these instructions are to yourself!
Once done, a **Pool Canvas** is created. For all practical purposes, it is the same as a test canvas. You can add questions to the Pool just as you would for a test:

![Pool Canvas](image)

The main caveats to remember with Pools are the following:

- You cannot add a Random Block-type of question to a Pool. (To make a Random Block question on a test, you use a random selection of questions *from a Pool*. This is a lot more confusing to read about than actually trying!)
- You do not assign point values to questions in a Pool. These are assigned during the test creation process.
- Students are not even aware of the existence of Pools. Test questions that students see can be created *from a Pool*.

Once a Pool has been created, you will see it listed the next time you create a test. If you select **From a Question Pool or Assessment** for a test question, as shown below . . .

![Test Canvas](image)

. . . after clicking the **GO** button, a new screen will appear, giving you a list of your current tests and pools. From here, you can select the type of question you want to search, and **Blackboard** will retrieve the listing, allowing you to insert them in the test you are working on:
The test creation and Pool Canvas process *sounds* a lot more confusing than it actually is. Try creating a sample test or two, and you will see how easy it can be. This is definitely one area of *Blackboard* where there is a lot of explicit on-screen help!
**Gradebook**

A popular feature in *Blackboard* for faculty and students alike, the online Gradebook allows the instructor to keep track of all grading in a course while at the same time allowing students the ability to check their progress. We should make clear that you **do not** have to use online tests or quizzes in order to use the Gradebook. Although any online tests you create do indeed get added automatically to the Gradebook, you can add anything you want to the Gradebook manually.

---

**The Blackboard Gradebook has NOTHING to do with the grades you turn in to the Registrar!!!**

With all the automation around, it is easy to get the technologies confused. As we mentioned at the beginning of this *Guide*, there is NO "communication" between *Blackboard* and our *Campus Web* server. *Campus Web* gives you the ability to submit your grades via the Web to the Office of the Registrar. *Blackboard* does not.

The first time you click on **Gradebook**, assuming you have not already administered any purely online tests or surveys (which will populate the Gradebook automatically), you will get a listing of all students who enrolled themselves into your *Blackboard* course:

![Gradebook View Spreadsheet](image-url)
For the sake of example, let’s assume you just graded a term paper worth 100 points. To add this to the Blackboard Gradebook, click the Add Item button (circled above). You will get the screen shown below.

It is critical to understand what some of these options mean, explained in the table below.
This drop-down menu gives you five choices:

- **Complete/Incomplete**
- **Letter**
- **Percentage**
- **Score**
- **Text**

This is how Blackboard will display the grade to your students and in the Gradebook. You still must INPUT the score as POINTS. Here is what each option means.

**Complete/Incomplete**
The default option for Surveys, and usually used only for Surveys rather than other items.

**Letter**
A grade that equals a specific range of percentages. In Blackboard, a 97% to 100% is an "A+," a 94% to 97% is an "A," and so on. Fortunately, these can be altered. We demonstrate how to do this in the section on Letter Grades, beginning on page 106.

**Percentage**
The grade is shown as a percentage, and is calculated by the following:

\[
\text{(Raw Score/Points Possible) * 100}
\]

**Score**
The raw score earned.

**Text**
You may enter any text string for a grade. As you can imagine, however, this will NOT have a calculable value and cannot be set to a numeric range.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Make item visible to students:</th>
<th>Self-explanatory, but if you plan on using the Gradebook only as a bookkeeping device for yourself, it's easier to just turn off the Gradebook option in the Manage Tools section of the Control Panel rather than do this for each item.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Include item in gradebook score calculations: | Good for when you have "prep" tests and you do not want the final score to affect the final grade. But this is also good to avoid possible student confusion for items in your Gradebook that they have not yet completed. If you chose to No to this, when students check their grades the points for this will NOT be included in the total points possible for the course in their Gradebook. We explain this further in the section beginning on page 110. |

After setting these options and clicking the Submit button, you will get the usual acknowledgement screen. The screen after the acknowledgement screen will return you to the Gradebook view. You can enter grades at any time through this Gradebook screen by clicking directly on the item name:
To input grades, first click directly on the item name.

After clicking on the item name, you will get the following screen:

**Item Options: Term Paper**

- **Item Grade List**: View and modify users' grades
- **Item Detail**: View detailed statistics for this item
- **Item Information**: Modify the properties of this item

Finally, you can click on **Item Grade List**, and start typing in grades on the ensuing screen:
Once you click submit, the Gradebook will look something like this:

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name (Last, First)</th>
<th>Term Paper</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tolson, Boris</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown, Charlie</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stein, Randy</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doe, John</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabbit, Jessica</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student, Jill</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student, Joe</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vesper, Ella</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

0 Students
Displaying records 1 - 6
```

**Letter Grades**

One thing worth pointing out is if you choose to display an item as a letter grade, *Blackboard* dutifully interprets a numeric score you input as a letter grade, as shown below:

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name (Last, First)</th>
<th>Term Paper</th>
<th>Presentation</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tolson, Boris</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown, Charlie</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stein, Randy</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doe, John</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabbit, Jessica</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student, Jill</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student, Joe</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vesper, Ella</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

0 Students
Displaying records 1 - 6
```

Never fear if you want to see the actual points assigned, however. You can always check this by clicking on the item name and then **Item Grade List**, as shown on the previous page.
While you may not choose to use a fixed grade scale, be aware that Blackboard allows you to customize the letter grade scale used. To do this, click the Gradebook Settings button on the top of the spreadsheet view of the Gradebook. You will get the following screen:

![Gradebook Settings](image)

Next, click on Manage Display Options, which will get you the following screen:

![Manage Display Options](image)

From here, click the Modify button (circled above) in the Letter row, and you will finally get to the screen where you can set Blackboard's letter grades, shown on the next page. Be aware what you set here affects EVERY letter grade in your Gradebook. You can not make separate settings for each individual assessment. Note that there are Add and Remove buttons allowing you to add/remove rows. For example, Dominican University does not officially have an "A+" grade. You can remove this plus any other grades that you would like to remove.

Check the "will be calculated as" settings!

It is worth noting that if you are relying on Blackboard's Gradebook to actually calculate your final grades and/or grade weights and you are using letter grades, Blackboard will take your letter grades and "convert" them to specific percentage scores. For example, in the screenshot on the next page, anyone receiving a B+ will be given a score of 88.5%, though their actual score may have been anywhere from 87% to 90%.

Also, take care with the letter grades. These are case-sensitive! There is a difference between a "b" and a "B" when typing in grades.
Are you among those who have difficulty figuring out how a term paper worth 100 points in a gradebook can be worth 15% of the grade and a PowerPoint presentation worth 50 points can be worth 20% of the grade? If so, Blackboard's ability to weight grades is for you! To use this feature, click the Weight Grades button at the top of the Gradebook:
This brings you to the screen below. For the sake of simplicity, let's say we have four total items in the Gradebook: a term paper, a PowerPoint presentation, a mid-term exam, and a final exam. We want them to be worth, respectively, 15%, 20%, 30%, and 35% of the grade. The first step (already completed) is to add the items to the Gradebook. Afterwards, clicking on the **Weight Grades** button will show the following:

---

### Weight Grades

- **The following error(s) have occurred:**
  - Total of all weights must equal 100%. Current total is 0.0

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weight by Category</th>
<th>Term Paper</th>
<th>PowerPoint Presentation</th>
<th>Mid-Term</th>
<th>Final Exam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra Credit</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Project</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem Set</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
<td>0.0 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Simply type in the appropriate percentages in the **Weight by Item** section. Suffice to say, they MUST add up to 100%! (That is why Blackboard gives you the annoying error message at the top of the screen the first time you enter the **Weight Grades** screen.)

What is **Weight by Category** on the left? Way back on page 98, when we showed how to add an item to the Gradebook, you may have seen that Blackboard assigns a Category name to every item (such as exam, paper, etc.) So, **Weight by Category** gives you the option of making all (collectively) worth a certain percentage of the grade. Therefore, the formula used by Blackboard is taking the weight for the category and dividing that by the number of items in the category.

After clicking **Submit**, the spreadsheet view of your Gradebook will look something like this:
Note that after adding the weight to the Mid-Term and Final Exam, *Blackboard* will not calculate a student's weighted total based on items completed thus far, but rather based on all items in the Gradebook. It takes into account the full 100% and weighs each item accordingly.

**Student View of Gradebook**

Assuming you enabled the ability for students to view the online Gradebook, students may access it by clicking the **Tools** menu item, and then clicking **View Grades** from the ensuing screen (which they will have to scroll down a bit to see!). An alternative--and one which students will likely appreciate--is to make a separate menu item for the Gradebook. To do this, go into the Control Panel, click on **Manage Course Menu** (under the **Course Options** section), and from the ensuing screen click on the **Add Tool Area** button. (Since the online Gradebook is considered a "tool," you want to click this rather than the Add Content Area button.) Finally, in the **Area Type** drop-down menu from the following screen, click on **Student Gradebook**. This will add the item to the menu:
Once students get into their Gradebook, they will be able to see all grades you have entered. Here is where that option to include item in gradebook score calculations seen on the Add/Modify Gradebook Item screen (see page 98) comes into play. If you selected No for this option for, let's say, the Mid-Term and the Final, here is what students will see:

| Item Name               | Date           | Grade | Points Possible | Class Average | Weight
|-------------------------|----------------|-------|-----------------|---------------|--------
| Term Paper             | 4/12/04 3:40 PM | 88    | 100             | 82.12         | 15%    
| PowerPoint Presentation| 4/12/04 3:46 PM | C+    | 60              | 44.12         | 20%    
| Mid-Term               | 2/26/04        | -     | 75              | -             | 30%    
| Final Exam             | 4/29/04        | -     | 100             | -             | 35%    
| Total                  |                |       | 127             | -             |        
| Weighted Total         |                |       | 28.8%           | -             |        

On the other hand, if you selected the default of Yes for all items in the Gradebook, note the slight difference:

| Item Name               | Date           | Grade | Points Possible | Class Average | Weight
|-------------------------|----------------|-------|-----------------|---------------|--------
| Term Paper             | 4/12/04 3:40 PM | 88    | 100             | 82.12         | 15%    
| PowerPoint Presentation| 4/12/04 3:46 PM | C+    | 50              | 44.12         | 20%    
| Mid-Term               | 2/26/04        | -     | 75              | -             | 30%    
| Final Exam             | 4/29/04        | -     | 100             | -             | 35%    
| Total                  |                |       | 127             | 325           |        
| Weighted Total         |                |       | 28.8%           | -             |        

See the difference? Leaving at the default Yes adds in everything to the Total row in the Points Possible column. Saying No to the two they have not completed yet does not. (Of course, one alternative is to simply not add the items not completed yet to the Gradebook at all, but student may appreciate knowing what's ahead!)

Unfortunately, the Weighted Total may throw students off a bit, because it takes into account everything in the Gradebook, and does not reflect the weighted total taking into account only those things they've completed so far.

Class Average a Necessary Evil
One thing some instructors have complained about in the student view of the online Gradebook is that students can see the class average. There is NOT any way to suppress this information from the student view.

Needless to say, students can view only their own grades!
Downloading/Uploading Grades

Blackboard gives you the ability to download and upload grades from a spreadsheet application—sort of. While uploading something directly from an Excel workbook sounds good in theory, odds are it will not work properly in Blackboard. For best results, you should FIRST download a Gradebook from Blackboard and use that Gradebook in Excel. That way, everything will be formatted the way Blackboard expects it to be formatted when you decide to re-upload it.

This feature allows you to avoid "double-entry": entering your grades in both Excel and Blackboard. Once you download a Gradebook from Blackboard and start using it in Excel, you can then enter your grades in Excel, and upload them to Blackboard. And yes, you can even add a new item in Excel. Here's the process.

Download First!

First, get to your Gradebook going in Blackboard. Here is what we have so far in our Gradebook:

![Gradebook Screenshot]

We click the Download Grades button (circled above) and get the following:

**Download Gradebook**

Instructions:

The gradebook has been saved to a file. To download this file to your computer, follow the instructions below.

1. After saving the file, open Microsoft Excel or a similar program, and go to the File menu. Select Open. On a Macintosh, this may be the only way to open the file, as the system may not automatically associate the saved file with Excel.
2. Locate the directory where the file is saved and double-click the filename (the file is named gb_export.csv by default.)

Download Tip: When downloading the gradebook, you may want to save it to a more permanent location, rather than the default location. This will help you locate the gradebook more easily once downloaded is complete.

After reading the instructions, click the Download button and you will get file download dialog similar to what you may have seen in the past when downloading files from the Internet:
At this point, you should click the **Save** button and specify the file location from the ensuing dialog box:

![Save As](image)

Note that the file type is a **csv** file, which some of you spreadsheet veterans are likely used to seeing. Go ahead and click the **Save** button (you can obviously rename the file if you want to), and you are done with this part.
Open Your Saved File in Your Spreadsheet Application

Next, we will open the saved file in our spreadsheet application of choice here at Dominican: Excel. In Excel, click File...Open. Remember, however, that since it was downloaded as a .csv file, you must remember to set the Files of type: drop-down menu at the bottom either to Text Files or to All Files:

![Excel Open dialog box](image)

On the next page is what the spreadsheet will look like:
Note that the Total column (one score has been selected, below) has a value "typed in" and is NOT a formula. This is normal, because it (and the Weighted Total column) will not be uploaded.

It is important to note the following.

The Total and Weighted Total Columns Are Text, Not Formulas!
Although the Total and Weighted Total (if you used weighted grades) columns are included, they are plain numeric values and not formulas, as seen on the formula bar in the above screenshot. This is because these values are generated by Blackboard within the Gradebook feature. When your file is later uploaded to Blackboard (should you choose to do this), it is important to remember that these columns ARE NOT UPLOADED. Therefore, don't bother changing any values in these columns.
Uploading a Gradebook Back Into Blackboard

Uploading back to Blackboard is fairly simple, but let's throw a new wrinkle in. Say you decide to add a Gradebook item to your spreadsheet in Excel. What then? Fortunately, it's a fairly simple process. As seen in the screenshot below, we've added a column called Oral Presentation and typed in the scores:

![Screen capture of Excel spreadsheet showing grades]

```
A1 = Last Name, First Name (User Name) | Student Id
B 2 Badenov, E 76 D-
C 3 Brown, Ch 45 A-
D 4 Dahl, Bar 100 A+
E 5 Doe, John 93 A
F 6 Rabbit, Jan 88 C+
G 7 Student, Ji 95 B
H 8 Student, Je 65 A+
I 9 Vader, Ella 95 A+
```

DO NOT ADD OR MODIFY USERS!
Any Gradebook upload that contains user data for any user name that is not enrolled in Blackboard will not be processed. Also, do not modify the user names. If you plan on uploading a Gradebook to Blackboard, this is not the place to start getting fancy with the user names, such as adding preferred nicknames, etc. (As we will see, Blackboard's Upload Gradebook screen will reiterate this.)
Next, click **File...Save As**. We will not do a "regular" save, because it's not a bad idea to rename it to a different file name (just in case something bad happens!). Note that the file type should be set to type **csv**, which it should be by default, but we type in a new name:

![Save As dialog box with file name set to `gradebook with oral presentation.csv`.

Excel will give you a warning that some thing may be incompatible. This is normal for a CSV file type. Go ahead and click **Yes** in this dialog box and will save it.

![Microsoft Excel warning dialog box.

Close Excel and go back into **Blackboard**. Click the **Upload Grades** button from the spreadsheet view of the Gradebook:
You will get a screen like the one below. By now, you are pretty familiar with using the **Browse** button next to a file name, which we have already done. (Note the statement that students cannot be added in this upload file):

![Upload Gradebook](image)

When you click the **Submit** button, **Blackboard** will ask you *which specific column you wish to upload*. This is one way **Blackboard** helps ensure you will not accidentally overwrite an existing column with new grades you may have put in the **Excel** spreadsheet:

![Choose Column to Import](image)

Suffice to say that if you DID create a new column in the spreadsheet (as we did in our example), you should make sure you **Create New Gradebook Item**!
Click **Submit**, you will immediately get the following **Add/Modify Gradebook Item** screen. Treat this as you would for any item you add to the Gradebook. Note that the **Item Name** is already filled in for you. The main thing you want to do fill in the **Points Possible** and, if you want, change the **Category**:

![Add/Modify Gradebook Item](image)

Click **Submit**, and you'll get an acknowledgement screen, where you should click **OK** . . .

![Gradebook Item successfully updated.](image)

. . . after which, you will get a screen asking you to choose the rows to import. The "rows" are the students, and assuming you recorded a grade for all students in your new item (which we did in our example), it's quickest to simply click the **Select All** column to place a checkmark next to everyone's name:

*Using Blackboard at Dominican University: A Faculty Guide - Part Five of Five*
Click the **Submit** button after checking all names, and you will receive yet another *Gradebook Item successfully updated* screen like we have already seen. Click **OK** at that screen, and you will FINALLY be returned to the spreadsheet view of your Gradebook, with your new column added!

Note that **Blackboard** added the column at the end. Fortunately, you can simply click on the **Manage Items** button at the top to get a screen that will allow you to place these items in any order you want.
**Gradebook View and Course Statistics**

The Gradebook Views link in the Control Panel simply gives you the option to **View Grades by Item** or **View Grades by User** and allows you to change any grades from following screens.

**Course Statistics** allows you to view course-wide statistics such as the number of times specific users have logged in and the times they have viewed the material. You can also view the number of times they have accessed specific areas (such as content areas). This is different from when you had the option to **track number of views** when adding an item in a Content Area (as discussed in our section on Content Areas, beginning on page 27). That option added a **Tracking** button in that area of the Control Panel. These course statistics are less specific.

**Adding an Assignment That Automatically Gets Included in Gradebook**

_**Blackboard**_ has a way of adding an assignment so that it automatically gets included in the Gradebook, has a grade posted in the Gradebook, _and_ allows you to exchange the file with the student using a method other than the Digital Drop Box. This is available within any Content Area of _Blackboard_, via the menu at the far right:

Click **GO**, _not_ the OK button when doing this.

The screen that follows (shown on the next page) will allow you to post instructions for the assignment and add an attachment. This is similar to any other file upload you have done in _Blackboard_, but note that you also input the total points for the assignment. Doing this will automatically add the entry to your Gradebook.
Next time you check your Gradebook, you will see that this assignment has been added.

**Student's View of Assignment**

Once posted, students will see the assignment in the content area you placed it within. See the following page for the student's view:
Upon clicking the link, they will see the file you have uploaded and see a dialog box where they, in turn, can submit the assignment back to you:

**Poem Analysis**

Write a brief, one-paragraph explication of the Hardy poem *She, At His Funeral*. The poem itself is attached as a Word document.

---

Upon clicking the link, they will see the file you have uploaded and see a dialog box where they, in turn, can submit the assignment back to you:

---

**Upload Assignment: Poem Analysis**

1. **Assignment Information**
   - **Name:** Poem Analysis
   - **Instructions:** Write a brief, one-paragraph explication of the Hardy poem *She, At His Funeral*. The poem itself is attached as a Word document.
   - **Assignment Files:** [She, At His Funeral](she_at_his_funeral.doc)

2. **Your Files**
   - **Comments:** Here my explication of the poem, Prof. Johnson.

3. **Submit**
   - Press save to continue working on this assignment later, or submit when you are ready to turn in this assignment.
What You Do Next

To access what the student submitted, go into the Gradebook, and click directly on the exclamation point icon:

```
Click here!
```

That will bring you to the Modify Grade screen, where you will later be able to enter your grade, but for now be able to download what the student submitted by clicking on the View button:

```
Modify Grade

Enter or modify a grade for the assignment. Click View to access files sent by the student, to enter feedback or instructor notes, or to send a file to the student.

Student Name | Item Name | Item Date | Last Submitted/Modified | Grade | Points Possible | Class Average | Weight |
--------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------------|-------|----------------|--------------|--------|
Charlie Brown (classroom) | Poem Analysis (Assignment) | May 11, 2004 | May 11, 2004 2:51 PM | 4.5 | 15 | 0 | 0.0 |

Student's Comments: Here my explication of the poem, Prof. Johnson.
Feedback to Student:
Instructor Notes:
```

This, in turn, leads you to the screen shown on the next page where you can download the assignment, and add your own comments. (You can even upload yet another file specifically to that student):
The student will be able to view your comments (or additional file) by going back to the content area where it was originally posted.
Support

This section of the Control Panel contains three links:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact System Administrator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We have discussed the second one, Manual, several times throughout this Handbook. This will open a separate screen that contains Blackboard's entire Instructor Manual is the best place to go for an overview of something that is unfamiliar to you or that this Handbook does not cover.

The Support link will take you to Blackboard's official support site at http://support.blackboard.com. In order to use this site, however, you will have to create your own account by scrolling all the way to the bottom of their screen, and clicking the following link:

Or, if you are a student or instructor needing help create an account today!

Once in, we find the so-called Training Center link most useful, after clicking on Self-Study Materials. This leads to several HTML and Flash documents demonstrating key concepts in Blackboard course creation.

Finally, Contact System Administrator will generate an e-mail to Ken Black, our current administrator. His e-mail address is: kblack@dom.edu