

Blackboard Grade Center Strategies



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Introduction

Congratulations! You have been assigned to teach an online class for Indian River State College. You are the expert for the course you are teaching. You know the content and the assessments you will use for the course. You have been provided a course shell in Blackboard, and it is ready for the upcoming semester. Students will be completing assessments and waiting for you to grade the assessments. But wait, how is the grade center structured? What is the grading scale you will use for the course? How do you calculate weighted grades? How do you assign assessments to specific categories? Do not panic. These are some of the questions that will be answered throughout this job aid.

Upon completion of this job aid, you will become a master at using the Blackboard grade center. You will be able to demonstrate the creation of a grading schema in Blackboard grade center, demonstrate the creation of weighted categories in Blackboard grade center, and demonstrate the correct designation for assessments in the appropriate category in Blackboard grade center. Let's get started!

Blackboard Login

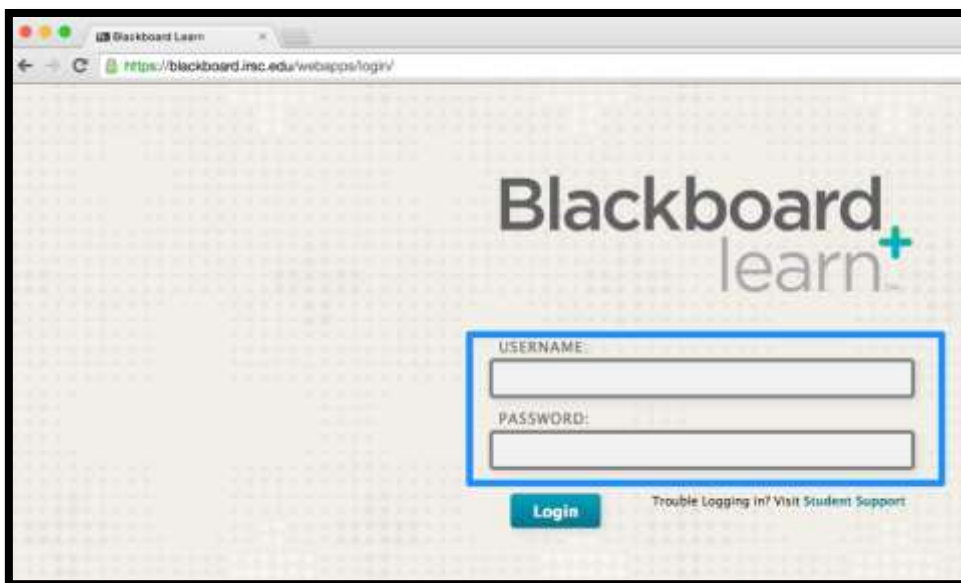


Figure 1

correct username and password. You will need to use your Rivernet credentials to login. It is the same username and password that is used to login to your webmail (IRSC webmail without the @irsc.edu).

Although not required, it is suggest you login to Indian River State College's Blackboard learning management system during this lesson. Go to <http://blackboard.irsc.edu> to access the Blackboard login web page. Figure 1 shows the Blackboard login page for Indian River State College.

Be sure to use your

Blackboard Grade Center

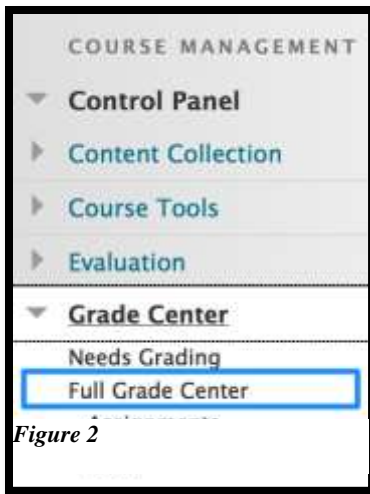


Figure 2

Blackboard's Grade Center is the location of the online grade book. In the Grade Center, you can manage your students' grades for assignments, tests, discussion posts, journals, blogs, and wikis. You can also create grade columns, create weighted categories and create a grading schema or grading scale.

Figure 2 identifies the location of the grade center on the control panel. Click the Full Grade Center link to access the grade center. Do not open the Grade Center in a separate window or tab as you lose access to information stored in the top frame.

Full Grade Center

The full grade center (Figure 3) provides access to many options that will be covered in this lesson. This lesson will concentrate on the Grading Schema, Weighted Categories, and assigning assessments to the appropriate weighted categories.

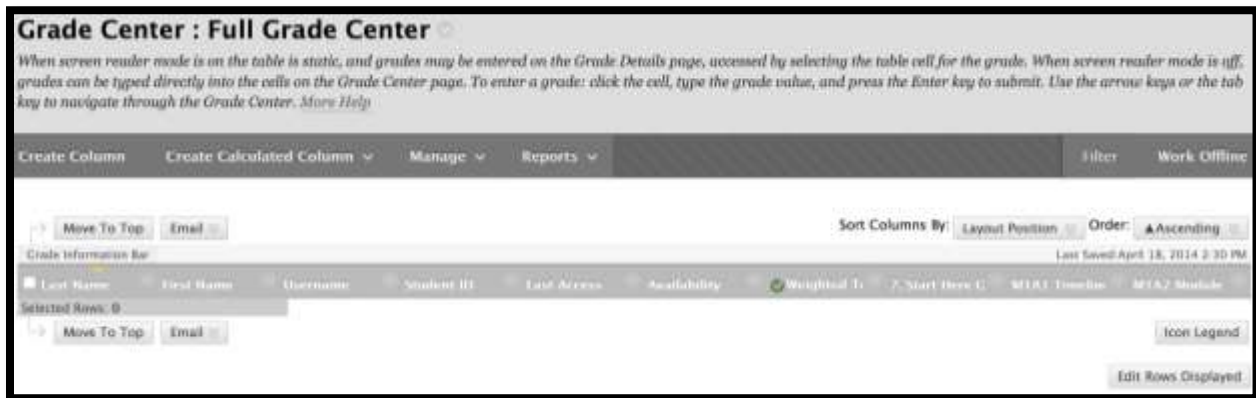


Figure 3

Section 1 Grading Schema

In the Grade Center, when an item is graded, a numeric score appears in the students' cells by default. A grading schema takes the actual points scored on a graded item and compares it to the total points possible for that item to derive a percentage. This percentage is mapped to a range of scores and displays a grade, such as a letter of A, B, C, D, and F. The grading schema is comparable to a grading scale. Figure 4 shows an example of how a grading schema can be configured. The grading schema can be customized to fit the grading scale used for your course. Note: Refer to your syllabus to verify the correct grading scale used for the course you teach.

Grades Scored Between	Will Equal
93 % and 100%	A
83 % and Less Than 93%	B
70 % and Less Than 83%	C
60 % and Less Than 70%	D
0 % and Less Than 60%	F

Figure 4

Configuring Your Grading Schema

There are seven steps to configuring your grading schema. The steps below will help you successfully configure the grading schema for your course.

Step 1



Figure 5

Click on the Full Grade Center (Figure 2) link on the control panel in your Blackboard course. Locate the Manage Tab. Figure 5 identifies the location of the Manage Tab in Blackboard Grade Center.

Step 2



Figure 6

The Manage Tab has a drop down menu (chevron). Click on the chevron and select Grading Schemas.

Step 3

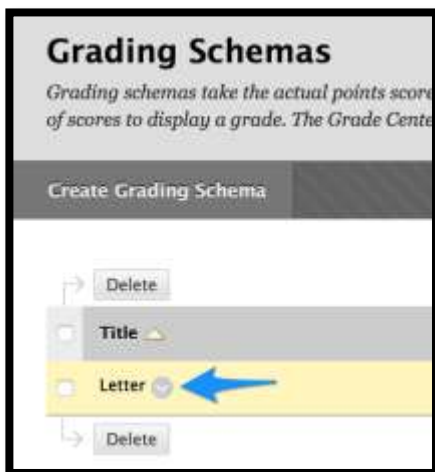
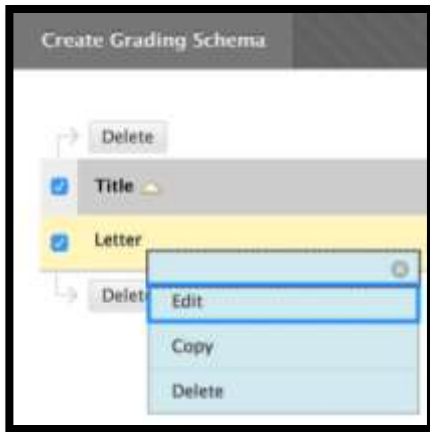


Figure 7

The default grading schema is called Letter. The Letter grading schemas can be edited or customized to your preferences. To edit the Letter grading schema, click on the chevron to activate the edit features.

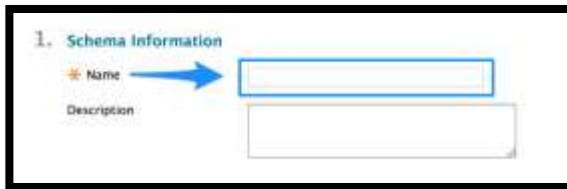
Step 4



Select Edit from the menu. Selecting the edit feature will allow you to modify the Grading Schema settings.

Figure 8

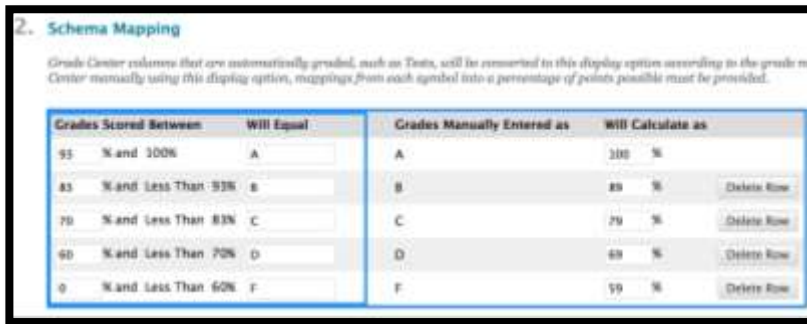
Step 5



You have the option of changing the Grading Schema name. Most instructors use the default grading schema name, Letter.

Figure 9

Step 6



The default grading schema can be edited to match the grading scale used for your course (refer to your course syllabus).

Figure 10

Step 7



Once the percentages are changed, click the submit button (Figure 11) to save the changes made to the grading schema. You have successfully created a grading schema.

Figure 11

Section 2 Weighted Categories

Weighted Categories Overview

Weighted categories allow for assessments to be assigned a specific value or percentage. The assessment's value or percentage is calculated when the assessment is assigned to a specific category. For example, if discussion board assessments are worth 10% of the total grade, any assessment added to the discussion board category will contribute to 10% of the total grade.

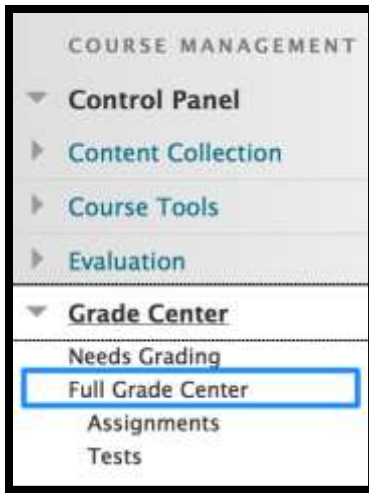


Figure 12

Recall from Section 1, Blackboard's grade center is the location of the online grade book. In the Grade Center, you can manage your students' grades for assignments, tests, discussion posts, journals, blogs, and wikis. You can also create grade columns, create weighted categories and create a grading schema or grading scale.

Figure 12 identifies the location of the grade center on the control panel. Click the Full Grade Center link to access the grade center. Do not open the Grade Center in a separate window or tab, as you lose access to information stored in the top frame. To create weighted categories, follow the eight steps below.

Designing Weighted Categories

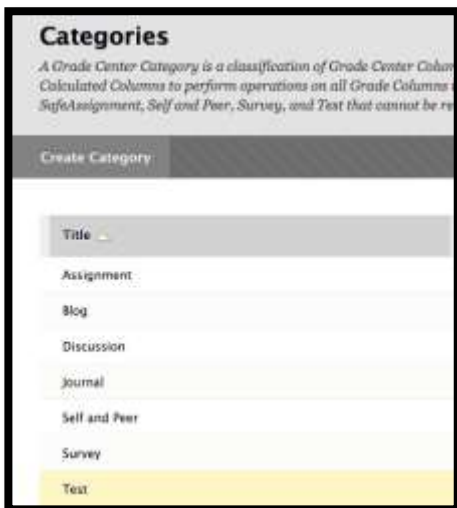


Figure 13

By default, Blackboard has category names that can be aligned with assessments. You can use the default categories or create your own. Figure 13 illustrates the default categories in Blackboard's Grade Center.

Designing Weighted Categories

Step 1

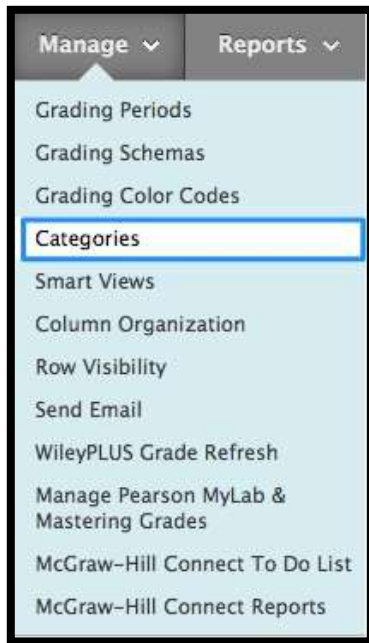


Figure 14

To view the categories in Blackboard's Grade Center, click the Manage tab and select Categories. Figure 14 illustrates how to view categories.

Step 2

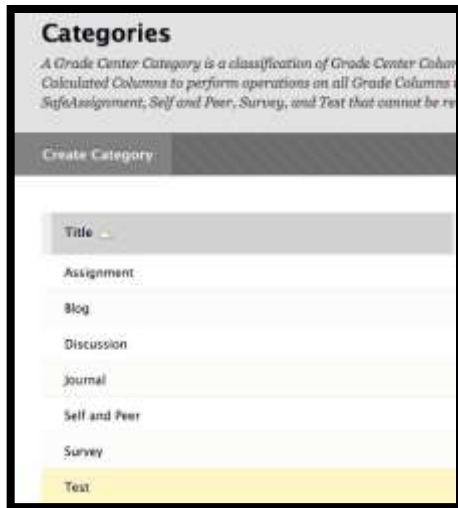


Figure 15

The default categories (Figure 15) cannot be edited or deleted. You can add additional categories by clicking the Create Category link. Categories that are self-created can be edited and deleted. Click on the Create Category link to create a category.

Designing Weighted Categories

Step 3



Create Category
Categories tag Grade Columns so that actions can be performed against all Columns in the Category. Create a new Category by giving it a Name and Description. The Description is optional, but can help differentiate Categories and explain a Category's purpose.

Indicates a required field.

Cancel Submit

1. Category Information


Name

Description

Figure 16

Give the category a name. Then click the Submit link. Figure 15 illustrates how to create a Weighted Column. You can repeat this step until you create the number of categories desired for the course you teach. Refer to your course syllabus for the number of categories in your course.

Step 4



Grade Center : Full Grade Center

When screen reader mode is on the table is static, and grades may be entered on the Grade Center. Grades can be typed directly into the cells on the Grade Center page. To enter a grade: click key to navigate through the Grade Center. [More Help](#)

Create Column Create Calculated Column Manage Reports

Average Column
Minimum/Maximum Column
Total Column
Weighted Column

Grade Information Bar

Last Name Student ID Last Access

Selected Rows: 0

Move To Top Email

Figure 17

The next step is to create a Weighted Column in the Grade Center. Click on the Create Calculated Column on the action bar and click Weighted Column. Figure 17 illustrates how to create a Weighted Column.

Step 5



1. Column Information

Column Name

Grade Center Name

Description

Primary Display

Percentage
Calculated grades display in this format in both the Grade Center and My Grades

Figure 18

Provide a name for the column, for example, weighted total. Since you will be using weighted grades, percentage should be the primary display.

Designing Weighted Categories

Step
6

3. Select Columns

Select the columns and categories to include in this weighted grade and then set the weight percentages.

Include in Weighted Grade

Columns to Select:

- Weighted Total
- Quiz 1
- Discussion Board 1
- Critical Assignment #1
- Quiz 2
- Discussion Board 2
- Column Information

Categories to Select:

- Assignment
- Survey
- Test
- Blog
- Journal
- Self and Peer

Category Information

Test:

Selected Columns:

Enter the weight percentage for each item. Percentages should add up to 100 percent.

% Category: Prezi Presentation

Weight Columns: Equally Proportionally

Drop Grades OR Use only the

Drop Highest Calculate Lowest Value to

Grades Highest Value to Calculate

Drop Lowest Grades Calculate

% Category: Critical Assignments

Weight Columns: Equally Proportionally

Drop Grades OR Use only the

Drop Highest Calculate Lowest Value to

Grades Highest Value to Calculate

Drop Lowest Grades Calculate

Total Weight: 0%

Figure 19

Select the columns in the Categories to Select box (Figure 19, A.) and click the right-pointing arrow (Figure 19, B.) to move the selections to the Selected Columns box. When you select a column, you can view the information about the column in the Column Information area below the Columns to Select box.

Step
7

Selected Columns:

Enter the weight percentage for each item. Percentages should add up to 100 percent.

30 % Category: Prezi Presentation

Weight Columns: Equally Proportionally

Drop Grades OR Use only the

Drop Highest Calculate Lowest Value to

Grades Highest Value to Calculate

Drop Lowest Grades Calculate

25 % Category: Critical Assignments

Weight Columns: Equally Proportionally

Drop Grades OR Use only the

Drop Highest Calculate Lowest Value to

Grades Highest Value to Calculate

Drop Lowest Grades Calculate

Total Weight: 100%

Figure 20

Type a percentage for each selection. The percentages of all columns added together must equal 100 percent. After assigning the last percentage, click anywhere in the box to update the percentage below the Selected Columns box in the Total Weight field. Figure 20 illustrates how to assign percentages to a category.

Step
8

Cancel Submit

Figure 21

You can click Yes to calculate as a running total or click No to include all selected columns in the calculation. Clicking No makes grades appear artificially low. Click the submit button (Figure 21) to save the column. You have successfully created a grade book with weighted categories.

Section 3 Assigning Assessments to Categories

Assigning Assessments to Categories Overview

Weighted categories allow for assessments to be assigned a specific value or percentage. The assessment's value or percentage is calculated when the assessment is assigned to a specific category. All assessments can be assigned to a specific category by using the Column Organization page. Rows in these tables represent Columns in the Grade Center views. Rows can be manipulated to customize the different views of the Grade Center.

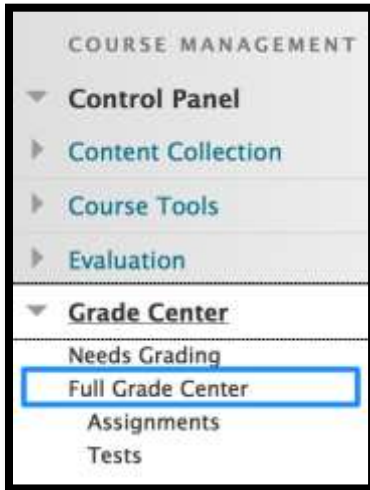


Figure 22

Recall from Section 1, Blackboard's grade center is the location of the online grade book. In the Grade Center, you can manage your students' grades for assignments, tests, discussion posts, journals, blogs, and wikis. You can also create grade columns, create weighted categories and create a grading schema or grading scale.

Figure 22 identifies the location of the grade center on the control panel. Click the Full Grade Center link to access the grade center. Do not open the Grade Center in a separate window or tab as you lose access to information stored in the top frame. To create weighted categories, follow the eight steps below.

Step 1

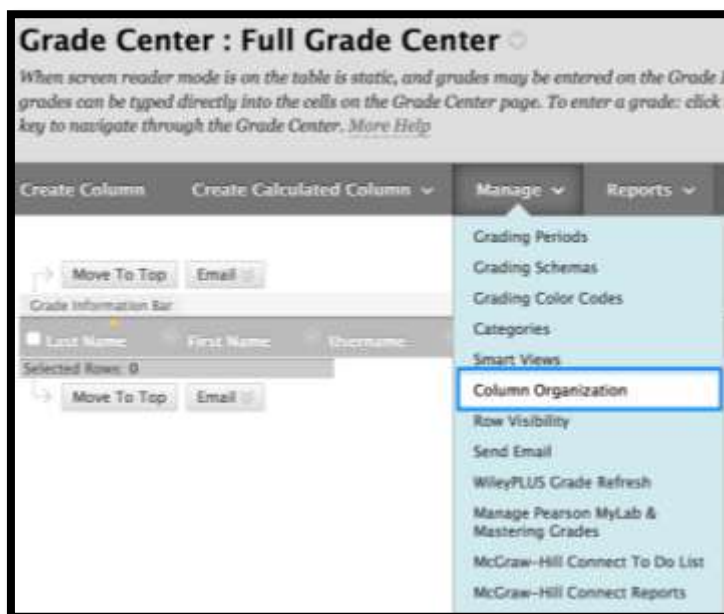


Figure 23

To access the Column Organization Page, expand the Manage tab in Blackboard Grade Center and click the Column Organization link.

Assigning Assessments to Categories

Step 2

A.		B.	
Name	Grading Period		Category
<input type="checkbox"/> Last Name (Frozen)			Institution
<input type="checkbox"/> First Name (Frozen)			Institution
Everything above this bar is a frozen column. Drag this bar to change which columns are frozen.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Weighted Total	Not in a Grading Period		Calculated Grade
<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Board 1	Not in a Grading Period		No Category
<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Board 2	Not in a Grading Period		No Category
<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Board 3	Not in a Grading Period		No Category
<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Board 4	Not in a Grading Period		No Category
<input type="checkbox"/> Quiz 1	Not in a Grading Period		No Category
<input type="checkbox"/> Quiz 2	Not in a Grading Period		No Category
<input type="checkbox"/> Quiz 3	Not in a Grading Period		No Category
<input type="checkbox"/> Critical Assignment #1	Not in a Grading Period		No Category
<input type="checkbox"/> Critical Assignment #2	Not in a Grading Period		No Category
<input type="checkbox"/> Ethical Behavior Prezi	Not in a Grading Period		No Category
<input type="checkbox"/> Final Exam	Not in a Grading Period		No Category

Figure 24

The Column Organization page is divided into various tables that control how different Grade Center views are displayed. Rows can be manipulated to customize the different views of the Grade Center. The assessments (Figure 24, A.) need to be assigned to a category (Figure 24, B.). Identify the assessments that belong to the specific categories.

Step 3

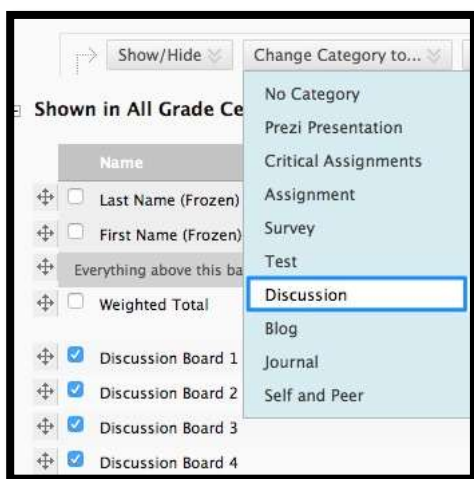


Figure 25

To move an assessment or group of assessments to a category, a different category, or no category, select its check box. For example, you can move the Discussion Board assessments from the No Category to the Discussion category (Figure 25). Select multiple check boxes to move multiple assessments to a category in one action. On the action bar, point to the Change Category to... drop-down list and make a selection. Be sure to click submit to save the changes.

Step 4

A.		B.	
Name	Grading Period		Category
<input type="checkbox"/> Last Name (Frozen)			Institution
<input type="checkbox"/> First Name (Frozen)			Institution
Everything above this bar is a frozen column. Drag this bar to change which columns are frozen.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Weighted Total	Not in a Grading Period		Calculated Grade
<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Board 1	Not in a Grading Period		Discussion
<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Board 2	Not in a Grading Period		Discussion
<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Board 3	Not in a Grading Period		Discussion
<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Board 4	Not in a Grading Period		Discussion

Figure 26

Verify the assessment is assigned to the correct category by repeating Steps 1 and 2. You will see the assessment column (Figure 26, A.) has the assessments assigned to the correct category (Figure 26, B.) Congratulations! You have successfully assigned assessments to the appropriate category in Blackboard Grade Center.