Using Rubrics

Blackboard Learn 9.1

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Using Rubrics

In this section, you will create rubrics. The Rubrics tool allows you to specify criteria and performance levels for grading, providing clear guidelines for students, instructors, and teach assistants.

Learning Outcomes

After completing this section, you will be able to:

- Make the Rubrics course tool available.
- Create rubrics.
- Associate rubrics with gradable content items.
- Associate rubrics with Grade Center columns.
- Manage rubric options.
- Grade using rubrics.
- Use rubric evaluation reports.

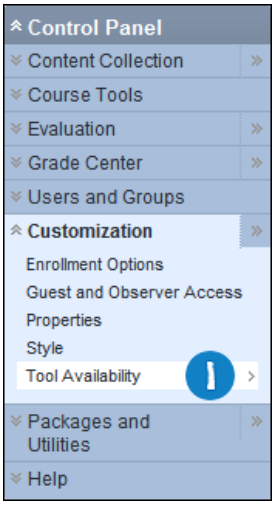
Making the Rubrics Tool Available

The Blackboard administrator at your school determines if the Rubrics tool is accessible for courses, but, like other course tools, you can choose whether it is available in your individual course.

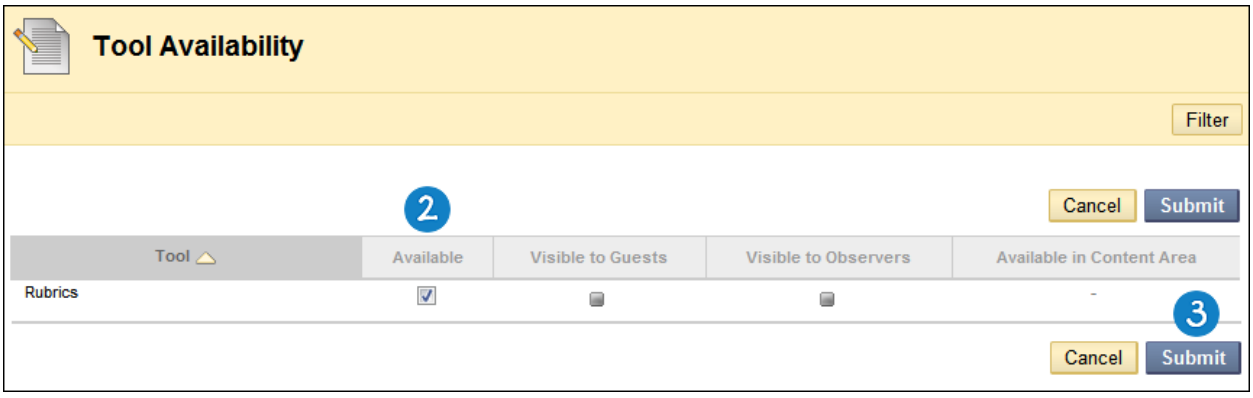
To determine if rubrics are available in your course, access the **Course Tools** section on the Control Panel. If Rubrics is not listed, you must make it available before you can create and use rubrics in your course.

QUICK STEPS: Making the Rubrics Tool Available

1. On the **Control Panel**, expand the **Customization** section and select **Tool Availability**.



2. Locate the **Rubrics** row and select the check box in the **Available** column.
3. Click **Submit**.



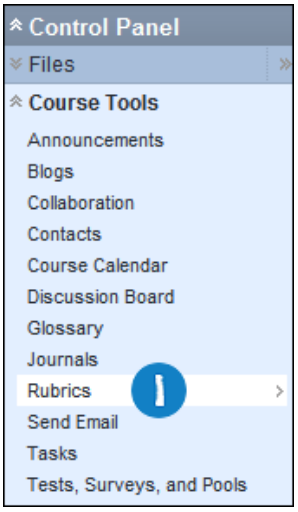
Creating Rubrics

You can create multiple rubrics in a course. Rubrics are made up of rows and columns. The rows correspond to the various criteria of an assignment. The columns correspond to the level of achievement expressed for each criterion.

Create rubrics using the **Rubrics** tool and then you can associate them with assignments, test questions, interactive tools, and Grade Center columns.

QUICK STEPS: Creating a Rubric

1. On the **Control Panel**, expand the **Course Tools** section and select **Rubrics**.

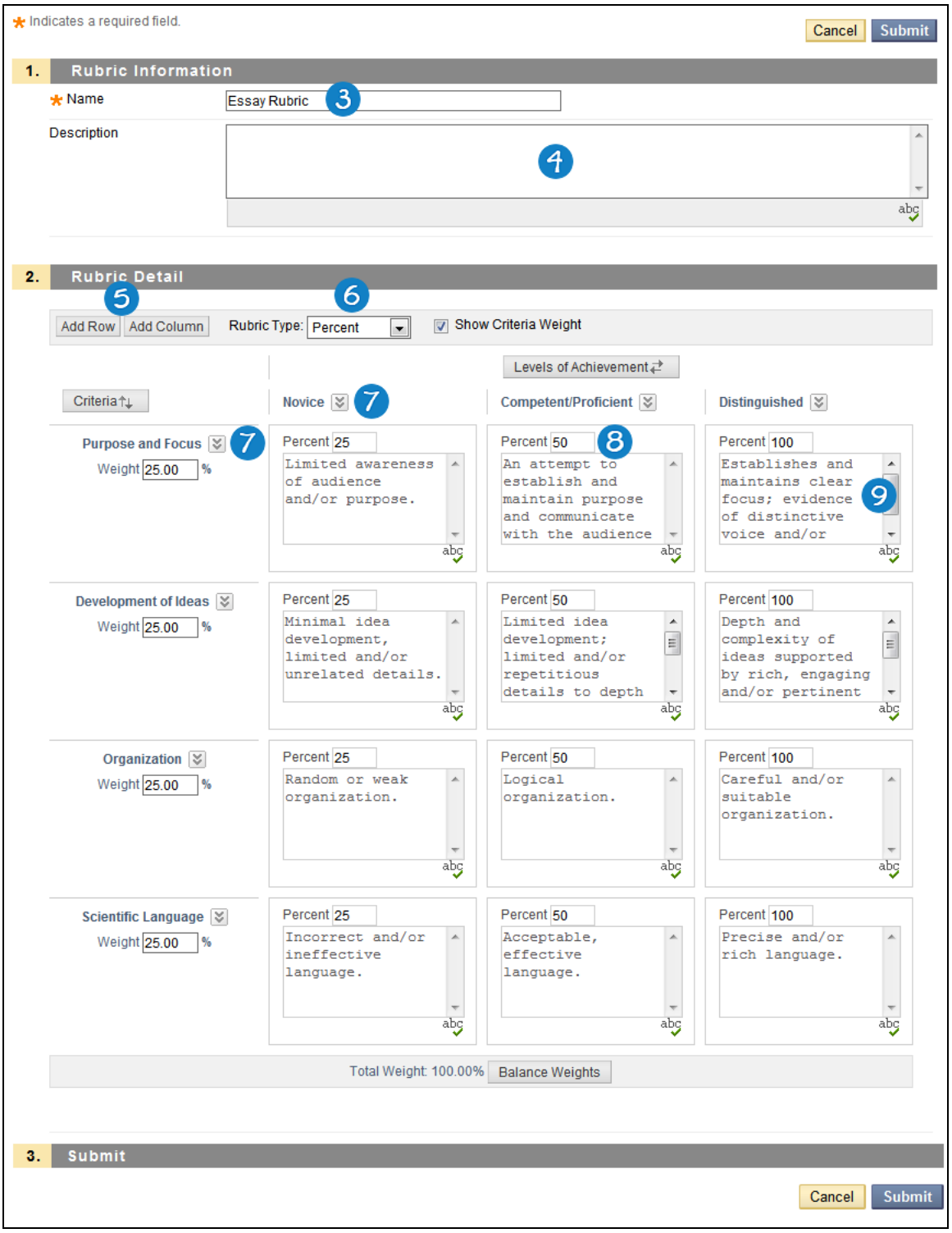


2. On the **Rubrics** page, click **Create Rubric** on the Action Bar.

3. Type a **Name** for the rubric.
4. Optionally, type a description for the rubric to make it easier to locate and associate it to relevant items.
5. Add rows and columns to the rubric, if needed.
6. Select a **Rubric Type** from the drop-down list.
    - **No Points**: Feedback only
    - **Points**: Single point value for each Level of Achievement

- **Point Range**: Range of values for each Level of Achievement
- **Percent**: Flexible depending on each item's possible points

7. Click the Action Link beside the **Levels of Achievement** and **Criteria** names, and select **Edit**. Type the new name and click **Save**.
8. Type a point or percentage value for each row and column.
9. Type a description defining the criteria and the associated Level of Achievement.
10. Click **Submit**.



There is a 1,000-character limit for each cell.

You can reorder rows and columns by clicking the reordering icon.

NOTE: Once you use a rubric for grading, you cannot edit it. Copy the rubric instead to create a duplicate rubric that you can edit.

Options when using percent-based rubrics:

- Select the **Show Criteria Weight** check box to show or hide criteria weights. If you add additional rows when weights are hidden, weights for new criteria are distributed equally.

- Use the **Balance Weights** button after adding a new row to keep all criteria weighted equally. If individual criteria weighting is preferred, you can type percentages under each criteria.

- The total weight for all criteria must equal 100%. No row may have a 0% weight. At least one **Level of Achievement** must have a value of 100%.

Ask Dr. C

In the following table, Dr. C discusses working with columns. Dr. C is our Blackboard Learn expert.

Your question	**Dr. C's reply**
Should I choose a points-based or a percent-based rubric?	If you are designing a rubric to be used with only one assignment, you can use a points-based rubric. However, if you want to create a rubric that you can use on multiple assignments or on multiple types of content, a percent-based rubric is more flexible. For instance, if you create a rubric that you want to use on all the papers your students submit during a semester, from a 50-point response essay to a 200-point final research paper, a percent-based rubric allows you to see easily how the point distribution will occur for each item.
What kind of descriptions should I write for each category?	The more detailed and specific, the better. Not only do precisely defined categories help you as you grade, but also students are better able to use the rubric as a guide while they create their work, and as a learning opportunity when they review their grades and your feedback.
Should I make the rubrics available to students?	Rubrics are an excellent way to guide instructors in grading, but they also serve as a structure for students' expectations and a teaching tool. By making the rubric available to students as they complete their assignment, you are providing additional guidance and instructions for them to follow on what is important and how to meet the highest standards. After you have used the rubric for grading, students can review your feedback and consult the descriptions of each category you selected to determine how to improve.

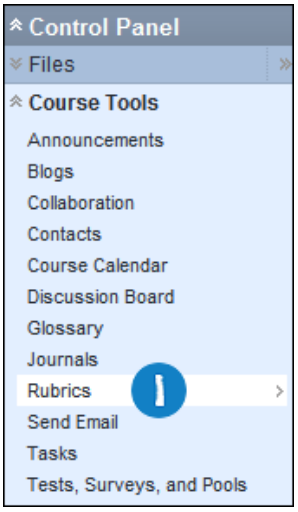
Sharing Rubrics

You can share rubrics between Blackboard Learn courses. If you teach multiple courses, you can create a rubric in one course, export it, and then import it into another. You can also share the exported file with other instructors to use in their Blackboard Learn courses.

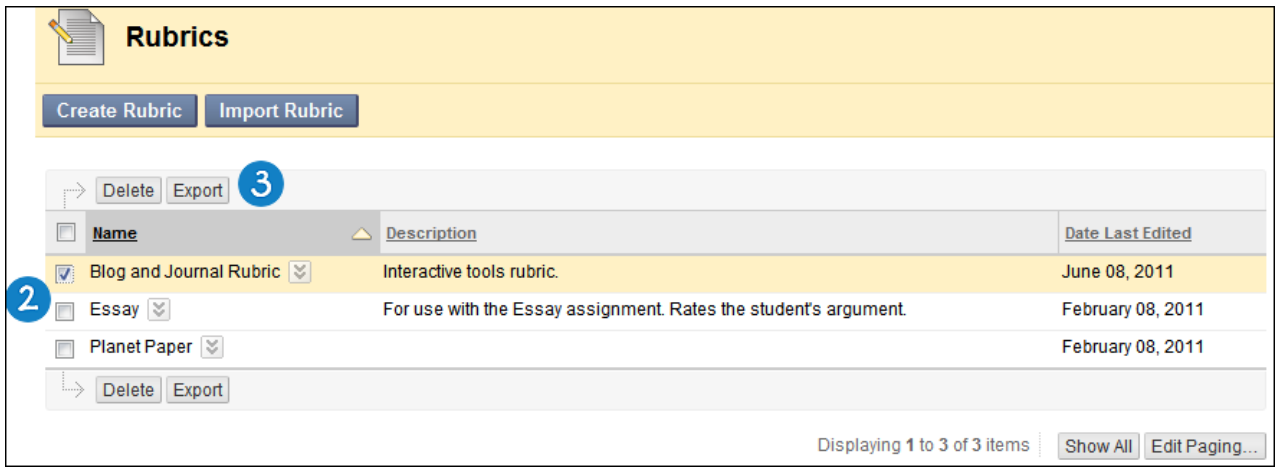
NOTE: You should make all changes to rubrics in a Blackboard Learn course. Do not make changes to the exported ZIP file.

QUICK STEPS: Exporting a Rubric

1. On the **Control Panel**, expand the **Course Tools** section and select **Rubrics**.

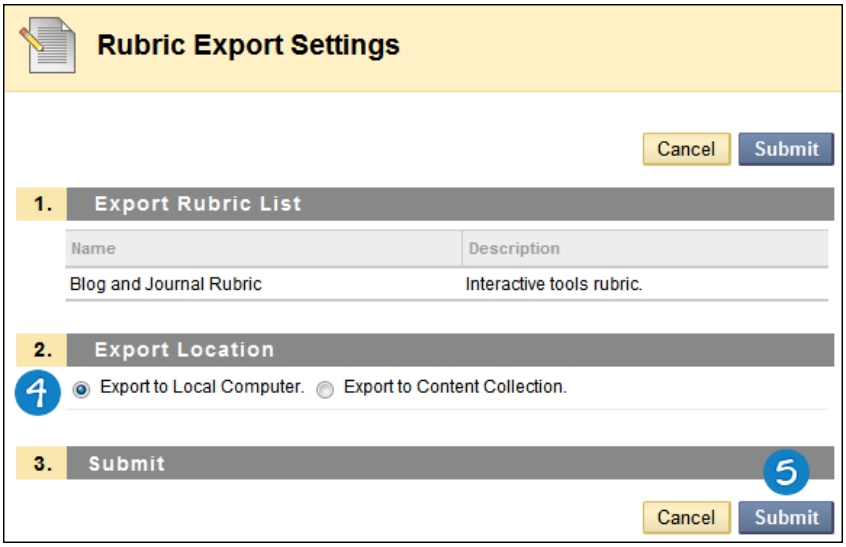


2. On the **Rubrics** page, select the rubrics you want to export.
3. On the Action Bar, click **Export**.

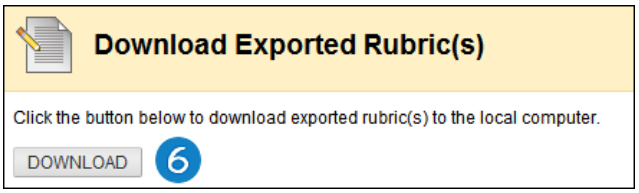


4. On the **Rubric Export Settings** page, select where to save the exported rubric. Choose **Export to Local Computer**, or, if your school licenses content management and you want to save the file there, click **Export to Content Collection**.

5. Click **Submit**.



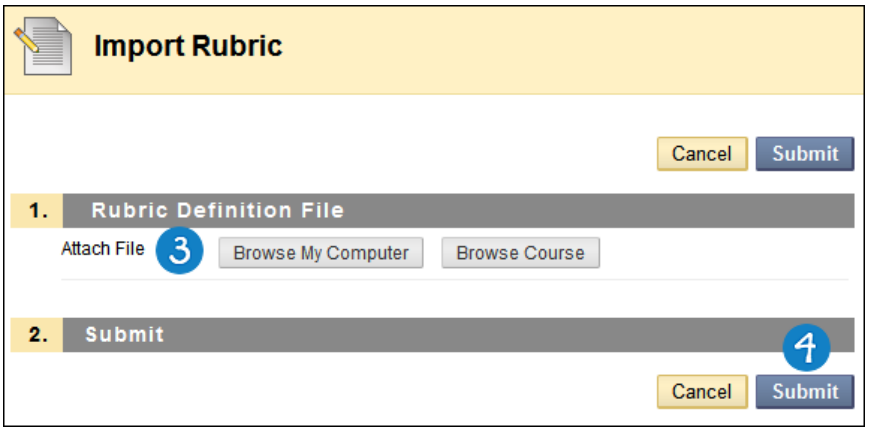
6. On the **Downloaded Exported Rubrics** page, click **Download** and save the file to a location you choose.



QUICK STEPS: Importing a Rubric

1. On the **Control Panel**, expand the **Course Tools** section and select **Rubrics**.
2. On the **Rubrics** page, click **Import Rubric**.

3. On the **Import Rubric** page, browse to locate the exported rubric file. Click **Browse My Computer** if the file is stored on your computer or **Browse Course** if the file is saved in Course Files.
4. Click **Submit**.



5. On the **Rubric Import Result** page, click **OK** to return to the main **Rubrics** page.

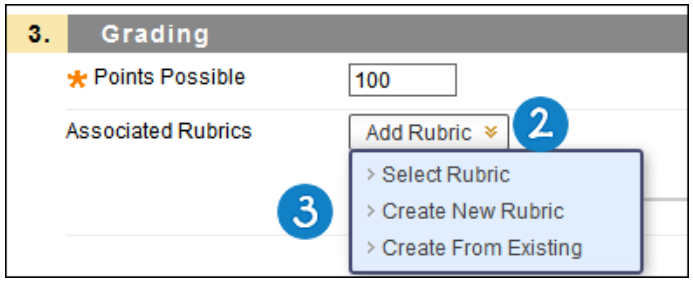
Associating Rubrics With Content

You can associate rubrics with the following types of content:

- Assignments
- Test question types: Essay, File Response, Short Answer
- Blogs and journals
- Wikis
- Discussion Board threads and forums

QUICK STEPS: Associating a Rubric With Assignments

1. Create a new or edit an existing assignment.
2. In the **Grading** section, point to **Add Rubric** to access the drop-down list.
3. Select an option:
   - **Select Rubric** to add a rubric you created with the Rubrics tool. A pop-up window opens, allowing you to select and submit the rubric you choose.
   - **Create New Rubric** to create a new rubric to associate with the assignment. A pop-up window opens, allowing you to create the rubric that will be associated when you click **Submit**.
   - **Create From Existing** to create a new rubric based on a rubric you have already created. A pop-up window opens, allowing you to select the rubric you want to base your new rubric on, and then another window in which you can create the new rubric that will be associated when you click **Submit**.

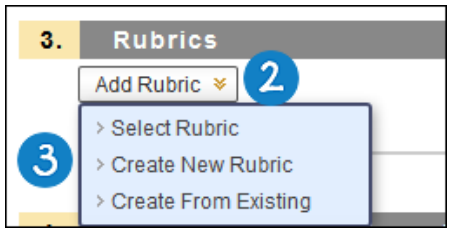


4. Finish creating or editing the assignment and click **Submit**.

   NOTE: If you are using a percent-based rubric, you need to provide the **Points Possible** before clicking **Submit**. If you are using a points-based rubric, you are prompted to use the rubric's point value as the assignment's possible points.

QUICK STEPS: Associating a Rubric With Test or Pool Questions

1. Create a new or edit an existing Essay, File Response, or Short Answer question.
2. In the Rubrics section, point to **Add Rubric**.
3. Select an option:
   - **Select Rubric** to add a rubric you created with the Rubrics tool. A pop-up window opens, allowing you to select and submit the rubric you choose.
   - **Create New Rubric** to create a new rubric to associate with the assignment. A pop-up window opens, allowing you to create the rubric that will be associated when you click **Submit**.
   - **Create From Existing** to create a new rubric based on a rubric you have already created. A pop-up window opens, allowing you to select the rubric you want to base your new rubric on, and then another window in which you can create the new rubric that will be associated when you click **Submit**.



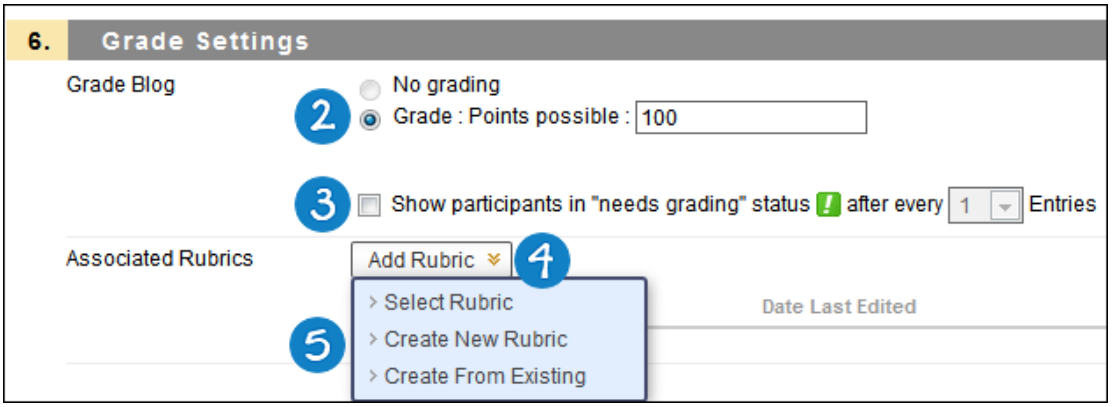
4. Finish creating or editing the question and click **Submit**.

   NOTE: Point values for test questions are handled in the main test or pool canvas. Both point and percent-based rubrics adjust their calculations to match the assigned point value for the test question.

   NOTE: Test questions display an icon next to the question's point value to indicate a rubric has been associated with the question.

QUICK STEPS: Associating a Rubric With Blogs, Journals, and Wikis

1. Create a new or edit an existing blog, journal, or wiki.
2. Under the Rubrics step, select **Grade**. This opens the ability to add a rubric.
3. Optionally, select the check box to determine how many entries (blogs and journals) or page saves (wikis) students need to submit before they are shown in Needs Grading status ( ) to indicate they are ready for grading.
4. Point to **Add Rubric**.
5. Select an option:
   - **Select Rubric** to add a rubric you created with the Rubrics tool. A pop-up window opens, allowing you to select and submit the rubric you choose.
   - **Create New Rubric** to create a new rubric to associate with the assignment. A pop-up window opens, allowing you to create the rubric that will be associated when you click **Submit**.
   - **Create From Existing** to create a new rubric based on a rubric you have already created. A pop-up window opens, allowing you to select the rubric you want to base your new rubric on, and then another window in which you can create the new rubric that will be associated when you click **Submit**.

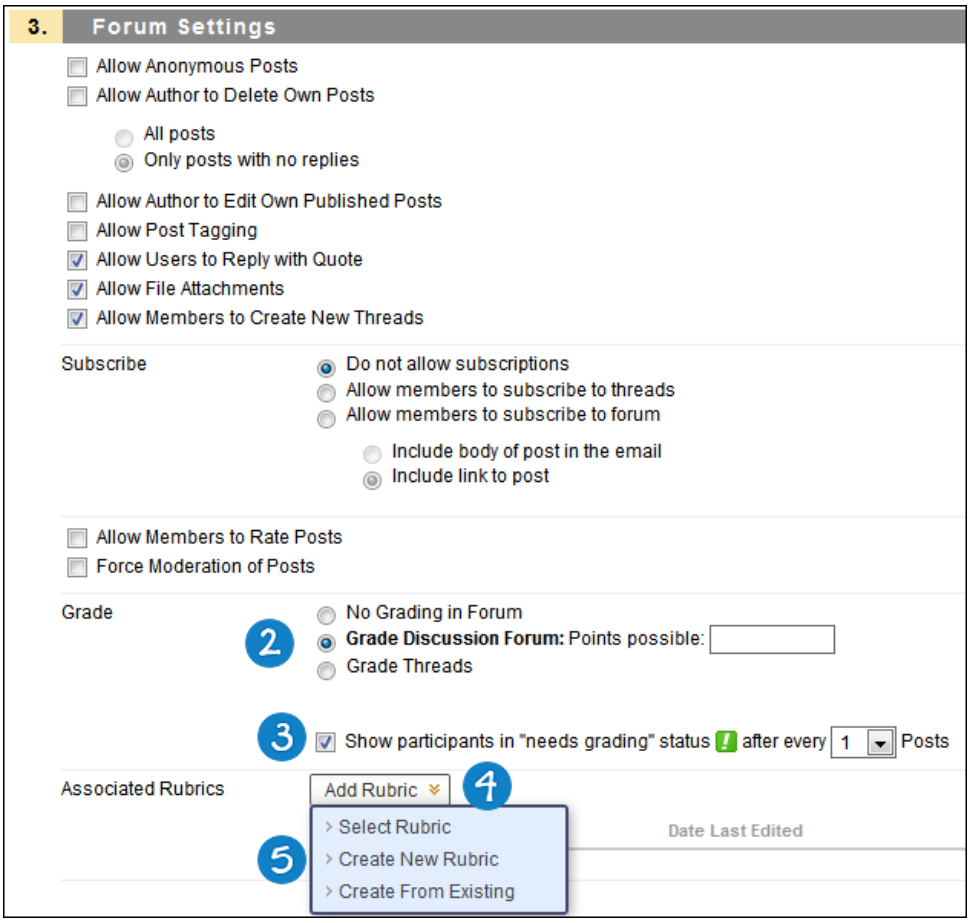


6. Finish creating or editing the blog, journal, or wiki and click **Submit**.

   NOTE: If you are using a percent-based rubric, you need to type the **Points Possible** before clicking **Submit**. If you are using a points-based rubric, you will be prompted to use the rubric's point value as the blog, journal, or wiki's possible points.

QUICK STEPS: Associating a Rubric With a Discussion Board Forum

1. Create a new or edit an existing Discussion Board forum.
2. Under step 3, Forum Settings, select **Grade Discussion Forum**. This opens the ability to add a rubric.
3. Select the check box for **Show participants in needs grading status** and select a number from the drop-down list. After a user meets the specified number, the item appears on the **Needs Grading** page. If you do NOT select the check box, the **Needs Grading** icon ( ) does not appear in the Grade Center and items do not appear on the **Needs Grading** page.
4. Point to **Add Rubric**.
5. Select an option:
   - **Select Rubric** to add a rubric you created with the Rubrics tool. A pop-up window opens, allowing you to select and submit the rubric you choose.
   - **Create New Rubric** to create a new rubric to associate with the assignment. A pop-up window opens, allowing you to create the rubric that will be associated when you click **Submit**.
   - **Create From Existing** to create a new rubric based on a rubric you have already created. A pop-up window opens, allowing you to select the rubric you want to base your new rubric on, and then another window in which you can create the new rubric that will be associated when you click **Submit**.

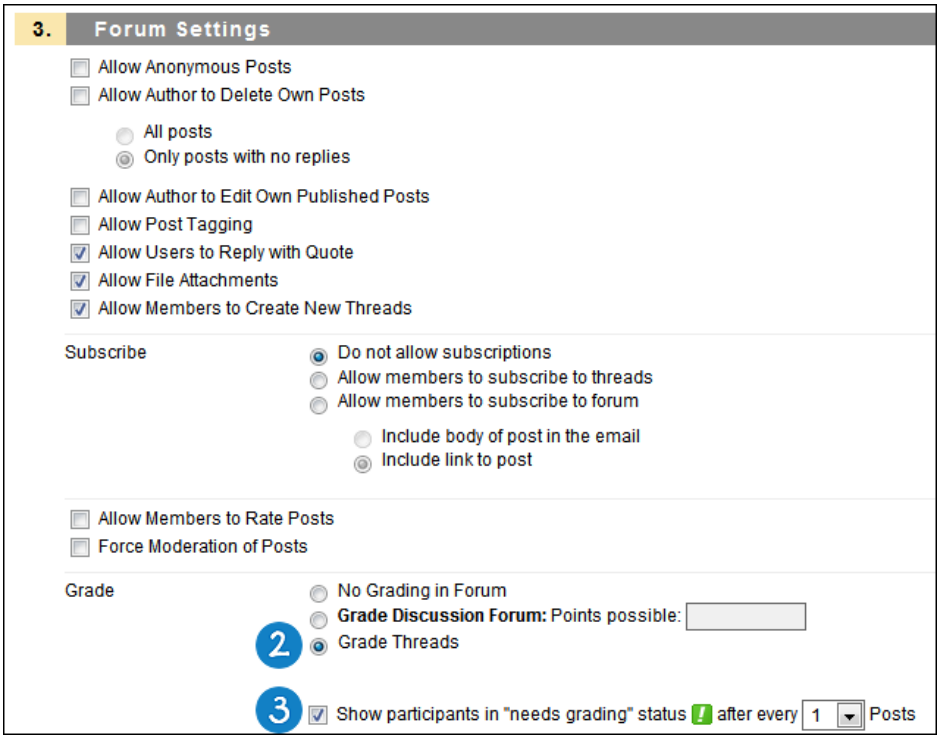


6. Finish creating or editing the forum and click **Submit**.

   NOTE: If you are using a percent-based rubric, you need to type the **Points Possible** before clicking **Submit**. If you are using a points-based rubric, you will be prompted to use the rubric's point value as the discussion forum's possible points.

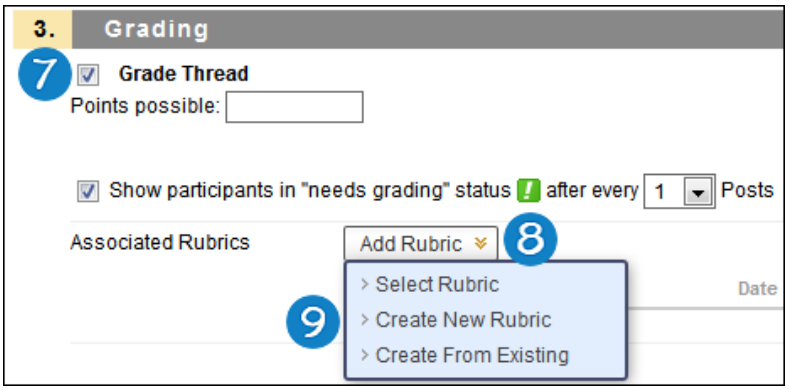
QUICK STEPS: Associating a Rubric With a Discussion Board Thread

1. Create a new or edit an existing Discussion Board forum.
2. Under step 3, Forum Settings, select **Grade Threads**.
3. Select the check box for **Show participants in needs grading status** and select a number from the drop-down list. After a user meets the specified number, the item appears on the **Needs Grading** page. If you do NOT select the check box, the **Needs Grading** icon ( ) does not appear in the Grade Center and items do not appear on the **Needs Grading** page. You will also be able to set this option on individual threads.



4. Click **Submit.**
5. Click the name of the forum to enter it.
6. Click **Create Thread**.
7. Under step 3, Grading, select the **Grade Thread** check box.
8. Point to **Add Rubric**.
9. Select an option:
   - **Select Rubric** to add a rubric you created with the Rubrics tool. A pop-up window opens, allowing you to select and submit the rubric you choose.

- **Create New Rubric** to create a new rubric to associate with the assignment. A pop-up window opens, allowing you to create the rubric that will be associated when you click **Submit**.
- **Create From Existing** to create a new rubric based on a rubric you have already created. A pop-up window opens, allowing you to select the rubric you want to base your new rubric on, and then another window in which you can create the new rubric that will be associated when you click **Submit**.



10. Finish creating or editing the thread and click **Submit**.

    NOTE: If you are using a percent-based rubric, you need to type the **Points Possible** before clicking **Submit**. If you are using a points-based rubric, you will be prompted to use the rubric's point value as the discussion thread's possible points.

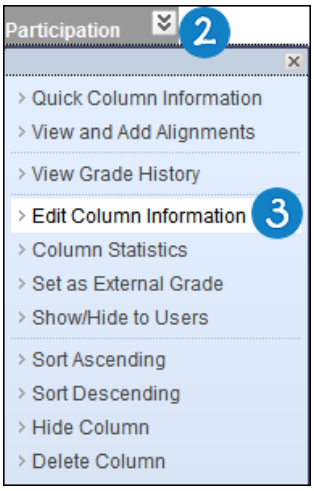
Associating Rubrics With Grade Center Columns

You can associate a rubric with any non-calculated Grade Center column, whether the column represents a gradable item or not. For instance, you can associate a rubric with a manually created column for class participation, and use the rubric to grade participation.

Students can view rubrics associated with Grade Center columns through the My Grades tool.

QUICK STEPS: adding a rubric to a Grade Center Column

1. On the **Control Panel**, under **Grade Center**, select **Full Grade Center**.
2. In the Grade Center, click the Action Link next to a column heading to access the contextual menu.
3. Select **Edit Column Information**.



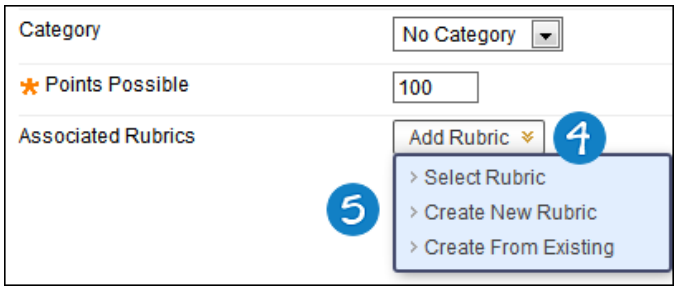
4. In the **Associated Rubrics** section, point to **Add Rubric**.

5. Select an option:

   - **Select Rubric** to add a rubric you created with the Rubrics tool. A pop-up window opens, allowing you to select and submit the rubric you choose.

   - **Create New Rubric** to create a new rubric to associate with the assignment. A pop-up window opens, allowing you to create the rubric that will be associated when you click **Submit**.

   - **Create From Existing** to create a new rubric based on a rubric you have already created. A pop-up window opens, allowing you to select the rubric you want to base your new rubric on, and then another window in which you can create the new rubric that will be associated when you click **Submit**.



6. On the **Rubrics** page, preview and select one or more rubrics you have made.

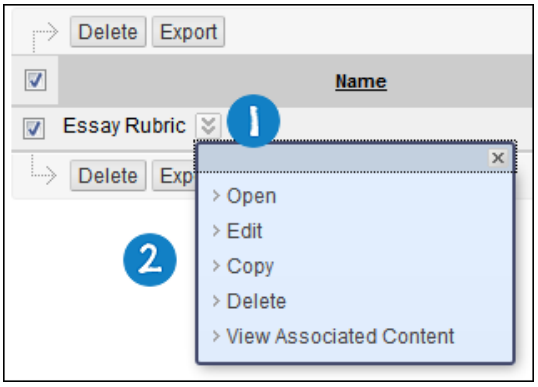
7. Finish editing the column and click **Submit**.

Managing Rubrics

Additional options are available from the **Rubrics** page.

QUICK STEPS: Managing Rubrics

1. Click the Action Link next to a rubric's name to access the contextual menu.
2. Select an option:
    a) **Open** to preview the rubric in a separate window. The rubric can be printed in this view, but cannot be edited.
    b) **Edit** to make changes to the rubric.
    c) **Copy** to duplicate the rubric in the same course. To share the rubric with another course, use the **Export** option.
    d) **Delete** to remove the rubric entirely. This action cannot be undone. If you would like to save a copy of the rubric for later use, use the **Export** option.
    e) **View Associated Content** to see which items the rubric is associated with.



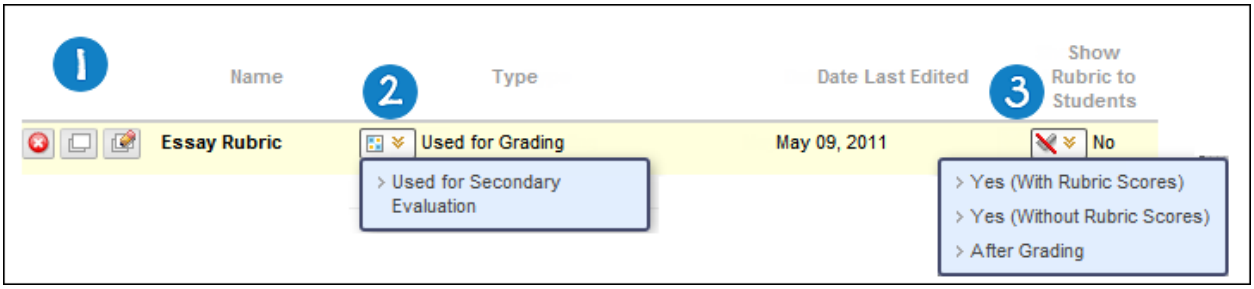
QUICK STEPS: Managing Associated Rubrics

1. Click the icons before the rubric's name to **Delete**, **View**, or **Edit** the rubric.

2. For the **Type**, rubrics can be designated as **Used for Grading** or **Used for Secondary Evaluation**. If multiple rubrics are associated, only one can be the primary grading rubric, designated as Used for Grading. Click the Action Link to change the type.

3. Click the Action Link under **Show Rubric to Students** to access the four options for rubric visibility.

    - **No** does not allow students to view the rubric at any time.
    - **Yes (With Rubric Scores)** allows students to view the rubric when the item is made available, including possible point or percentage values.
    - **Yes (Without Rubric Scores)** allows students to view the rubric when the item is made available, but does not include the possible point or percentage values.
    - **After Grading** allows students to view the rubric only after grading on their submission is completed.



NOTE: If you show rubrics associated with Grade Center columns that are not related to gradable items (such as a manually created column, rather than an assignment) to students, they will only be able to view them in the My Grades tool.

Hands-on Activity

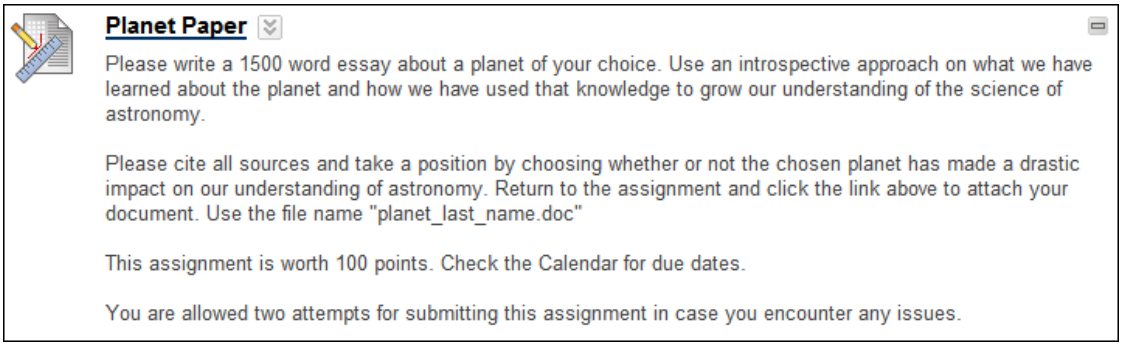
For this activity, use your Practice Course.

Create a rubric

- Create a single rubric for assignments.

Add a rubric to an assignment

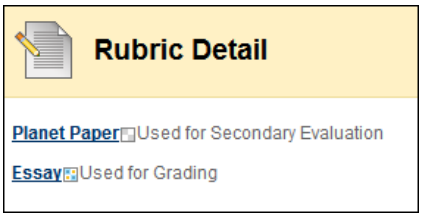
- Add the rubric you created to the **Planet Paper** assignment, and set it to be visible to students with rubric scores.



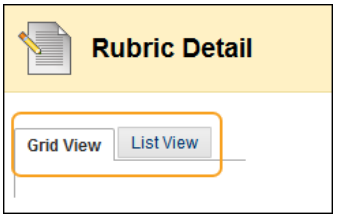
Grading With Rubrics

Once you have created a rubric and associated it with an assignment or assessment, you can use it for grading.

If multiple rubrics are available, you will be given the option to click a rubric's title to begin evaluation. When you have finished your evaluation, you can choose to begin evaluating with another associated rubric.

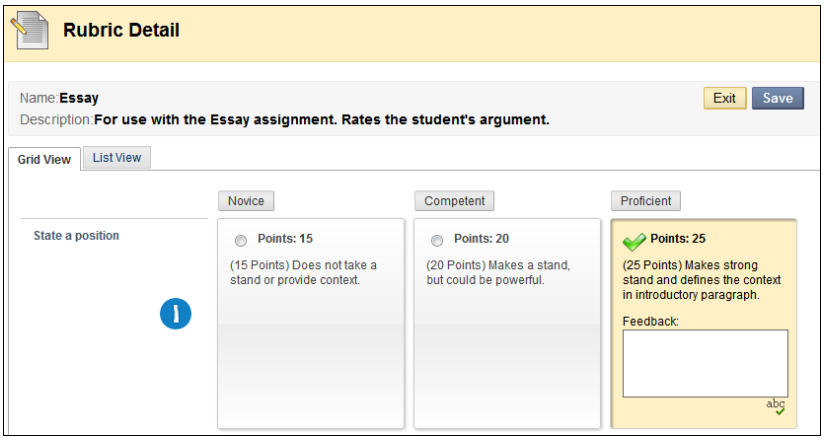


Two views are available when grading with a rubric: **Grid View** and **List View**. Grid View is the default view.

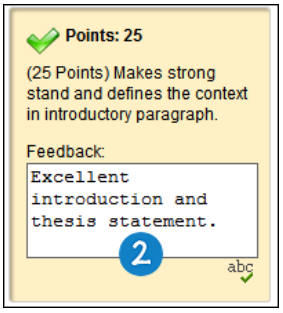


QUICK STEPS: Grading With Rubrics in Grid View

1. Click a cell to apply that point value to the grade. To change the selection, click another cell in the same row. A green check mark appears when a cell is selected.



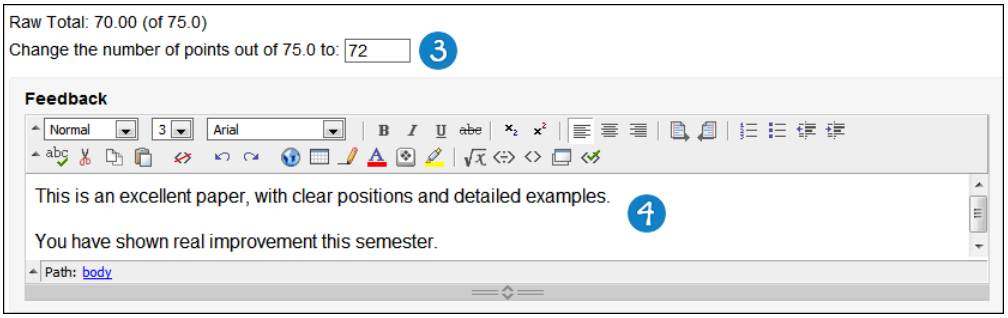
2. Optionally, type **Feedback** for individual criteria to the student in the text box that appears when a cell is selected.



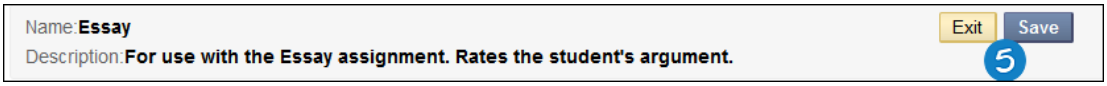
NOTE: If a rubric with point ranges has been used, select the desired value from the drop-down list.

3. A running **Raw Total** score is displayed as point selections are made. Optionally, type a score in the **Change the number of points** box to override the selected score.

4. You have the option to type overall **Feedback** to the student using the full features of the Text Editor.

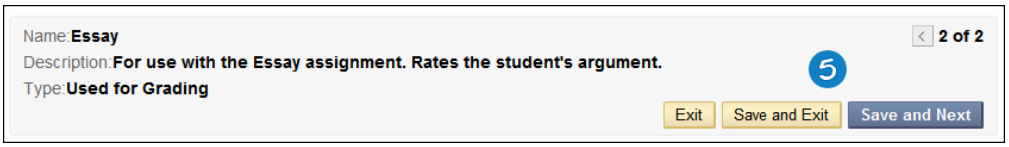


5. When grading is complete, click **Exit** to leave the rubric without saving any selections, or **Save** to save the score and feedback and return to the attempt.



-OR-

If multiple rubrics are associated, click **Exit** to leave the rubric without saving any selections, **Save and Exit** to save the score and feedback and return to the attempt, or **Save and Next** to use another rubric for evaluation.



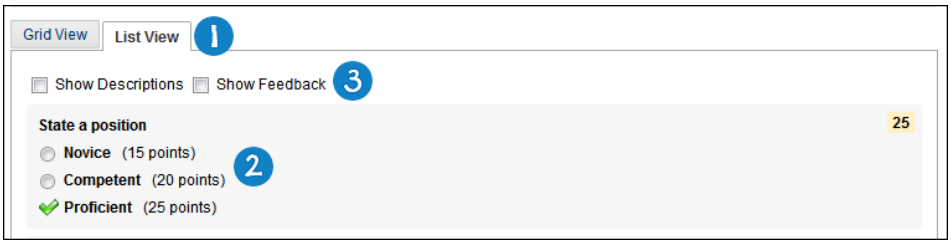
QUICK STEPS: Grading With Rubrics in List View

1. Click **List View** to switch displays.

2. Select a radio button for each criterion to apply that point value to the grade. A green check mark appears when a value is selected.

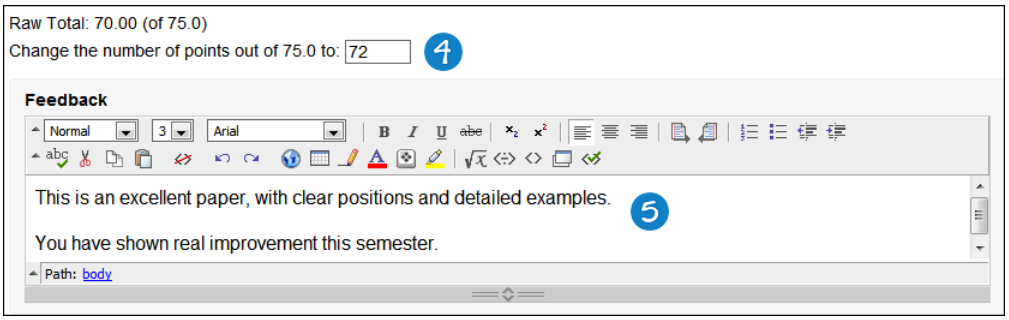
   NOTE: If a rubric with point ranges has been used, select the desired value from the drop-down list.

3. Optionally, select the check boxes to **Show Descriptions** for criteria and to **Show Feedback** text boxes.

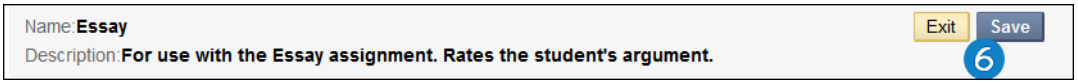


4. A running **Raw Total** score is displayed as point selections are made. Optionally, type a score in the **Change the number of points** box to override the selected score.

5. You have the option to type overall **Feedback** to the student using the full features of the Text Editor.

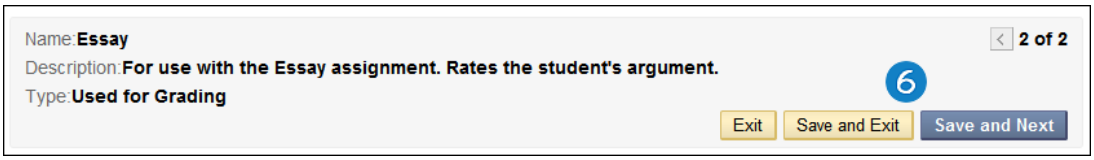


6. When grading is complete, click **Exit** to leave the rubric without saving any selections, or **Save** to save the score and feedback and return to the attempt.



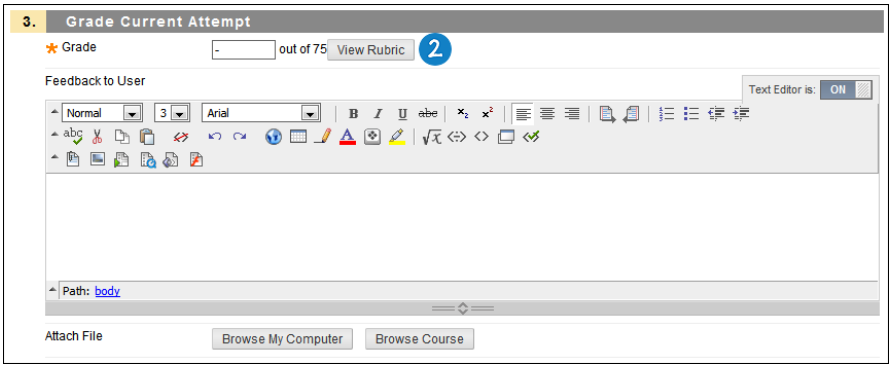
-OR-

If multiple rubrics are associated, click **Exit** to leave the rubric without saving any selections, **Save and Exit** to save the score and feedback and return to the attempt, or **Save and Next** to use another rubric for evaluation.



QUICK STEPS: Grading Assignments Using a Rubric

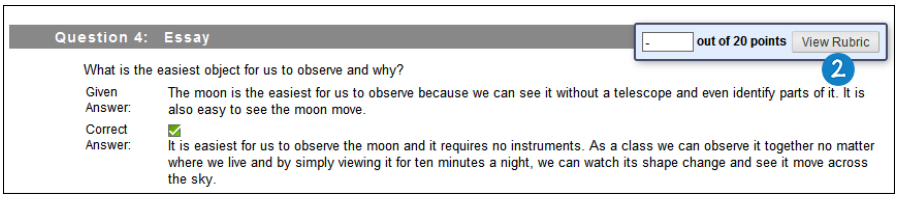
1. Access the attempt to be graded through the **Grade Center** or the **Needs Grading** page. To learn more about starting the grading process from the **Needs Grading** page, see the *Needs Grading* manual.
2. In the Grade Current Attempt section, click the **View Rubric** button to grade using the rubric.



3. Complete grading using the rubric.
4. Click **Submit** to finish grading the assignment.

QUICK STEPS: Grading Test Questions Using a Rubric

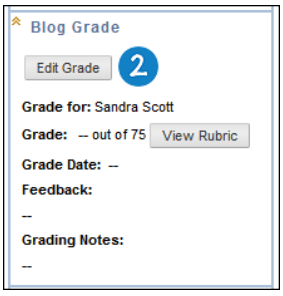
1. Access the attempt to be graded through the **Grade Center** or the **Needs Grading** page. To learn more about starting the grading process from the **Needs Grading** page, see the *Needs Grading* manual.
2. For any question with an associated rubric, click the **View Rubric** button to grade using the rubric.



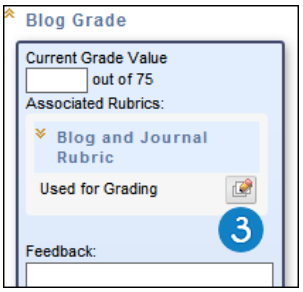
3. Complete grading using the rubric.
4. Click **Submit** to finish grading the test.

QUICK STEPS: Grading Blogs, Journals, or Wikis Using a Rubric

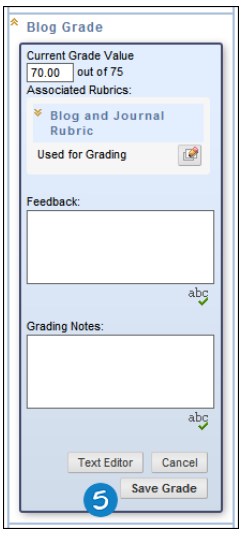
1. Access the attempt to be graded through the **Grade Center**, the interactive tool, or the **Needs Grading** page. To learn more about starting the grading process from the **Needs Grading** page, see the *Needs Grading* manual.
2. For any blog or journal entry or wiki page with an associated rubric, click the **Edit Grade** button to access the rubric for grading. Clicking **View Rubric** here opens a read-only view of the associated rubric.



3. Click the **View Rubric in Window** button to begin grading with the rubric.

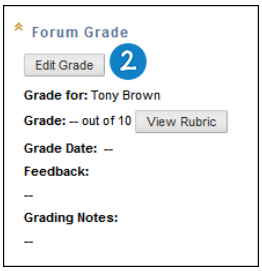


4. Complete grading using the rubric.
5. Click **Save Grade** to complete grading.

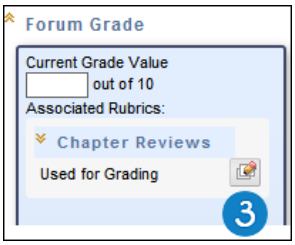


QUICK STEPS: Grading Discussion Board Forums Using a Rubric

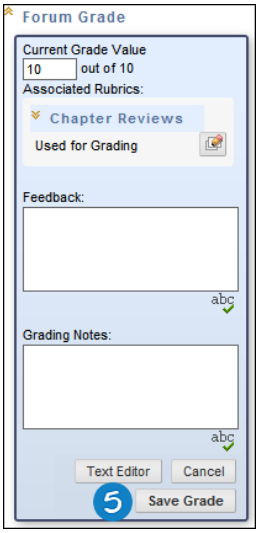
1. Access the attempt to be graded through the **Grade Center**, the interactive tool, or the **Needs Grading** page. To learn more about starting the grading process from the **Needs Grading** page, see the *Needs Grading* manual.
2. For any discussion board post with an associated forum rubric, click the **Edit Grade** button to access the rubric for grading. Clicking **View Rubric** here opens a read-only view of the associated rubric.



3. Click the **View Rubric in Window** button to begin grading with the rubric.

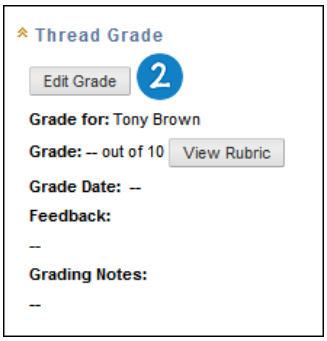


4. Complete grading using the rubric.
5. Click **Save Grade** to complete grading.

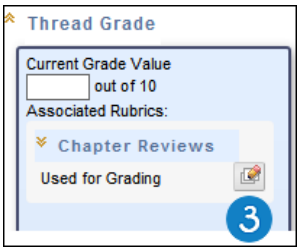


QUICK STEPS: Grading a Discussion Board Thread Using a Rubric

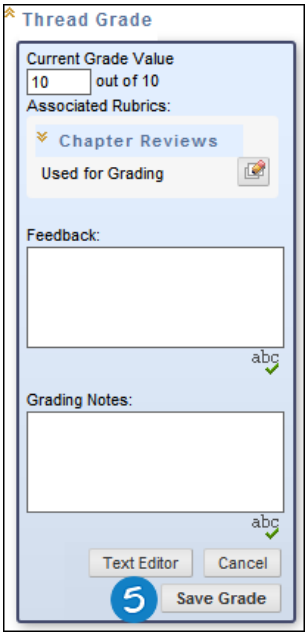
1. Access the attempt to be graded through the **Grade Center**, the interactive tool, or the **Needs Grading** page. To learn more about starting the grading process from the **Needs Grading** page, see the *Needs Grading* manual.
2. For any Discussion Board post with an associated thread rubric, click the **Edit Grade** button to access the rubric for grading. Clicking **View Rubric** here opens a read-only view of the associated rubric.



3. Click the **View Rubric in Window** button to begin grading with the rubric.



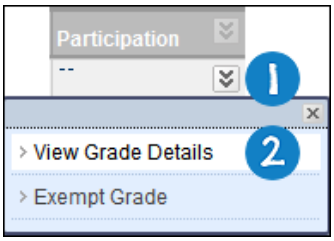
4. Complete grading using the rubric.
5. Click **Save Grade** to complete grading.


Thread Grade
Current Grade Value
10
out of 10
Associated Rubrics:
Chapter Reviews
Used for Grading
Feedback:
abc
Grading Notes:
abc
Text Editor
Cancel
5
Save Grade

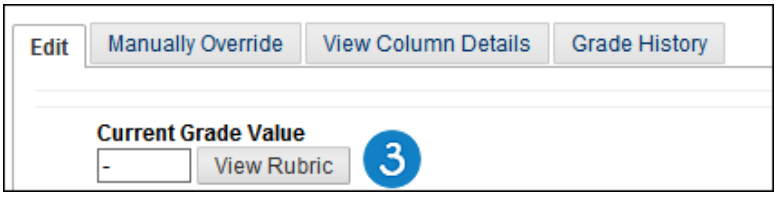
QUICK STEPS: Grading a Grade Center Column Using a Rubric

You can use a rubric for grading, even if the Grade Center column is not related to a gradable item. If you set the rubric to be visible to students, they will be able to view it in the **My Grades** tool.

1. In the Grade Center, click a cell to access the Action Link.
2. Click **View Grade Details**.



3. From the **Grade Details** page, click **View Rubric** to begin grading with the rubric.



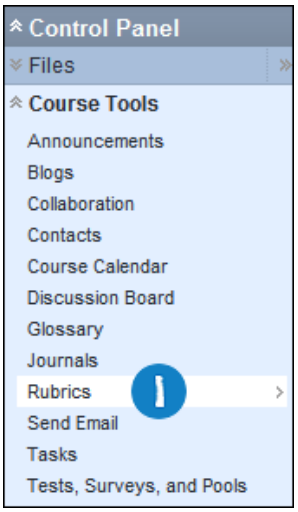
4. Complete grading using the rubric.
5. On the **Grade Details** page, click **Save** to save the grade.
6. Click the arrow next to the current student's name to continue grading, or click **Return to Grade Center**.

Viewing Rubric Reports

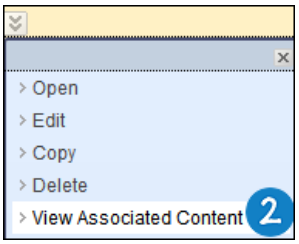
If you want to evaluate a rubric or your use of it, you can run a Rubric Evaluation Report at any point in the grading process. Once a rubric has been used for grading, the report will be available for review. Statistics are updated as the grading process continues.

QUICK STEPS: Viewing a Rubric Evaluation Report

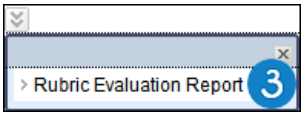
1. On the **Control Panel**, expand the **Course Tools** section and select **Rubrics**.



2. On the **Rubrics** page, click the Action Link next to a rubric's name to access the contextual menu and select **View Associated Content**.



3. Click the Action Link next to the item name and select **Rubric Evaluation Report**. If there is no Action Link available, the rubric has not yet been used for grading and a report cannot be run.



4. On the **Run Reports** page, select any options, such as the **Format** and the **Start** and **End Date.**
5. Click **Submit**.
6. If your school licenses content management, you may choose to **Save to Content Collection**. Otherwise, click **Download Report** to view the report, or **Run a new Report** to change format or date criteria. Click **OK** to return to the main Rubrics page.

The Rubric Evaluation Report delivers three statistics about the rubric's use in grading the item.

- **Average Rubric Performance** shows the average total score of all attempts scored using the rubric.
- **Average Rubric Criteria** shows average scores, compared against the possible points, for each criterion.
- **Frequency Distribution** shows the distribution of scores across each Level of Achievement.

Hands-on Activity

For this activity, use your Practice Course.

Grade using a rubric

- Access the **Needs Grading** page, and grade two students' attempts on the Planet Paper assignment using the rubric.

Run a rubric evaluation report

- When you have completed grading using the rubric, run a rubric evaluation report to see how the rubric was used to score the student's attempts.