For Instructors
Using Grade Center in a Blackboard course at Heartland Community College.

The Grade Center allows you to grade assignments, tests and other assessments and keep track of student progress in a course. The Grade Center is where you will assign grades to student work. Before beginning make sure you are in the Edit Mode On to make changes to your course. If the upper right of the screen shows Edit Mode off, simply click on this Edit Mode button to change this to Edit Mode On. The Grade Center is accessed through the Evaluation portion of the Control Panel under Course Management at lower left. Click on Evaluation and Grade Center. You will see the list of students enrolled in your course arranged by Last Name and First Name (Columns one and two). Other columns include a Last Accessed entry for the date the student last logged into your course. When you create a test, assignment, safeassign or other assignment requiring a grade a column will automatically be created for that assessment. As you progress into the semester you will be adding more columns so you will need to use the scroll bar at the bottom of the grade center to view all of the columns. Remember whenever you see a down pointing chevron that means more options are available for that item. The columns in the grade center have a variety of options available. You can sort columns ascending or descending using these chevron symbols, hide columns from your view, and gather and edit column information. The orange arrow at the top of a column shows you that this column is being used a sort the rows. Simply clicking down on the column will resort your rows. Some individual cells in the Grade Center even have chevron symbols which allow for more options. You can see grade details, add quick comments, or exempt grades using those chevron menu options. If you are unsatisfied with the organization of the columns there are a few ways to change this. Rolling over button next to Sort Columns By: allows you to choose from 6 options, Layout Position, Categories, Date Due, Date Created, Points Possible, or sorting by the Display name. Another option is to roll over the Manage button and click on Column Organization. This will allow the greatest amount of control over the display of the columns. Here you can drag and drop columns into your own custom organization and even hide visible columns or show hidden columns. If you wish to hide a visible column click on the checkmark box next to the column name and roll over the Show/Hide button at the top. Here you can click on Hide, Show or Show in all grade center views. In this case if I wanted to show the hidden column student ID I would checkmark the student ID box and roll over show/hide and choose Show Selected Columns. Once you are satisfied with your column organization click Submit. Back out in the Grade Center you can click directly in a cell to edit and assign a student a grade or score. Clicking in a empty cell will show you the information for that item in the grey Grade Information Bar just to the top of the columns and rows of the Grade Center. In this case it shows a Grade Type of Grade, a Points Possible of 5, a display as a Score (rather than displaying as a percentage, text, a letter grade or a complete or incomplete), and if the score is visible to users (in this case it is chosen Yes). The Manage button I just showed manages all of this information about grading periods, schemas, categories, views, organization of columns and student visibility. So with a cell selected you can type a score, letter grade, or percentage right into the cell that you click on and click enter on the keyboard. The first time you do this for a cell the grade center will acknowledge that you just entered a grade and ask if you want this grade assigned. Click OK to assign the grade and those points will show up in the students cell for that assignment. You can create a new column if a column wasn't created for you automatically for an item you would like to assign a grade to (such as a journal entry, blog posting, an ungraded survey, credit for participation, etc). Click on the Create Column button and the create grade column screen will appear. This will allow you to enter a column name, grade center display name, and a description of the column. The primary display drop down can be changed to score, letter grade, percentage, or complete/incomplete. This primary display is for both the display of grades in the Grade Center (what you see as an instructor) and the My Grades

(which the student sees when they go to view their grade). A secondary display can also be assigned which displays only in the Grade Center. A category can be assigned using the drop down Category box allowing you the option of No Category, Assignment, Survey, Test, Discussions, Self and Peer Assessment, or Safe Assignments. Categories can be helpful for sorting your Grade Center to manage the grades. For instance if you want to see all of the rows sorted by the Test Category you can do that by assigning categories to these columns. Finally in this part one section you can enter a points possible. Part two allows you to enter a due date or choose none. Part three allows for column inclusion in the calculations. If you want the points to be added to your total or other calculated columns you would choose yes. Also you can show the column to students and show statistics to students based on this column. After you've set up your column click Submit which will add your new column to the Grade Center. Calculated columns can also be created by rolling over Create Calculated Column and choosing the column type. You can create Average Columns, Minimum/Maximum Columns, Total Columns, or Weighted Columns. Similar to the last step I showed these columns can either be shown to students or hidden from students My Grades view depending on your choice. An example of a calculated column which has already been created for you up front is the Total Column. This will total up the points/grades given to the students and show the calculation automatically. Another option you have is to create a report or view the grade history. Rolling over the Reports button shows these two options. Clicking on Create Report will allow you to give the report a name, specify the students/users you want in the report, specify columns for inclusion in the report, and add a custom footer to the report. This report will be a printable, read-only document. When satisfied with the columns and other information click preview for a preview of the report or submit to create your report. The View Grade History button under Reports shows you the changes you have made to the Grade Center over a specific period of time. You can use the Grade History to track changes you've made to student grades, clear that history, or download the history. Finally in the Grade Center you can upload or download Grades rolling over the Work Offline button. You can choose to download the Grade Center as a tab-delimited file in Microsoft Excel format (.xls) or comma-delimited file (.csv) which can also be opened in a spreadsheet program like Excel. Uploading files is much more finicky about having the file formatted in the appropriate format, with all of the student user names exactly as listed in the actual online Grade Center. It is best to download a Grade Center file, save it and then upload that Grade Center file rather than trying to create a Grade Center file from scratch. The Grade Center will be a location you will probably be spending much of your time in grading assessments, assignments and assigning points to other items. It allows for a great deal of flexibility in how you organize and display student grades not only for yourself but in how the students are presented their grades in the student My Grades view.