Columns for tests and assignments in Blackboard’s Grade Center typically reflect how a student scored on specific assessments. For example, consider this Evaluation Scheme, which reflects what you would see in a course outline:

**Assignment 1:** 20% (marked out of 10 marks)
**Assignment 2:** 20% (marked out of 10 marks)
**Mid-term Exam:** 25% (marked out of 25 marks)
**Final Exam:** 35% (marked out of 35 marks)

The column for Assignment 1, for example, would have a point total of 10 marks. However, the relative worth of that assignment in the course, according to the Evaluation Scheme, is 20%.

Therefore, presenting only the point totals to students via the Grade Centre/My Grades doesn’t best reflect how a student is doing in the course.

Blackboard’s Grade Center allows instructors present student grades in a way that conforms more closely to course’s Evaluation Scheme. Instead of showing student grades as sum total of marks attained in all assessments, instructors can “weight” certain categories or specific columns as a percentage relative to its worth in the course.

They can do this by creating a **weighted grade column** which links either to a) columns assigned a particular category or b) specific “items” or columns.

Furthermore, instructors can use a weighted total column to drop a certain number of scores. This is often used with quizzes. For example, if an instructor allows students to take 12 quizzes but have only the 10 highest scores count, the weighted grade column allows the lowest 2 scores to be dropped.

**Creating an Weighted Grade Column**

1. Move the cursor over the **Create Calculated Column** icon in the action bar of the **Grade Center**.
2. Select **Weighted Column** from the action link menu.

3. Type in a **Column Name** (Required).

   *Column Name is a formal name for the Item, and is displayed in the Grade Center if no Grade Center Display Name is entered. This field will only display the first 15 characters in the column header.*

**Selecting Columns for Weighting**

In order for grades to be weighted properly, you need to select either individual columns (items) or columns that are label with assigned a particular category.
In many courses, instructors like to have a category (e.g. Assignments, Quizzes, Tests, Attendance, etc.) count for a certain percentage of the total course grade. In the example below, Assignments count as 15% of the total course grade, the Proposal project counts as 30%, and the Usability Testing project counts as 15%. Additional projects and assignments are weighted such that the combined total of all columns will be 100%.

1. Select the column items to be included in the Weighted Grade Column, and enter the percentages for each column or Category to be included in the Weighted Grade.

   **Columns to Select** – A list of all columns in the Grade Center. Select the Column and click the arrow to add it to the Weighted Grade column.

   **Categories to Select** – A list of all Categories in the Grade Center. Select the category and click the arrow to add it to the Weighted Grade column.

2. When a Category has been selected, several other options appear:
   - Select a **Grading Period for the Category** using the drop-down menu. This will only appear if a Grading Period has been created. Only columns within the selected Grading Period will be included in the Weighted Grade. **If you don’t use grading periods, don’t worry about this option.**
   - Select how to weigh columns within the Category: Equally or Proportionally.
     - Choosing **Equally** applies equal value to all columns within a Category. Best used for items already of equal value (e.g. quizzes worth 10 points each).
     - Choosing **Proportionally** applies the appropriate value to a Grade Item based on its points compared to other columns in the Category. Best used for items that may have variable points.
assigned to them (e.g. one assignment worth 5 points and a larger assignment worth 10 points). Proportionally weighting items gives more weight to items that are already worth more.

- Decide whether to drop high or low grades within the Category or use the lowest or highest value in the category.

3. After all columns and Categories have been selected, enter the percentage for each selection. The total percentages for the weighted categories and/or columns should be 100%.
- To remove a selected Grade Item or Category from consideration, click the red “X”.

4. **Calculate as a running total** – Select **Yes** to calculate the weight as a running total to include only the Columns that have been graded. Select **No** to include all items.

**Selecting Options**

5. You can share the **Weighted Grade** column with your students.

The following permissions can be selected to add the column to My Grades (the student view of the Grade Center):
- **Include Column in the Grade Center calculations** – Makes the column available for use in other calculations.
- **Show Column in My Grades** – Shows the column in My Grades.
- **Shows Statistics (average and median) to Students** – Shows the Weighted Grade column statistics in My Grades.

6. Click **Submit** to save.