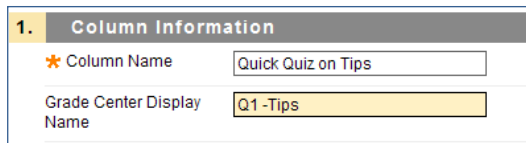


## Best Practices: The Grade Center

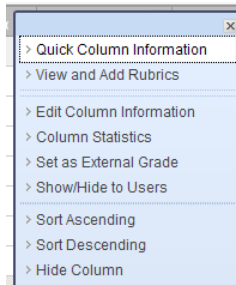
The Blackboard Grade Center includes many features for managing grades and feedback. Follow these tips and best practices to provide clarity for students and streamline your grading experience.

- **Column Names should be self-describing and easily identifiable to students**



Use the Grade Center display name to abbreviate for your ease of use while grading.  
Use the column description to add additional details.

- **Column Names should be consistent with the naming convention in the course site**
  - Name the Grade Center Columns to match exactly what the activity, assignment, or assessment is named in the content area.
  - **DO NOT** change assignment/quizzes in the Content area after they have been created or deployed.
  - If you changed column names in the Grade Center, you will need to manually update the name of the item within the Content Area it is assigned.
- **Organize Columns in a logical order, such as sequential Due Date or Category**
  - By default new columns are added to the end of the Grade Center. Students will see columns from top to bottom, as you see from left to right.
- **Delete any unused columns – it prevents student confusion**



Use **Show/Hide to Users** to hide a column from students. When hidden to users, students will not be able to see the column in “My Grades”.

Use **Hide Column** to hide the column from *you* in the Full Grade Center view. This is helpful if you have many columns, as you can hide the column after you’ve graded the assignment to “clean-up” your Grade Center view.

- **Add (And Maintain) Due Dates on Columns**
  - This is how the “To-Do” notification module on the right side of the Course Home Page is populated upcoming deadlines to serve as a reminder to students.
  - Don’t forget to update these dates if you rollover your course from term-to-term!
- **Provide comments and feedback via the Grade Center**
  - Comments can be added to any student score. Adding comments to student scores allows for instructor-to-student interaction, and provides an opportunity for remediation.
  - Files attachments, such as rubrics or a document with changes tracked, can be added as feedback. Use the “attach file” option, or embed within the textbox of Feedback to User.
- **Back-Up your Grades often**  
Download your grades from the full grade center on a semi-regular basis to keep a back-up copy.