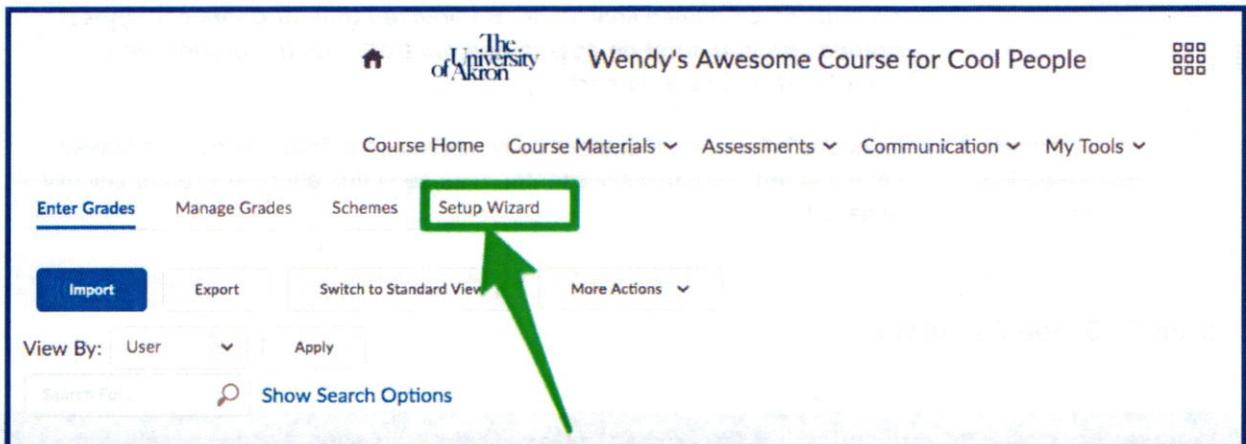


# Demystifying the Brightspace Gradebook

## Use the Grades Setup Wizard

In the Grades tool (under the Assessment link in the Navigation bar), if a grade book is not set up or imported for your course, you will see the Grades Setup Wizard page when you first navigate to the tool. You can also click Setup Wizard to open it. The Grades Setup Wizard guides you through multiple steps that contain set up options you must choose from to create your grade book.

**TIP** Many options in the Grades Setup Wizard have  Get help on icons you can click to find additional explanations on what each option can do.



## Step 1: Choose Grading System

The grading system determines what kind of valuation system is applied to categories and grade items in your grade book.

Grading system	Description
Weighted	Grade items and categories are calculated as a percentage of a final grade worth 100%. The Max. Points assigned to individual grade items can be any value, but their contribution towards the final grade is always their assigned percentage value.
Points	Grade items are calculated using a points system in which the points assigned to each grade item are totaled for the final grade.
Formula	Grade items are calculated using the points system, but a custom defined formula is used to set conditions around how grade items contribute to the final grade. <b>Help is recommended for this option.</b>

## Step 2: Final Grade Released

Option	Description
Calculated Final Grade	The final grade calculated by the grade book. You cannot adjust the final grade without adjusting grade item scores.
Adjusted Final Grade	<p>You can manually change the final grade calculation without affecting grade item scores.</p> <p>An <b>Adjusted Final Grade</b> is a final grade that you <i>must manually enter</i> to override the calculated final grade. <b>Be advised that students can appeal grades and you must be able to demonstrate that the grades were calculated fairly and impartially.</b></p>
Automatically Release Final Grade	If checked, the system automatically marks users' final grades as released once created. You may still alter the release status after being automatically released.

## Step 3: Grade Calculations

Option	Description
Drop ungraded items	Grade items that you have not entered grades for are not counted towards users' milestone grades and final grades. They are ignored in both calculation types. <i>We recommend that you <b>drop ungraded items</b> as long as you carefully and manually enter 0's for every missed assignment. If you fail to enter 0's, students will believe they are magically earning an A for no work!</i>
Treat ungraded items as 0	Grade items that you have not entered automatically count as 0 towards final grades. Select this option if you leave grade items blank because no work was submitted and you do not want to manually enter 0's for students who do not submit assignments. <b>Caution, if you choose this option you will need to remember not to release final grades to students until you have entered grades for all assignments.</b> In this scenario, students are always failing until you enter grades.
Automatically keep final grade updated	If you select this check box, final grades are automatically adjusted after changing a grade item or a calculation option. If you do not select this option, you must manually go to grade book to perform final grade recalculations

## Step 4: Choose Default Grade Scheme

Grade schemes define how grades are organized or labeled within a course or for a specific grade item. If you need to create a manual grade scheme, we recommend that you seek assistance.

## Step 5: Managing View Display Options

This step controls how you see grade calculation data. This option does not manage how many decimal places are displayed to students.

## Step 6: Student View Display Options

This step controls how grades appear to students. You can set whether they see their grades as straight values, percentages, or scheme levels, and whether they can see the calculation method (logic) behind their final grade. In general these settings are a matter of clarity.

## Step 7: Grade Setup Summary

The final step summarizes the choices you made while setting up your grade book.

## What are Grade Items and Categories?

Using Categories in your gradebook allows you to create headings that help organize your Grade Items. A category consists of one or more grade items. If you use a weighted grading system with percentages, you must use Categories to identify each weighted area.

To create Categories and Grade Items, you must be in your gradebook. To locate your gradebook, go to Course Admin and click on **Grades** under the assessment heading.

### Create grade book categories

Use grade book categories to organize and group related grade items into sections. For example, you could have separate categories for Assignment Submissions, Quizzes, Case Studies, Participation, Discussions, and so on. When grade items are grouped together in a category, you can distribute points equally across all grade items and drop the highest or lowest item in the group.

**Note:** For a points-based gradebook, categories are optional. For a weighted gradebook, categories are required.

1. On the **Manage Grades** page, click **Category** from the New button.
2. Type a **Name** for the category.
3. Optional: enter a **Short Name** to display in the grade book.
4. Optional: enter a **Description** of the category.

- If you are using the weighted system, enter the total Weight or percentage that you want the category to contribute towards the final grade.

Distribution

Manually assign weight to items in the category

Distribute weights by points across all items in the category

- Distribute weight evenly across all items

0	Number of highest non-bonus items to drop for each user <span style="float: right;">?</span>
1	Number of lowest non-bonus items to drop for each user <span style="float: right;">?</span>

*This example treats all grade items equally, and drops the lowest grade.*

- Set additional options as required and click **Save**, then click **Close**.

**Important:** Brightspace will calculate a subtotal for categories. For this reason, you cannot point bonus items in a category by themselves (the subtotal denominator would be 0 and division by 0 is an arbitrary math violation).

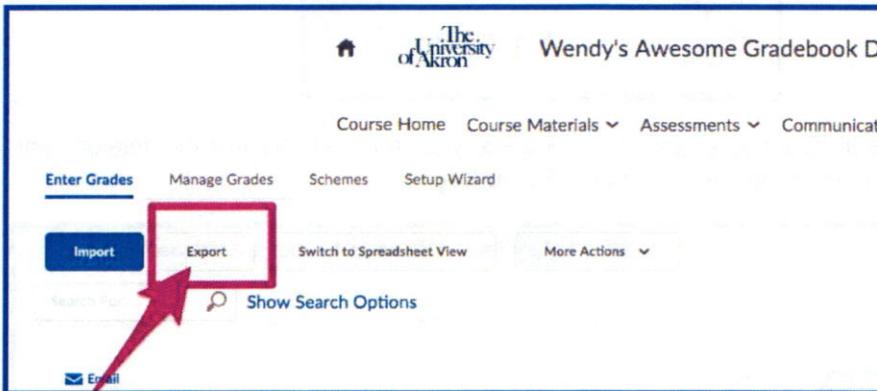
### Create a Grade Item

- On the **Manage Grades** page, click **Item** from the **New** button.
- Click **Numeric** (in almost all cases).
- Enter a **Name** for the grade item.
- Optional enter a **Short Name** to display in the grade book.
- If you want the grade item associated with a category, select a category from the **Category** dropdown list.
- Enter a **Description** of the grade item. If you want to make the description available to users, select **Allow users to view grade item description**.
- Enter the value you want the item graded out of in the **Max. Points** field.
- If you are using the weighted system, enter the **Weight** you want the grade item to contribute to the category. If the item does not belong to a category, the **Weight** you enter contributes to the final grade.
- If you want users' grades to exceed the total value of the item, select the **Can Exceed** check box.
- Select the **Bonus** check box if you want the item counted as a bonus item.
- NOTE:** Bonus items are not counted towards the maximum points for a category or final grade. If available, you must select the **Can Exceed** check box, and the **Bonus** check box to allow users' grades to exceed the maximum points specified.

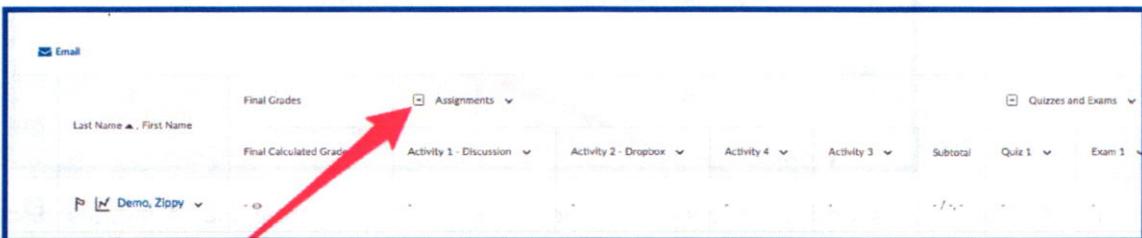
12. If you are using the points system, you can also choose the **Exclude from Final Grade Calculation** option. If you are using the weighted system you can accomplish the same results by setting the weight to 0%.
13. You can click **Add Rubric** to add a rubric, or click the **Create Rubric in New Window** link to create a new rubric.
14. Click **Save and Close**.

### Top Secret tips:

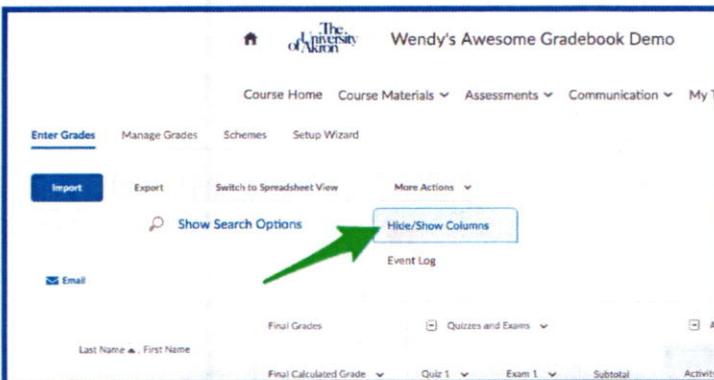
1. You ABSOLUTELY should export your gradebook at the end of the term!



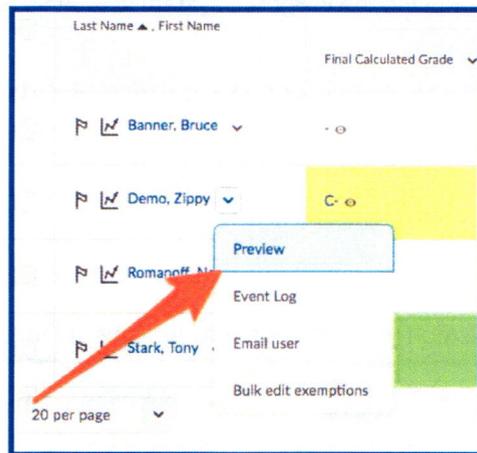
2. You can collapse categories in your gradebook to focus on specific grade items:



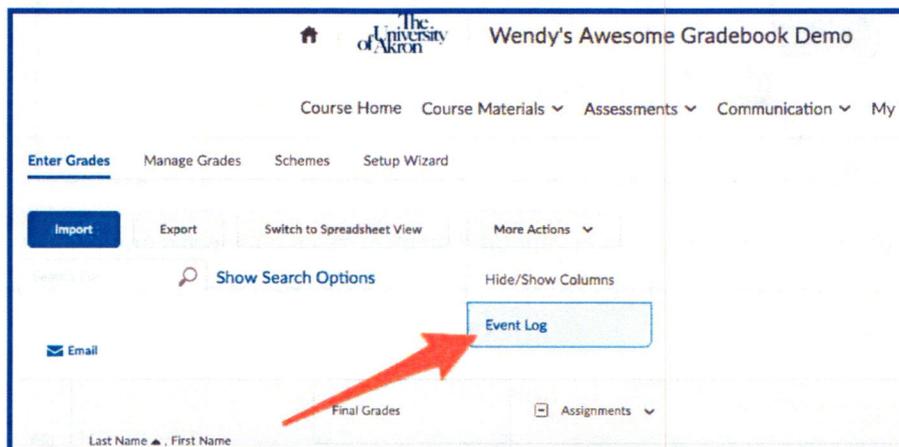
3. You can show and hide columns:



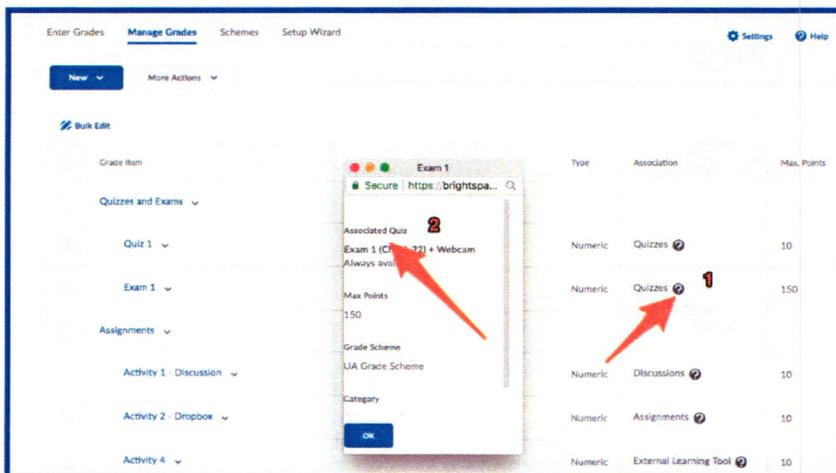
- You can view exactly what any student sees in your gradebook.



- If a grade item is accidentally deleted from **Grades**, you can easily recover the deleted item (and all student grades) themselves by going to the **Event Log**



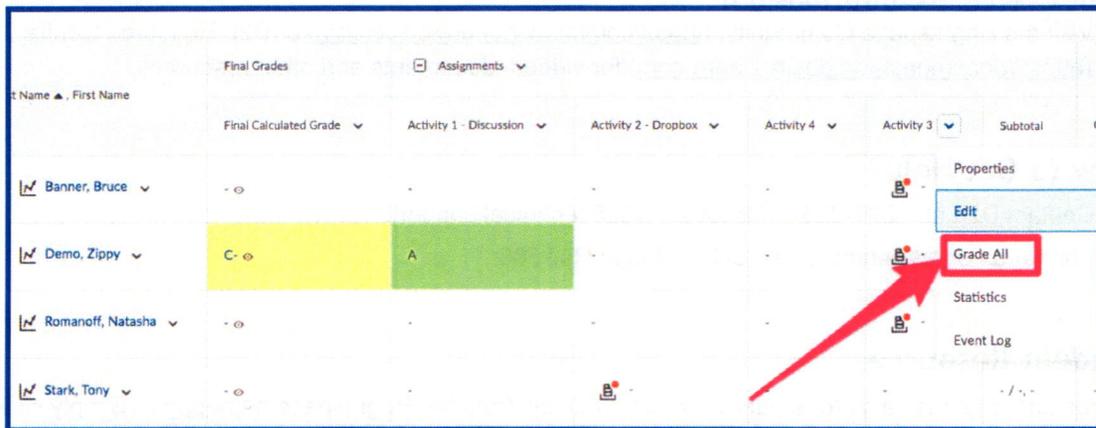
- You can view associations between the grade book and content (assignments, quizzes, discussions):



7. It's EASIEST to grade from the gradebook using the icons.



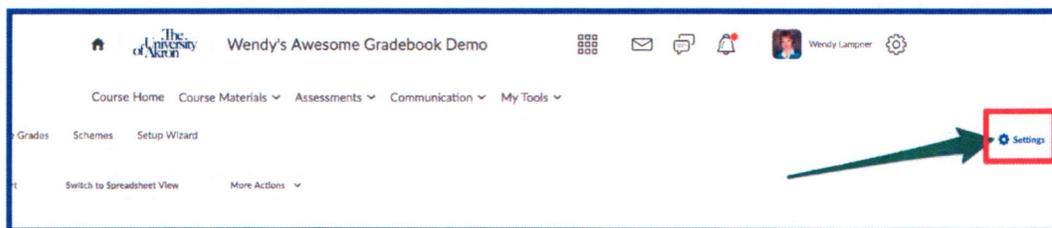
8. Bulk grading is amazing!



9. Creative uses for text columns.

- a. Scheduling appointments.
- b. Notifications or messages to a student.

10. There is a settings button on every tool in Brightspace including the Gradebook. These buttons are likely to save you time! (Hint - you could default to **Manage Grades** at the start of the semester and **Enter grades** once your grade book is done).



## Looking for More Tutorials?

### Step-by-Step Guides for each tool:

[http://www.uakron.edu/it/instructional\\_services/dds/brightspace/instructor-resources](http://www.uakron.edu/it/instructional_services/dds/brightspace/instructor-resources)

**Hoonuit (formerly Atomic Learning):** Click on the My Help menu in Brightspace, then select **Hoonuit**. You may need to sign in with your UA credentials to get to the next page. Here, you can search for Brightspace at the top of the screen. When the topics appear, select Brightspace 10.7 – Instructor. You will find over 50 videos with mini 2 to 3 minute tutorials.

**Sign up for more hands on training:** [https://share.uakron.edu/itl\\_seminars/](https://share.uakron.edu/itl_seminars/)

The **DDS blog** provides information on how many of the different tools can be used within the online classroom to achieve specific goals or implement various learning strategies. The search allows you to find specific topics or tools. Direct link: <http://blogs.uakron.edu/dds/>

## Want Even More Information?

Visit the Brightspace Community: <https://community.brightspace.com>) or D2L Resource Centre (<https://documentation.desire2learn.com>) for videos, documents and other resources.

## How to Get Help?

Contact D2L at 1-877-325-7778 for 24/7/365 technical support.

For hands-on assistance, visit DDS in Leigh Hall 506.

## Student Resources

Videos and brief task aids for student use are available from the Brightspace homepage. Simply click the **My Help** tab, and select **Student Brightspace Tutorials**. Here is the direct link:

[http://www.uakron.edu/it/instructional\\_services/dds/brightspace/video-tutorials-for-students](http://www.uakron.edu/it/instructional_services/dds/brightspace/video-tutorials-for-students)