How to Set Up Your Gradebook in Sakai

Instructors can set up the Gradebook in Sakai to organize, manage, and distribute students' grades and to automatically calculate final grades.

This handout covers how to perform the initial set up of your Gradebook, so you'll be able to add students' grades later. (A separate handout covers how to enter students' grades.)

We will work with Sakai's newest Gradebook tool, which is called simply – **Gradebook**. (An older Gradebook tool is available, called Gradebook Classic. This handout does not cover Gradebook Classic.)

Step 1: Consider your grading system

How you set up your Gradebook depends on your course grading system you've outlined in your Syllabus. The Sakai Gradebook works best if your grading structure consists of categories and percentages, similar to these examples:

Discussion Forums	25 %
Research Paper	15 %
Tests	60 %

Homework (Drop 1 lowest HW grade)	30 %
Project	20 %
Quizzes	10 %
Exams	40 %

In-class writings	25 %
Quizzes*	15 %
Tests	30 %
Final Exam	10 %
Final Paper	20 %

*Lowest quiz grade will be dropped

Some instructors use a **total points system**, with final grades based on points accumulated throughout the semester. Though Sakai's Gradebook wasn't specifically designed for this, Instructors can use a total points system with the Sakai Gradebook and can display students' final course grades in points.

> **TIP:** Instructors are encouraged to use a simple grading system of categories and percentages, if possible, as Sakai's Gradebook was designed to calculate grades using categories and weights.

Whatever you do, make sure your Gradebook in Sakai is consistent with what you put in your syllabus.

Step 2: Add the new Gradebook

By default, the older Gradebook Classic is available in your course sites. You will need to add the new Gradebook to your site for this activity.

To add the new Gradebook and remove Gradebook Classic from your site:

1. In your Sakai site, click on **Site Info**, then click the **Manage Tools** tab along the top.
2. Click the checkbox beside **Gradebook** to select it, and click the checkbox beside **Gradebook Classic** to deselect it.
3. At the bottom, click **Continue**, then **Finish**. The new Gradebook has been added to your course menu, and Gradebook Classic has been removed.

Step 3: Set up your gradebook

1. In your Sakai site, click on **Gradebook**, then click the **Settings** tab along the top. There are four Gradebook Settings sections.

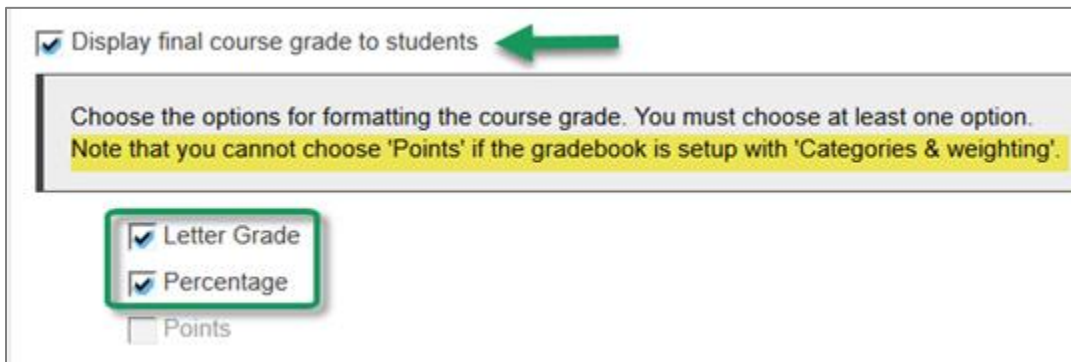2. In the first section **Grade Entry,** make sure **POINTS** is selected.

   TIP: This selection refers to how you **enter** grades for individual assignments. For example, if a student scores 40 on an assignment that is worth 50 points, will you enter *40 points or 80 percent*? We've found that choosing "percentages" here often creates problems for instructors and students; therefore choosing "POINTS" is strongly recommended.

3. In the second section, in **Gradebook Release Rules,** make sure the box is checked to **Display released Gradebook Items to students**. If you un-check this box, your students will not be able to see any grades!

   TIP: Grades for individual assignments can be hidden from students or released to students later, when you set up gradebook items or edit them.

4. Also in **Grade Release Rules,** you can check the box to **Display final course grade to students**. You may want to check this after students have completed several assignments. When you check this box, your students will see their overall course grade (as calculated by Sakai), based on work that has been submitted and graded so far in the class.

   You can also choose how the final grade displays to students. Most instructors select both **Letter Grade** and **Percentage** for the grade display, as shown below.

   TIP: If you use a total points system for determining course grades (rather than categories and weights), we recommend you select only the **Points** box above.

   What does the "course grade" look like to students?

   The sample below shows how the **Course Grade** appears to students (if you choose to display it and if you select letter grade and percentage as pictured above).

5. In the next section, choose **Categories & Weighting**, if your grading system consists of categories and percentages, as described earlier. (Otherwise, choose "No categories" or "Categories only".)
   a. Click **Add a Category** and use your grading structure to enter categories and percentages (%) in the boxes. As categories and percentages are added, the Running Total will change. The Running Total must be 100% in order to save and exit.

   b. **Drop Lowest** (optional) - To drop the lowest grade(s) in a category, check the box beside **Enable Drop Lowest** as shown below. A new column will appear in the category list. To the right of any category, you can **enter how many low grades to drop**. For example, enter 1 to drop the single lowest grade in the category, or 2 to drop the two lowest, etc.

   IMPORTANT: To drop a grade, all items in the category must have the same point value!
   For example, if dropping a low grade in the Homework category, all assignments in that category must have the same "points possible". If some Homework assignments will be worth 10 points and others worth 100, DO NOT attempt to drop the lowest grade.

c. When finished, click **Save Changes.**

Important! Categories may not be visible after setting up your Gradebook. Why?

Categories will not display in the Gradebook until you have added one or more items (i.e. assignments) to the Gradebook. The next handout in this series covers adding items to your Gradebook.

Step 4: Select Grading Schema options

Your last step is to make sure the correct letter grades are assigned for your final course grades.

1. In the **Gradebook**, in **Settings**, click on **Grading Schema.**

2. In the **Grading Schema** section is a scale that tells Sakai the letter grade to assign to students based on their overall (numeric) course grade.

   o The default **Grade Type** (grading scale) is **Letter Grades**, a 10-point grading scale.

   o If your course grading scale is not a 10-point scale, click on the Grade Type **drop down menu** and select a different **grading scale** from the list. Check the **letter grades** and **numbers** displayed.

   o If the **letter grades** and **numbers** are correct, click **Save Changes**. If not, you can manually adjust the numbers to match your grading scale, and then click **Save Changes**.

For Gradebook videos and handouts, and info about Extra Credit, visit Sakai Gradebook resources [http://courses.durhamtech.edu/wiki/index.php/Sakai:_Gradebook]