

Canvas Gradebook Basics Webinar Transcript

Introduction 00:00

Christine: Howdy, and welcome to this Canvas gradebook webinar! We're going to get started with the Canvas gradebook today. In our agenda, first of all, I want to share that we're here to support you with your Canvas and your course development questions, and you can get help by sending an email to EngrLearnTech@tamu.edu. Another way you can get help is by going to our website, which is LearnTech.engr.tamu.edu.

On that page, we have a list of our live and recorded workshops, so if you miss a workshop, you can often find a recording on the website here, and that's our website. Another place that you can find help is also on the Office of Academic Innovation website, which is lms.tamu.edu (putting that link in there as well). On this site, they have a lot of support for the transition over to Canvas as well. They also have many YouTube videos that are also very helpful.

Agenda 01:09

Our agenda today will go over some of the basic questions that we get for Gradebook, starting from "Where can I see grades?" all the way to "What do I need to do at the end of the semester?" Our objective today is that you will hopefully be able to successfully navigate and use Canvas gradebook features to finalize grades.

Where can I find grades? 01:34

So, at the very beginning, "Where can I see grades?" The grade columns are visible in the grades section of the course navigation menu. The course navigation menu is found on the left-hand side of the page, and it looks like this image that we have in the center. But, sometimes, the course navigation menu is not visible. If you don't see the course navigation menu, look for the three-line symbol (sometimes called a "hamburger menu") that I have circled in orange up here at the top. When you click that, it will expand the menu, and then you can look down for the grades section.

What does the gradebook look like in Canvas? 02:12

"What does the gradebook look like in Canvas?" Here is a screenshot of the grade columns in Canvas. Here is each individual assignment and column, a very familiar layout similar to

eCampus. The grade columns are automatically created for each assignment and quiz, and this is what they look like. You may see additional columns with a percentage at the bottom on the grade columns' far right. If you've set up assignment groups, it'll show students their running total in any assignment category that you've created.

Both "grade" columns and "total" columns can be hidden from students, but the "total" columns can either all be hidden or all be visible. They cannot be hidden selectively, whereas the individual grades can be hidden one by one.

Where can I see student submissions? 03:17

"Where can you see student submissions?" If you click on the published assignment or quiz title anywhere in the course, whether that's in Gradebook, on the modules page, or on the assignments page... Whenever you click on that title, it will take you to the details page for the assignment or the quiz. Then, in the sidebar menu on the right side of the page, you have options to either download all the files if you have file submissions, and it'll group those into a zip folder. Or, you can open SpeedGrader, and that's how you would access inline grading abilities.

Another way to access the SpeedGrader function is in the gradebook on the three-dot menu; if you click that and open it, you will see the SpeedGrader option. But to download, you do have to go to the quiz details page; that's the only place you'll be able to download.

How can I find a grade column? Filtering & Ordering columns 04:18

Once you're within the gradebook, important functions are ordering or filtering your grade columns. You can do this in two different ways. You can order your columns by dragging and dropping them, and that can reorder them horizontally. Alternatively, you can click on "View > Arrange By," then you can have them appear horizontally according to due dates, points, or module.

Then if you're having trouble finding an assignment, you can use filters. When you enable the filters by clicking "View" and then "Filters," it will open up a drop-down box on the top-right corner of the gradebook. Then, you can click that drop-down menu and isolate it by module or by assignment group to quickly find the grade column you're looking for. That's very helpful if you're quickly trying to make a change in the midterm column without having to scroll through 20 or 30 columns. You can quickly rule it out using the drop-down filters.

How can I sort student results & status within a column? 05:38

Within the column, sometimes you would wish to arrange the student results vertically to highlight students who are missing a grade or view the grades from high to low. You can do that by clicking on the three dots in the column header. That allows you to sort student grades within the column, and then you can sort by grade, by missing, or by late.

There's also the ability to color-code the column. Each cell can be color-coded by status. You can set up your own colors. This would allow you to visually look across the field and quickly identify whatever characteristics are important to you. For example, for students who are missing assignments, you can have those coded red so that you can quickly identify who's missing assignments. You can customize these colors, so if you don't want so many, you might change some of them to white. The only thing I would recommend is: do not set your background color to black because then you won't be able to see your text.

What does the search bar do? 07:00

On the top-right of the gradebook, you're going to see a search bar. I often hear the question, "What does the search bar do?" The search bar has one function, which is to search by student name. This allows you to quickly isolate the grades and submissions for one student, so that's what the search bar is for.

How can I add a column to the gradebook? 07:22

One of the most common functions that faculty and instructors need to do is to add a column to the gradebook that's not necessarily attached to a quiz. In Canvas, all gradebook columns are associated with an assignment or quiz. So, to create an extra gradebook column for a paper quiz, you will not see that in the gradebook menu.

Instead, you'll need to create a new assignment. Within the assignment, you will see a "Submission Type" area in the settings, and then you will select either "no submission" or "on paper." This will allow you to create a new column and manually input those grades or upload those grades from a CSV file.

What's the difference between "no submission" and "on paper"? "On paper" is an indication that will be communicated to the students, which allows them to see the assignment and due date and be reminded of that assignment and know that that is an assignment they will turn in in class, as a paper-based assignment as opposed to an assignment that is turned in online. This

is especially good in settings where you're using the Canvas as a gradebook, but you're not necessarily using Canvas for the full-class experience (if your class is not online).

How can I hide all grades from students? 09:05

Another really important question is, "How can I hide all grades from students?" If you notice within the gradebook, at the far-right corner, you will see a gear icon. And when you click on that gear icon, it gives you some options. The most important option here is your grade posting policy. Here is where you can set whether you want all of the grades to be automatically visible to students or whether you want to manually post grades.

This is important, especially if you have a self-grading quiz, a quiz that grades itself. If you don't want that grade to be their final grade, you want to make sure students are not able to automatically see those grades. You want the chance to change those grades before they're visible. So, here's where you would select "Manually Post Grades." You can do this individually for each grade column, or you can set a grade posting policy for your entire course. That's why it says "all grades" here. This is where you set your grading policy for the entire course.

On the other hand, if you'd like only to hide specific grades from students, you can set the grade posting policy for a single column within the column three-dot menu. Here are some caveats on this information.

These hide and post options are only available after one grade has been entered. You can use the test student to enter a grade, and then hide and post grades. But, it's meant to be used to set the grade posting policy for the column before you enter the grades. After you enter the grades, you can use the hide and post grades to make those grades available or hide them from students as you desire.

How can I export an excel file of the gradebook? 11:18

Another important function in the gradebook is, "How can you export an Excel file of the gradebook?" You can export a file, then input your grades and import [the file] again. That is within the actions menu on the top left-hand corner of the gradebook. In the actions menu, you can see "Export." That gives you your file where you can put in your student grades. Then, "Import" allows you to pull in that file, and the grades will be the grades that you put onto your Excel sheet then can be added into the gradebook. This can save you from having to individually type grades when you're manually putting grades into the gradebook.

How can I group or organize my grades? 12:06

Now, we're going to discuss assignment groups a little bit. That's underneath the question, "How can I group and organize my grades?" Canvas has a feature called "Assignment Groups."

Assignment Groups is how you can create weighted categories for your assignments and quizzes that would match your syllabus. Here, in my example image, I have six categories. And, in each of these categories, all of the assignments are worth 40% of the total grade. Labs are worth 10%, quizzes are worth 10%, homework is worth 10%, the midterm exam is 15%, and the final exam is 15% of the total. This will create groups, and groups will then calculate based on the assignments within a group.

Here is what the assignment groups [feature] looks like. If you click the "Assignments" tab on the assignments page in the course navigation menu, you'll see a couple of features. First of all, these are the individual assignments, and then the grade title bar indicates the group they're part of. You can move assignments between groups simply by dragging and dropping them into a new group by scrolling over these six dots on the far left.

You can assign the group weights so that all of the group assignments are averaged and weighted for the final grade. You can create a group that does not contribute to the final grade by specifying that percentage as zero. And, you can add a group by clicking on the "Add (+) Group" icon at the top-right of the page.

You can set the group totals by clicking the three-dot menu that's over on the right-hand corner of each group, but you can also do it in a batch by clicking the three-dot menu at the top right-hand of the Assignments Group page, which will allow you to customize all of the grade percentages and view the total.

Why do we use assignment groups? Assignment groups is how you set up a weighted total. All graded assignments are then organized into groups, and a weighted percentage is assigned to each group. However, you do not necessarily need to use assignment groups. You can also use a calculated total; that is when you do not have any assignment groups.

Then, assignments are weighted equally where a point is a point. This is actually the default setup in Canvas. These are two options that you have available to you when you're organizing your grades.

How can I drop the lowest score and other gradebook functions 15:35

A couple of other questions that frequently come up: “How can I drop or ignore the lowest scores?” That is within the Assignment Group setting, and that is on this three-dot menu for each group. You can click on that, and that will allow you to set the policy for the grades within that group. “How can I quickly give all students the same grade or input zero for all missing grades?” This is within the three-dot menu on the gradebook column for that assignment. Then you can click on “Default Grade,” and that allows you to set a grade for all of the missing grades.

“How can you see when a grade change happened?” This is helpful when you have more than one person grading in your course and are unsure what happened. You can view gradebook history in the “Gradebook” menu at the top left of the gradebook.

A really important question is, “If you do not want students to view the totals for your assignment groups, how can you hide that?” That is within the “Settings” > “Course Details” on the Settings menu within the course navigation menu. This is relevant when you have raw scores and a final score, and your raw scores are different from... For example, if you have a midterm (or the raw scores), you will add in a new column with the actual final score. To prevent your students from becoming agitated, you need to hide the total in that assignment group so they can’t see it. That total will not reflect the final grade.

Audience Question: How to input 0 for all missing grades 17:28

Participant 1: Yes, Christine, if you could go back one slide, please. I wanted to ask where you mentioned how to input zero for all missing grades. Yeah, this has been something that I have always been looking for a better solution to in eCampus. So, in this case, as you mentioned, do we still have to individually enter zero? What I want is once the deadline passes, if someone has not submitted an assignment or a test, the LMS automatically gives a zero. Is this possible?

Christine: Yes. That will be found within this gear menu here, and then that’s under “Late Policies.” Then, what you can do is [check] “Automatically apply grade for missing submissions,” and then you can put a zero. Oops.

Participant 1: That’s great. That’s a great feature.

Christine: Yes, you can do that.

Participant 1: Thank you. Thanks for your question.

Keyboard Shortcuts 18:33

There are some keyboard shortcuts for grading. These are the keyboard shortcuts for grading, and you can see those right here next to the search bar if you would like to use them.

End of Semester Checklist 18:48

Last, we're going to go over a checklist of, "What does a professor need to check at the end of a semester?" This is a checklist that we have here, and then we'll go over some of the details of this checklist.

Before you finalize grades at the end of a semester, you should check your grading scheme and verify it matches your syllabus.

If you're using Assignment groups, you should ensure that your groups are set up, and the assignments are in the correct group.

You'll want to have all your grades entered, and make sure that no grades are blank or missing. Make sure that the grades are posted and visible to students.

Download a copy of your grades for your records, if you'd like to.

Check the permissions for student access.

How can I check the grading scheme of my course? 19:59

Then, finally, submit your grades to Howdy. Some of those are things we've already gone over, but we will check first. We will talk about a few of them that we haven't talked about. First is, "How do I check or change the grading scheme of my course?" The grading scheme is located within the Settings menu. Within Course Details, you can Enable Course Grading Scheme and then View the Grading Scheme. I'll show you that: course navigation menu, go to Settings, and then here is where the grading scheme is. You can click "View Grading Scheme." This is where you can verify this matches your syllabus. Usually, it's set to a default that's correct, but it's always a good idea to double-check.

Concluding the course and submitting to Howdy 20:43

Another thing you might note in the same place is concluding your course. This is usually automatically populated by AI (the Office of Academic Innovation). Then, you would want to check and make sure those settings are set to your liking.

Submitting the grades to Howdy. The instructions are found on lms.tamu.edu. I cannot walk you through that because I do not have access to it because I don't have a course currently. An important thing to know about submitting grades to Howdy is that there are specific times when that occurs, so you want to ensure that you get those done within the necessary timeframe.

Common mistakes 21:32

A couple of common mistakes that happen when setting up your gradebook for the end of the semester: one is putting assignments that don't belong into an assignment group that has a grading rule. This can make your total for that grade for that assignment group to be incorrect. I'm going to skip over that; those are all very complex cases.

Another thing that can occur is that if you didn't put a zero for a missing assignment, students will see an average that's significantly higher than their actual grade, and we know that leads to students being unpleasantly disappointed, and then a mess that has to be sorted through.

Another issue is failing to specify total points when setting up a required assignment. That will mess up your grade weighting as well. Then, if your grade scheme isn't set up, the total grade column won't calculate correctly.

This is the checklist one last time, and I will move forward if there are no questions.

Resources and Conclusion 22:57

There's an Instructor Guide within the Canvas community; I highly, highly recommend looking into the Instructor Guide. When you're learning how to use the gradebook, there's a learning curve when moving from the eCampus gradebook to the Canvas gradebook because things do not seem like they're set up intuitively. So, expect to have some challenges and some unexpected things as you work through that. You can find a lot of resources in the Instructor Guide, and, of course, on the resources I listed at the beginning of the presentation. Once you get everything set up, it's going to be a lot easier for your next semester.