Virtual Campus (powered by Brightspace) – Creating a gradebook

Teaching and Learning Support Service (TLSS)
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Context
This document presents the steps to: 1) create a course space within Virtual Campus; 2) activate/deactivate a course space within Virtual Campus; 3) set-up a weighted gradebook; and 4) enter grades in Virtual Campus and adjust their visibility to students.

Important Note: The information presented in this document is based on Brightspace version 10.8.11.15349.

1 – CREATE YOUR COURSE SPACE

Step 1: Access the Maestro Faculty portal

• Navigate to uottawa.brightspace.com
• You will be redirected to the single sign on page for Virtual Campus
• Enter your uoAccess credentials: Username = your email; Password = email password
• Click on Login
• On the right-hand side of the main homepage, click on Create my courses (Maestro)

• Enter your uoAccess credentials, and click on Login to Maestro
Step 2: Create or Merge a course

• Click on Create course or Merge courses depending on your needs (see image below).

  • **Important:** Selecting the Merge courses option, will allow you to combine several courses into one course space on Brightspace. It is useful if you have multiple lab sections for the same course and you want all students to access the same course space. The Merge Courses option is irreversible. Questions about Merging courses? Visit the walk-in lab located in VNR1020.

  ![Image of course creation options](https://example.com/texture.png)

• A list of the available courses that are tied to your profile will be listed by semester

  • **Note:** If no courses are tied to you teaching profile, a notice will pop-up indicating that there are No courses available. If this occurs, check the online course timetable to see if you have officially been linked to the course. If you do not see your name next to the course in the timetable, contact your department.

• Select the course you wish to create a space for within Virtual Campus by clicking on the circle next to it

• Click on the Next Step button

• Review and modify the title if you wish

• Take a moment to read the copyright notice and visit the Copyright Office website

• Click on I have read and accept the copyright notice. Create the course space in the bottom-right corner

• A note, Please be patient, the course is being created will appear in the boom-right hand corner

• A new page will appear indicating that Your course has been created successfully

• Take a moment to read the notices and then click on Go to Virtual Campus to access your course space

2 – EDIT YOUR COURSE SETTINGS

Limit access to the course with start and end dates

• In the Navbar, click on Course Admin

• Click on Course Offering Information

• Place a check mark beside Course is Active.

  • **Important:** If you do not want students to have access to the course space leave this box unchecked or alternatively check it off and assign a start date (see next step).

• Place a check mark beside Course has start date

• Edit the start date and time

• Add an End Date (Optional)

• Click on Save
3 – SET UP A WEIGHTED GRADEBOOK

Step 1: Edit Grades tool settings

**Note:** In this guide we provide guidance on creating a gradebook that uses a weighted system. **Weighted** means that all grades must add up to only 100%. For **Weighted** you can use one value to grade an item and then weight it. For example, you have a quiz that you would like to grade out of 30, but it is worth 10% of the final course grade. If you set **Weighted** as your grading system, later when creating the grade item for the quiz, you can set **Maximum points** to 30, and **Weight** to 10. When you are setting up your gradebook, you will notice that there are other grading system type options available. If you wish to use a different type of grading system (e.g. Points), please visit the walk-in lab located in VNR1020 to discuss your options.

- In the Navbar, click on **Grades**
- Click on the **Setup Wizard tab**, scroll down and click on **Start**
- Review/Edit settings on each page and click on **Continue** to advance through the 6 pages. **Note:** If you do not want students to see their final grade or the grades that you enter, make sure that the following are applied:
  - The **Automatically release final grade** option is not selected.
  - Under the **Student View Display Options**, all of the options (i.e. Points grade, Weighted grade, Grade scheme symbol, and Grade scheme color) are not selected.
  - Under the **Final Grade Calculation** section, the **Display how final grade was calculated to users** option is not selected.
- In the final step, review the **Grades Setup Summary**
- Click Finish or Back to modify your selections

Step 2: Create Categories

**Note:** Use Categories if you want to categorize Grade Items and easily and evenly assign weight values across a number of Grade Items. This function is optional.

For the following steps, refer to point 1-4 in the image below.

1. In the Navbar, click on **Grades**
2. Click on **Manage Grades**
3. Click on **New**
4. Select **Category**
5. Fill in the **Name** field. **Note:** Consider using the following types of terms if possible: Exams, Assignments, etc.
6. Under the **Weight** Field, enter the weight attributed for the entire Category (e.g. Assignments 60%)
7. Under **Distribution**, select if you would like to manually or evenly distribute weight across category items
   - **Not sure what to select?** Consider the following example. The Assignments **Category** is worth 60% of the final grade and is composed of two assignments:
     - Select **Manually assign weight to items** when the weight will not be evenly distributed among the items composing a category. E.g. Assignment #1 is worth 20%, and Assignment #2 is worth 40%.
• Select to **Distribute weight evenly across all items** when the items making up a category are all worth the same amount. E.g. Assignment #1 is worth 30%, and Assignment #2 is worth 30%. If you select this option, when creating a **Grade Item** (see next section), the value weight field will automatically be filled in and will adjust as you add items to the Category.

8. Edit the **Display Options** according to your preferences/needs

9. Scroll up and click on the **Restrictions** tab

10. Edit the Visibility options. If you wish to hide the grade column from your students select **Hide this Category**.

11. Attach a **Release Condition** if you wish. For additional guidance on this aspect, visit the lab in VNR1020.

12. Click on **Save and Close** or alternatively on **Save and New** if you wish to add another Category

13. Proceed to the next section to add Grade Items to the Category

**Step 3: Create a Grade Item for each evaluation in your course**

For the following steps, refer to point 1-4 in the image below.

1. In the Navbar, click on **Grades**

2. Click on **Manage Grades**

3. Click on **New**

4. Select **Item**

   ![Grades Interface](image.png)

   - **Note**: Consider using the following types of terms if possible: Midterm exam, Final Exam, Assignment #1, Quiz #1, etc.

5. Choose a **Grade Item Type** (e.g. Numeric)

6. If you have set-up Categories, use the drop-down to associate the **Grade Item** with a specific **Category**

7. Fill in the **Name** field. **Note**: Consider using the following types of terms if possible: Midterm exam, Final Exam, Assignment #1, Quiz #1, etc.

8. In the **Maximum Points** field, enter the maximum score that an individual can attain on the item

9. In the **Weight** field, enter the weighted value for the item out of 100%. For example, you will grade a quiz out of 30, but it is worth 10% of the final course grade. You can set **Maximum points** to 30, and **Weight** to 10. If in doubt enter the same value in both the **Maximum Points** and **Weight** field.

   **Note:**
   • If the **Grade Item** is associated with a **Category** that is set to **distribute weight evenly across all items**, this field will automatically be filled in and will adjust as you add Items to the Category.
   • If the Grade Item is associated with a **Category** that is set to **Manually assign weight**, then you will need to calculate the weights. Take the following example: The Assignments Category is worth 60% of the final grade and is composed of Assignment #1 which is worth 20%, and Assignment #2 which is worth 40%. When setting up the grade Item for Assignment #1, entering 20 under the Weight field would actually reflect Assignment #1’s worth out of 100% rather than the 60% associated with the category. Assignment #1 is actually worth 1/3 of the 60%, so its weight is roughly 33.33%. Similarly, Assignment #2 is worth 2/3 of the 60, so its weight is roughly 66.67.

10. Edit the other **Grading** settings and **Display Options** according to your preferences/needs

11. Scroll up and click on the **Restrictions** tab in the header and edit the Visibility options
12. Attach a **Release Condition** (optional). For additional guidance visit the walk-in lab located in VNR1020.
13. Click on **Save and Close** or alternatively on **Save and New** if you wish to add another **Item** to the Category

### 4 – ENTERING GRADES AND ADJUSTING GRADE VISIBILITY

**Entering grades for Grade Items not attached to an evaluation component within Virtual Campus**

*Note:* Creating a grade item for an in-class presentation is an example of an item that is not tied to an evaluation component within Brightspace.

- In the Navbar, click on **Grades** and then click on **Enter Grades**
- Click on downward pointing arrow beside the column title of the **Grade Item** that you wish to enter a grade for, and select **Enter Grades**
- On the next page, enter the grades and any feedback that you wish to provide to students
- Click on **Save and Close**

**Making individual Grade Items visible to students**

- In the Navbar, click on **Grades**
- Click on **Enter Grades**
- Click on downward pointing arrow beside the column title of the **Grade Item** that you wish to make visible and select **Edit**
- Click on the **Restrictions** tab
- Ensure that the Grade Item’s **Visibility** is set to visible
  - *Note:* If you select **Grade item is visible for a specific date range**, set the **Start Date** and **End Date**
- Click **Save and Close**

**Releasing/Unreleasing final grades**

*Note:* This function only applies to the columns that are located under the **Final Grades** section of Grade Book.

For the following steps, refer to point 1-9 in the images below:

1. In the Navbar, click on **Grades**
2. Click on **Enter Grades**
3. Click on downward pointing arrow beside the column title of the **Grade Item** that you wish to release
4. Select **Enter Grades** (previously referred to as **Grade All**)

![Image of Grade Book interface]
5. Scroll down and change the number of items to display per page so that all students display on the page
6. Check the box in the header to select all students in the course
7. Click on the **Release/Unrelease** button
   - **Important:** For student’s whose grade you are not ready to release, simply ensure that the box next to their name is not checked off before clicking on the **Release/Unrelease** button. Upon clicking on this button, a checkmark will appear under the **Released** column for each student in the list for whom a grade has been released.
8. To Unrelease (hide) the final grades, repeat the process. No checkmarks should be present under the **Released column** of the table for the students whose grades you have unreleased.
9. Click **Save and Close**

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**Interested in learning more or need help using it?**

**To explore effective teaching strategies with Virtual Campus** contact the Teaching and Learning Support Service (TLSS) or visit the [TLSS website](https://www.tlss.com) to see what training/workshops and resources are available.

**For technical guidance using Virtual Campus** call 1-866-811-3201 (24 hours a day / 7 days a week) or for Technopedagogical guidance, visit the walk-in computer lab located in Vanier Hall, room 1020. Consult [our website](https://www.ourwebsite.com) to view our hours of operation.