About Total Columns

The total column is a type of calculated column that generates a grade based on the cumulative points earned, related to the points allowed. You can select which columns and categories are included in a total column’s calculation. When creating a total column, you can include other calculated columns.

A total column is created by default and appears in new courses. You can rename, change the settings, change which columns are included, or delete this default column. The following list includes the settings for the default total column.

- All grade columns are included in the calculation.
- Calculated columns are not included. Ungraded items are not included. You can change this by editing the column and selecting No for **Calculate as Running Total**.
- Included in **Smart Views > Final Grade View**. To learn more, see Using Smart Views in the Grade Center.
- Set as the external grade column, which is the grade reported to your school. You cannot delete the default total column until you set another column as the external grade. Set any column as the external grade column by accessing the contextual menu in the column header. Select **Set as External Grade**.

_columns with text as the grade display are not included in a total column's calculation. For example, if you set a column to display text, such as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory, you cannot use it in grade calculations._

Total Points Formula

Add the points possible of all selected columns to fill the total points. Then, add a student’s earned scores for all selected columns. This is the total earned out of the total points possible. Exempted items are ignored. The results display according to the **Primary** and **Secondary Display** options.

Column 1 points earned + Column 2 points earned + Column 3 points earned + Column 4 points earned = Total Points Earned out of Total Points Possible

**Example:** Student A

Eight values: 8/10, 3/5, 2/2, 3/7, 47/50, 20/25, 88/100

Earned Points Value: 171

Points Possible Value: 199

Total Points: 171/199

**Example:** Student B

Eight values: 9/10, X (exempt), 1/2, 5/7, 45/50, X, 22/25, 90/100
You can assign a grade to a maximum of four decimal places, but the Grade Center displays only to a maximum of two decimal places. Grades to three or four decimal places are rounded up. For example, 45.4357 is rounded up to 45.44. Calculated columns also display to a maximum of two decimal places.

How to Create Total Columns

The total column is a type of calculated column that generates a grade based on the cumulative points earned, related to the points allowed. You can select which columns, grading periods, and categories are used in the calculation for a total column. You can change your selections at any time and the calculation updates automatically.

A total column is created by default and appears in new courses. You can rename, change the settings, change which columns are included, or delete this default column.

When creating a total column, you can include:

- **All Grade Columns**: Include all individual grade columns in the Grade Center.
- **All Grade Columns in Grading Period**: If grading periods exist, include only the grade columns associated with a grading period.
- **Selected Columns and Categories**: Include specific grade columns and categories (and the associated columns).

Columns with text as the grade display are not included in a total column's calculation. For example, if you set a grade column to display text, such as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory, you cannot use it in calculations.

**Example**: Selected Columns

You create a total column to determine the final grade for the final quarter that includes all of the columns in the final quarter grading period.

**Example**: Selected Columns and Categories

You want to provide students with a percentage score showing their effort on assignments and participation. When you create a total column, you select the Assignment category and two participation columns. Students can view their percentage scores in My Grades.

Use the following steps to create a total column.

1. In the Grade Center, point to **Create Calculated Column** on the action bar.
2. Select **Total Column**.
3. On the **Create Total Column** page, type a brief, descriptive **Column Name**. This name becomes the
column name in the Grade Center and on students’ My Grades pages. If this name is too long to display clearly in the Grade Center, you can type a short, descriptive name in the Grade Center Name box.

Only the first 14-15 characters typed in either name box appear in the column heading in the Grade Center grid. If you point to the column heading, you can see its full name on the Grade Information Bar.

4. Optionally, type a Description. You can use the content editor functions to format the text. Information provided here appears to students when they click the item name in My Grades.

5. Make a selection in the Primary Display drop-down list. The selection is the grade format shown in the Grade Center and to students on their My Grades pages. If you created any custom grading schemas, they appear in the list. Five default options appear:

- **Score**: A numeric grade appears in the column. This is the default setting. If you do not make a selection, the score appears in the grid.

- **Letter**: A letter grade appears in the column. The default grading schema is used to assign letter grades. For example, a score of 21/30 equals 70% and appears as a C.

- **Text**: This default display option does not display text for a total column or allow you to type directly in the column's cell to edit it. If you select Text, the numeric score appears in the column. If you want to display text values, you must create a custom text grading schema. Examples of text values include: Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, and Poor - OR - Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory. If you choose to share the column results with students in My Grades, they will see the text values for their grades.

- **Percentage**: A percentage appears in the column. For example, a score of 21/30 appears as 70%.

- **Complete/Incomplete**: When a student submits an item, a check mark (✔) appears in the column, regardless of the score achieved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Display</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Secondary Display</th>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Complete/Incomplete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Optionally, make a selection in the Secondary Display drop-down list. The default setting is None. The same options appear in this drop-down list except for the option chosen as the Primary Display. In the Grade Center column, the secondary value appears in parentheses. The secondary value does not appear to students, and you cannot manually edit the secondary value from a column’s cell.

If you select the default Text option, text will not appear. If you want text values to appear, create a custom text grading schema.
7. If grading periods exist, you can associate the total column with a grading period by making a selection in the **Grading Period** drop-down list. If no grading periods exist, the drop-down list does not appear. You can use grading periods to Grade Center data and create calculated columns.

8. In the **Select Columns** section, select what to include in the total column’s calculation. The following table lists the options.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Grade Columns</td>
<td>Include all individual grade columns in the Grade Center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Grade Columns in Grading Period</td>
<td>Select a grading period from the drop-down list to include only those columns associated with the grading period in the calculation. If no grading periods exist, the drop-down list does not appear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected Columns and Categories</td>
<td>Select grade columns and categories individually.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Select the columns in the <strong>Columns to Select</strong> box and click the right-pointing arrow to move the selections to the <strong>Selected Columns</strong> box. When you select a column, you can view information about the column in the <strong>Column Information</strong> area below the <strong>Columns to Select</strong> box.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- A column that is set to **No for Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations** does not appear in the selection list.

- For Windows, to select multiple items in a list, press the **SHIFT** key and click the first and last items. To select items out of sequence, press the **CTRL** key and click each item needed. For Macs, press the **COMMAND** key instead of the **CTRL** key.

Select the categories in the **Categories to Select** box and click the right-pointing arrow to move the selections to the **Selected Columns** box. When you select a category, you can view which columns are included in the category in the **Category Information** area below the **Categories to Select** box. Other options appear after you move the category to the **Selected Columns** box:

- If grading periods exist, make a selection in the **Grading Period** drop-down list. If no grading periods exist, the drop-down list does not appear. If you selected a category for the calculation, you can limit the columns used by selecting a particular Grading Period.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Option</strong></th>
<th><strong>Description</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Use only the Lowest -OR- Highest Value to Calculate</td>
<td>removes all grades from the calculation except for the best or worst score.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To delete a selection in the Selected Columns box, click the red X.

9. **Calculate as Running Total**: Select Yes to calculate as a running total. Running totals exempt cells that do not contain data. Select No to include all selected columns in the calculation, using a value of 0 if no grade exists. This can make grades appear artificially low.

10. Select the **Options**.

   - **Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations**: Select Yes to make the column available for potential inclusion when creating calculated columns.
   
   - **Show this Column to Students**: Select Yes to display the column to students in My Grades.
   
   - **Show Statistics (average and median) for this Column to Students in My Grades**: Select Yes to include statistical information with the grade value when shown to students.

11. Click **Submit**.

   If a column is deleted from the Grade Center that is included in a total calculation, it is also removed from the calculation.

The new total column appears last in the Grade Center grid unless you associated it with a grading period. All grading period columns appear together in the grid until you reorder them.

You can change the column's settings at any time and change which columns are included. Once edited, the calculation updates automatically.

You are not allowed to type directly in a total column's cell to edit the calculated grade. Therefore, no contextual
menu appears when you move your mouse pointer over an individual cell in a total column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Testing Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To keep a total column in view, despite the addition of other columns, move the column and freeze it on the Column Organization page.

You can assign a grade to a maximum of four decimal places, but the Grade Center displays only to a maximum of two decimal places. Grades to three or four decimal places are rounded up. For example, 45.4357 is rounded up to 45.44. Calculated columns also display to a maximum of two decimal places.