Creating & Organizing Columns
Blackboard Learn Grade Center
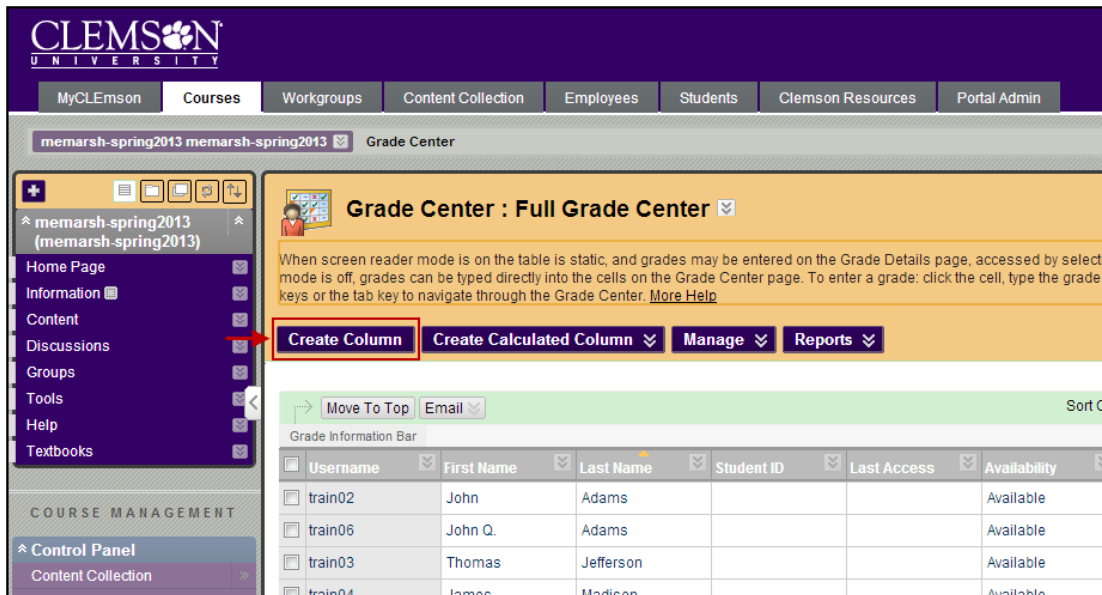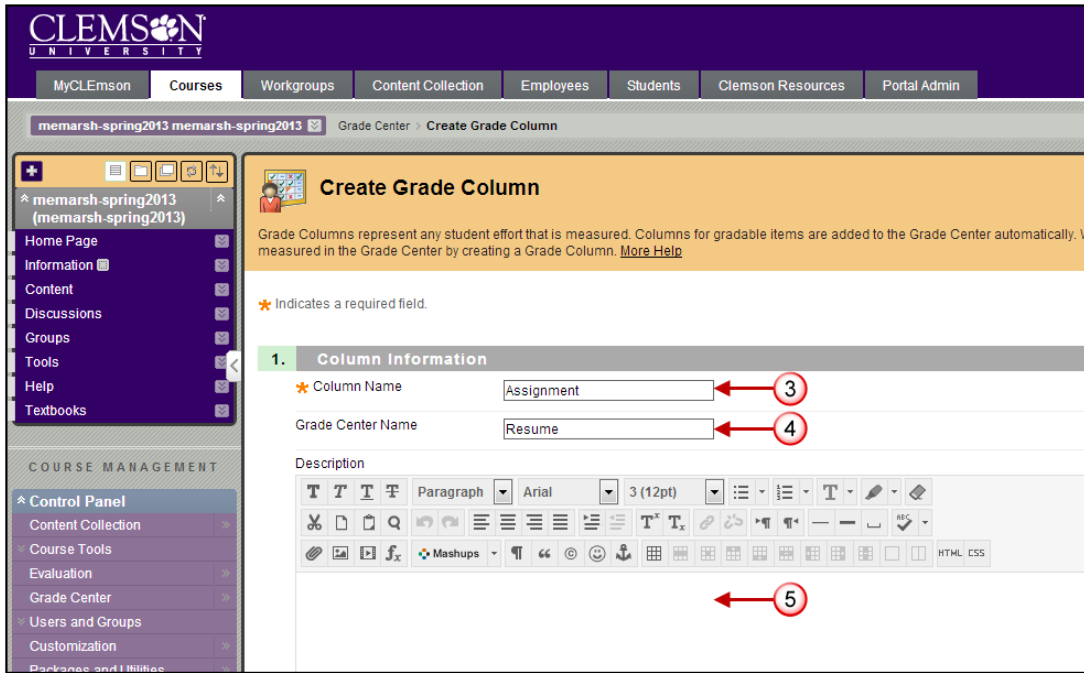
Creating a Grade Center Column

Manually Creating a Grade Center Column

To manually create a Grade Center column:

1) Click **Create Column**.

2) The Create Grade Column page is displayed.

3) Enter a **Column Name**. This is a formal name, and is displayed in the Grade Center if no **Grade Center Display Name** is entered. This field will accept 15 characters.

4) Enter the **Grade Center Display Name**. This appears as the column header in the Grade Center. This field will accept 15 characters in the column header. The Grade Center is the only area where this name is used.

5) Enter a **Description** of the column.
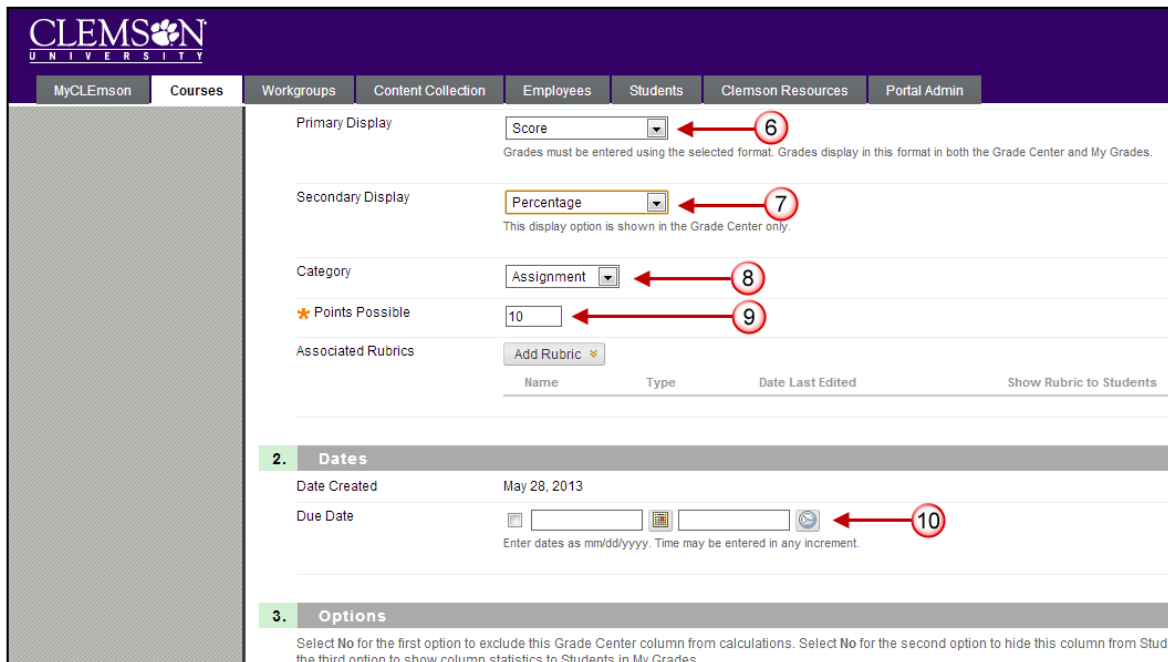
6) Select a **Primary Display** from the drop down menu. The default choice is Score. The format chosen is the primary or only format displayed to Students.

- **Score –** will display the grade as a score. Points Correct out of Points Available.

- **Text** – will display the grade in alphanumeric format. An example may be Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. Text columns can contain non-graded information like a students home town, their lab partner, or their preferred name. Text columns cannot be included in Calculated Columns such as **Weighted Grade**, **Total Points**, **Average Grade**, and **Minimum/Maximum grades**.

- **Percentage** – will display the grade as a percentage. Points Correct divided by Points Available.

- **Note**: Simply entering a Score for Grade Column that uses the Primary Display of Percentage will not calculate Percentage. To calculate a Score's Percentage select "Score" from the **Primary Display** drop down menu and select "Percentage" from the **Secondary Display** drop down menu.

- **Letter** – will display a letter grade A, B, C, D, F based on the points or percentage values defined in the Grading Schema.

- **Complete/Incomplete** – will display the words Complete or Incomplete for the grade to indicate whether the assignment has been completed.

    ***Grading Schema – once grading schemas are created they will appear as an option in the Primary and Secondary Display options.

7) Select a **Secondary Display** from the drop down menu. This selection displays the secondary format for this Grade Item in the Grade Center in parenthesis.

8) Select a **Category** from the drop down menu. This associates the column to a Category.

- Default Categories are included in the Grade Center. User defined Categories must first be created before they can be associated with a column.

- Categories classify Grade Center Columns and can be used to create Smart Views that focus the view of Grade Center data or to create Calculated Columns.

9) Enter **Points Possible**. Denote the number of points assigned to this column. Non-numeric entries are not accepted.

Select a **Grading Period** from the drop down menu. The **Grading Period** drop down menu will only be displayed if Grading Periods have been defined.

> **Note:** Columns that are assigned a **Due Date** are automatically associated with a Grading Period if the **Due Date** falls within the date range of the Grading Period. This option to automatically associate columns with a grading period is an option you can select when creating the Grading Period.

The system added field **Date Created**, displays the date the Grade Item was created. This information cannot be edited.

10) Enter a **Due Date**. Select from the following:

- **None** – there will be no due date for the Grade Item.

- **Due On** – specify the due date and time for the Grade Item, including month, day and year.

11) Set additional **Options** for the column by clicking **Yes** or **No** for the following:

a. **Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations** – the column is included in the possible selections of items when creating Calculated Columns, such as Weight Grades Columns or Total Point Columns.

b. **Show this Column to Students** – Grades will appear in My Grades, View Grades and the Report Card module when available.

c. **Show Statistics (average and median) to Students in My Grades** – includes statistical information with the grade value when shown to students.

12) Click **Submit**.

The new column is added to the far right side of the Grade Center. However, you can always change the order of this column by hovering your mouse over the **Manage** action link and selecting **Column Organization**

Creating Calculated Columns

In the Grade Center, you can calculate grades by combining multiple columns to attain performance results, such as class averages, final grades that are based on a weighted scale, or total points, or to drop the lowest quiz score, etc. These are called Calculated Columns. These columns, which display performance results, can be displayed to students or remain accessible to only the Faculty member, TA, and Grader. The possible Calculated Columns include the following:
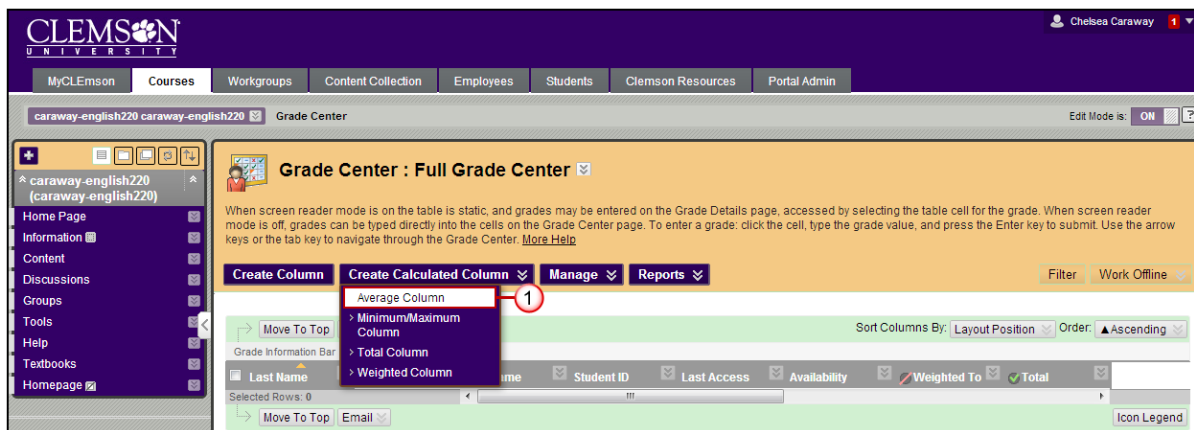
- Average Column

- Minimum/Maximum Column

- Total Column

- Weighted Column

Creating an Average Column

An Average Column calculates and displays the numeric average for a selected number of Columns. An example of an Average Column would be if a faculty member wanted to display the average for all Tests, or display the average grade for each Student for a grading period. You also have the option of dropping the lowest or highest score before the average is taken.

To create an Average Column:

1) Hover your mouse over the **Create Calculated Column** action link and select **Average Column**.

2) The Create Average Column page is displayed.
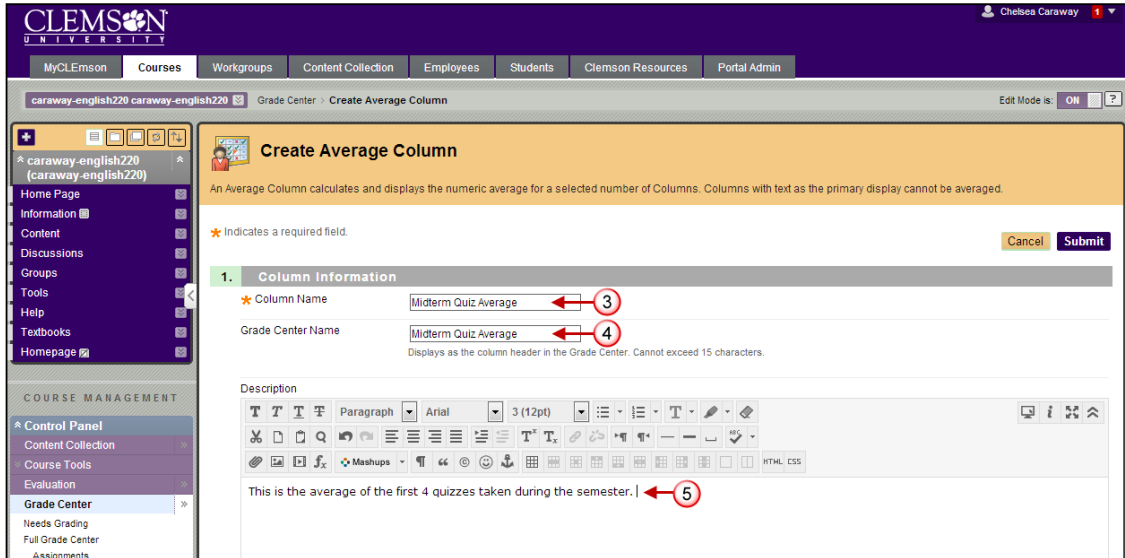
3) Enter a **Column Name**. This is a formal name, and is displayed in the Grade Center if no **Grade Center Display Name** is entered. This field will accept 15 characters.

4) Enter the **Grade Center Display Name**. This appears as the column header in the Grade Center. This field will accept 15 characters in the column header. The Grade Center is the only area where this name is used.

5) Enter a **Description** for the Average Column.
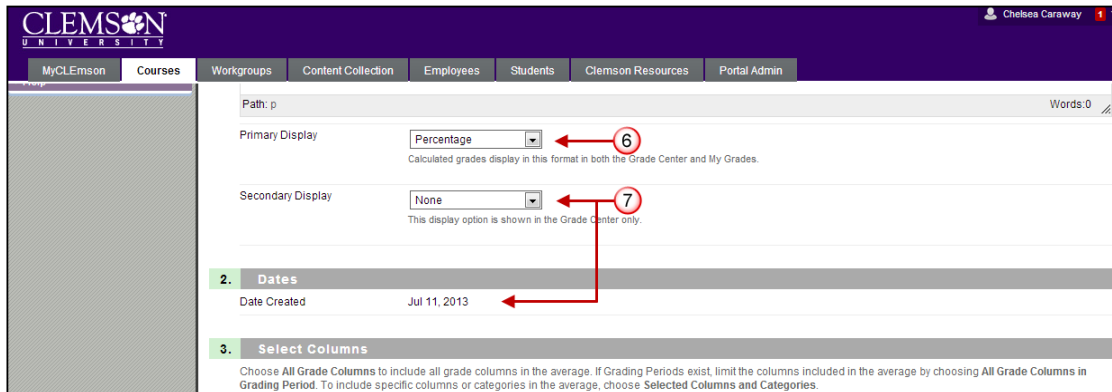
6) Select a **Primary Display** from the drop down menu. The default choice is Score. The format chosen is the primary or only format displayed to Students.

7) Select a **Secondary Display** from the drop down menu. This selection displays the secondary format for this Grade Item in the Grade Center in parenthesis.

- **Date Created** is automatically populated based on the system date and time.

8) In the **Select Columns** area, click the radio button to select which Columns, Categories or Grading Periods to include when calculating the Average Column. An Average Column can include the following options:

- **All Grade Columns** – Includes all Grade Columns in the average.

- **All Grade Columns in Grading Period** – Includes All Grade Columns in a specific Grading Period when generating the average.

- **Selected Columns and Categories** – Includes specific columns or categories in the average.

   Note: Columns and Categories that are not set to "Include in Grade Center Calculations" are ignored when calculating the Average.
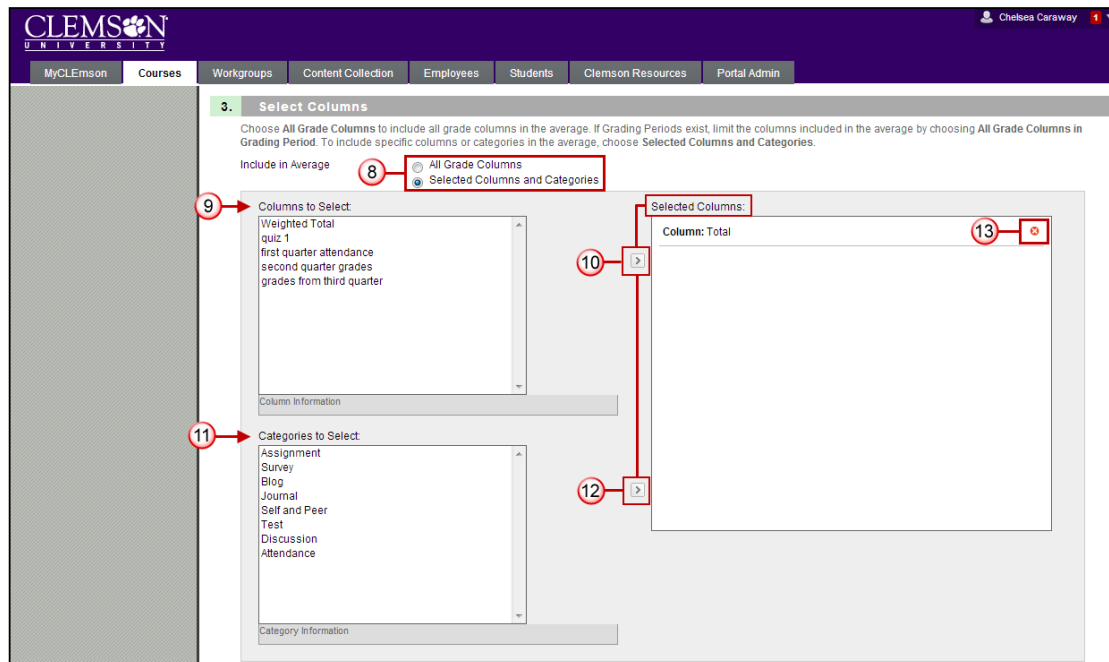
9) In the **Columns to Select** box, select the Columns to include in the calculation of the Average Column.

10) Then click the right arrow button to move the columns to the **Selected Columns** area.

11) In the **Categories to Select** box, select the Categories of Columns to include in the calculation of the Average Column.

12) Then click the right arrow button to move the columns in the selected categories to the **Selected Columns** area.

13) To remove items from the **Selected Columns** area click the red, circular X icon

14) Click **Yes** for **Calculate as Running Total** to include only items that have grades or attempts in the Running Total. Selecting No includes all items in the calculations, using a value of 0 for an item if there is no grade.

15) Click **No** to **Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations**.

16) Click **No** if you do not want to **Show this Column to Students**.

17) Click **Yes** if you want to **Show Statistics (average and median) for this column to Students in My Grades**.

18) Then click **Submit**.

Creating a Minimum/Maximum Column

A Minimum or Maximum Grade column displays either the minimum or maximum grade for a selection of Columns. This column can be displayed to the Students or just the Faculty.   For instance, Faculty may choose to find the minimum scores of all the Tests from a Grading Period and display it only to the Faculty.

To create a Minimum/Maximum Column:

1) Hover your mouse over the **Create Calculated Column** action link and select **Minimum/Maximum Column**.

2) The Create Minimum/Maximum Column page is displayed. Enter a **Column Name**. This is a formal name, and is displayed in the Grade Center if no **Grade Center Display Name** is entered. This field will accept 15 characters.

3) Enter the **Grade Center Display Name**. This appears as the column header in the Grade Center. This field will accept 15 characters in the column header. The Grade Center is the only area where this name is used.

4) Enter a **Description** for the Minimum/Maximum Column.
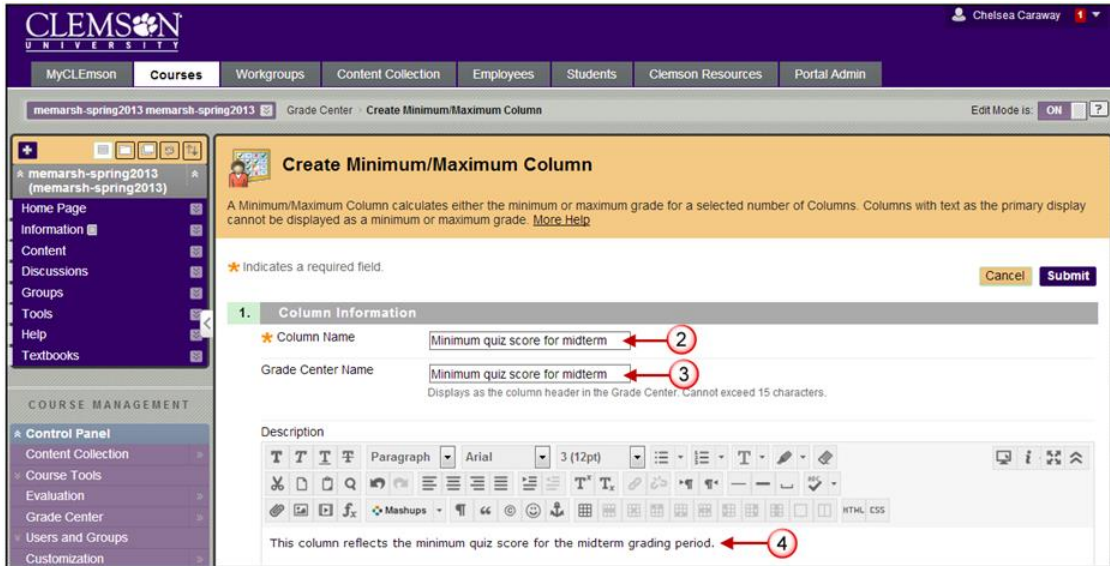
5) Select a **Primary Display** from the drop down menu. The default choice is Score. The format chosen is the primary or only format displayed to Students.

6) Select a **Secondary Display** from the drop down menu. This selection displays the secondary format for this Grade Item in the Grade Center in parenthesis.

If a Grading Period has been created, you may use the drop down list that will display in order to select a **Grading Period**.   This selects all the columns associated with a Grading Period.

7) **Date Created** is automatically populated based on the system date and time.

8) In the **Select Columns** area, select a radio button for the **Calculation Type**. This can be either Minimum or Maximum.
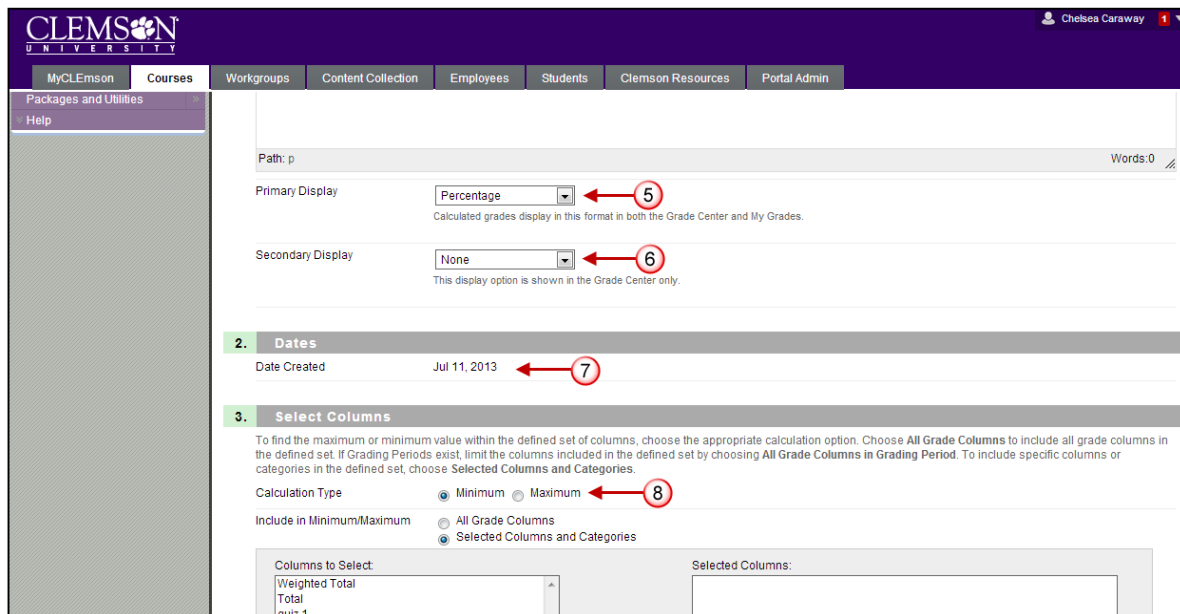
9) Next, click the radio button for **Selected Columns and Categories** or **All Grade Columns** to include when calculating the Minimum/Maximum Column. In creating a Minimum/Maximum Grade column, the Faculty can select from the following:

- **All Grade Columns** – Includes all Grade Columns in the minimum/maximum.

- **All Grade Columns in Grading Period** – Includes All Grade Columns in a specific Grading Period in the calculation of the minimum/maximum.

- **Selected Columns and Categories** – Includes specific columns or categories in the minimum/maximum.

  Note: Columns and Categories that are not set to "Include in Grade Center Calculations" are ignored when calculating the Minimum/Maximum.
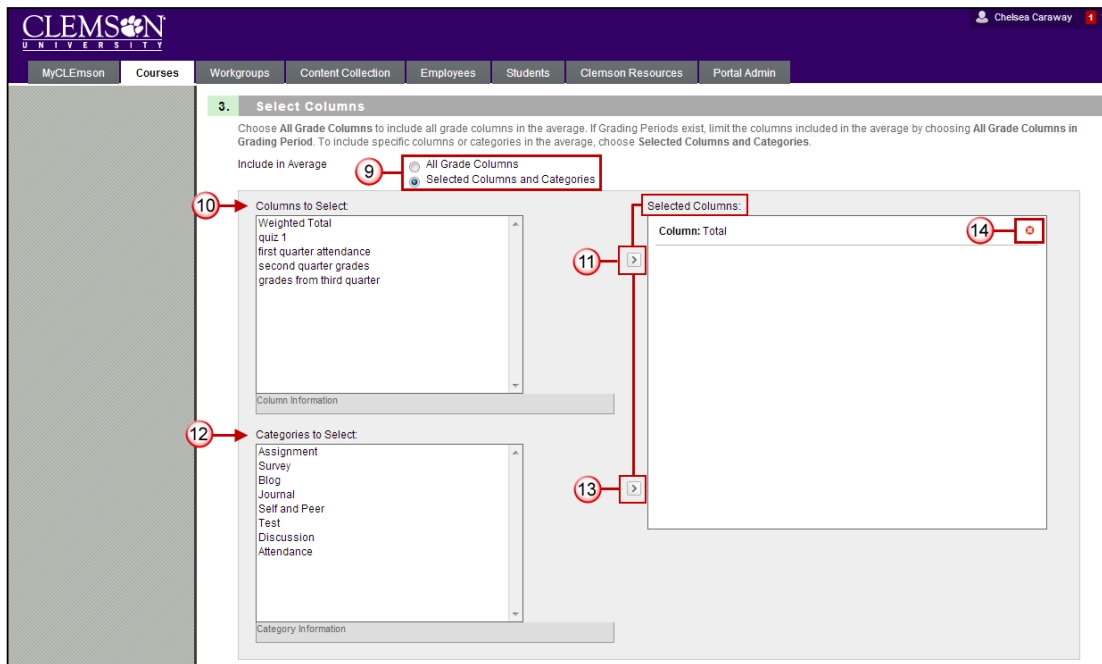
10) In the **Columns to Select** box, select the Columns to include in the calculation of the Minimum/Maximum Column.

11) Then click the right arrow button to move the columns to the **Selected Columns** area.

12) In the **Categories to Select** box, select the Categories of Columns to include in the calculation of the Minimum/Maximum Column.

13) Then click the right arrow button to move the columns in the selected categories to the **Selected Columns** area.

14) To remove items from the **Selected Columns** area, click [×] for the item to remove.
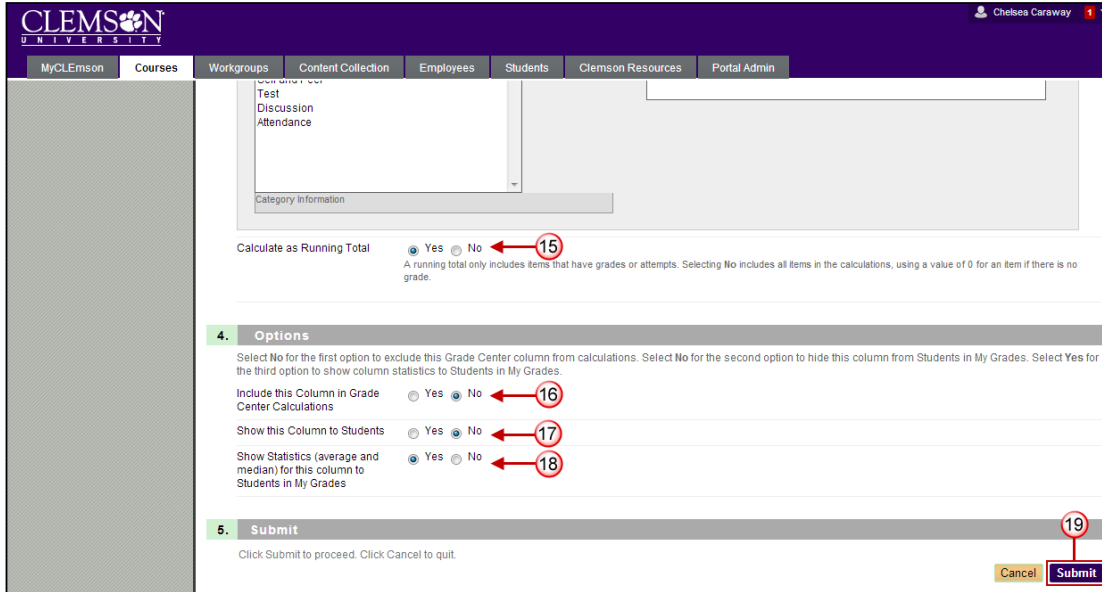
15) Click **Yes** for **Calculate as Running Total** to include only items that have grades or attempts in the Running Total. Selecting No includes all items in the calculations, using a value of 0 for an item if there is no grade.

16) Click **No** to **Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations**.

17) Click **No** if you do not want to **Show this Column to Students**.

18) Click **Yes** if you want to **Show Statistics (average and median) for this column to Students in My Grades**.

19) Then click **Submit**.
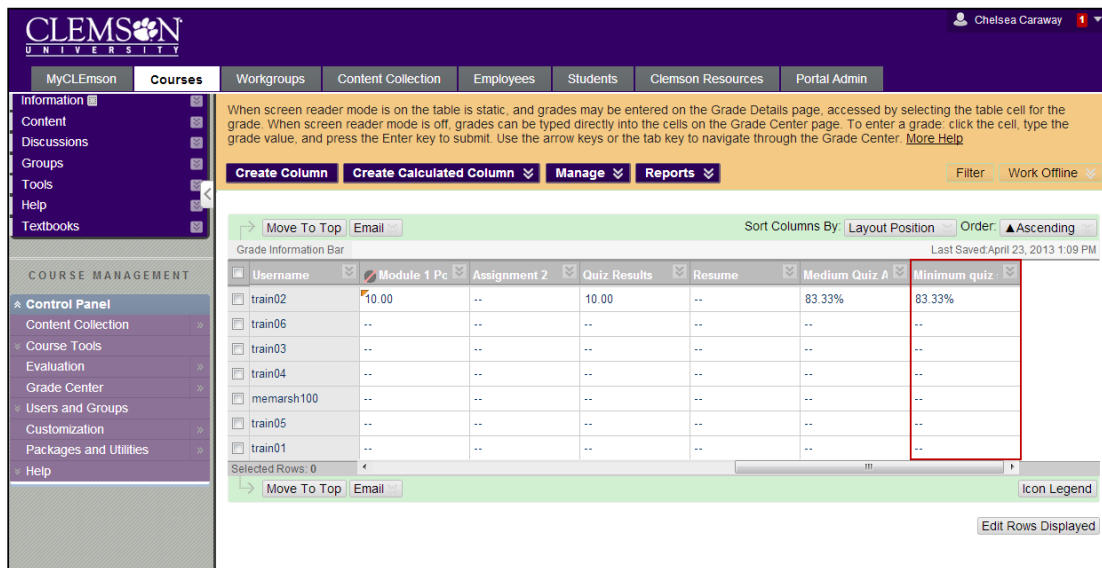
20) The Grade Center is displayed with the new Calculated Column at far right.

Creating a Total Column

A Grade Center Total Points column is a grade based on the cumulative points received, related to the points allowed.

For example, Faculty may create a column to determine the final grade for the first quarter by creating a Grade Center Total Points column that includes all of the columns in the first quarter Grading Period. Alternatively, Faculty can create a Grade Center Total Points column that displays the percentages of a particular Grade Center column, or a Category or Categories.

You also have the option of dropping the lowest or highest score before the average is taken.
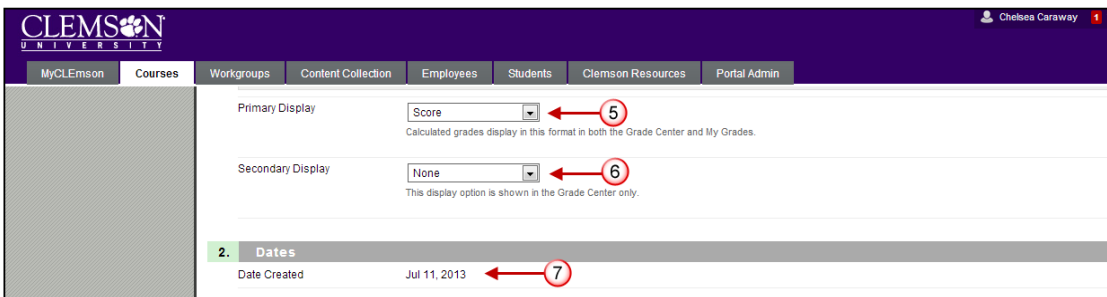
To create a Total Column:

1) Hover your mouse over the **Create Calculated Column** action link and select **Total Column**.
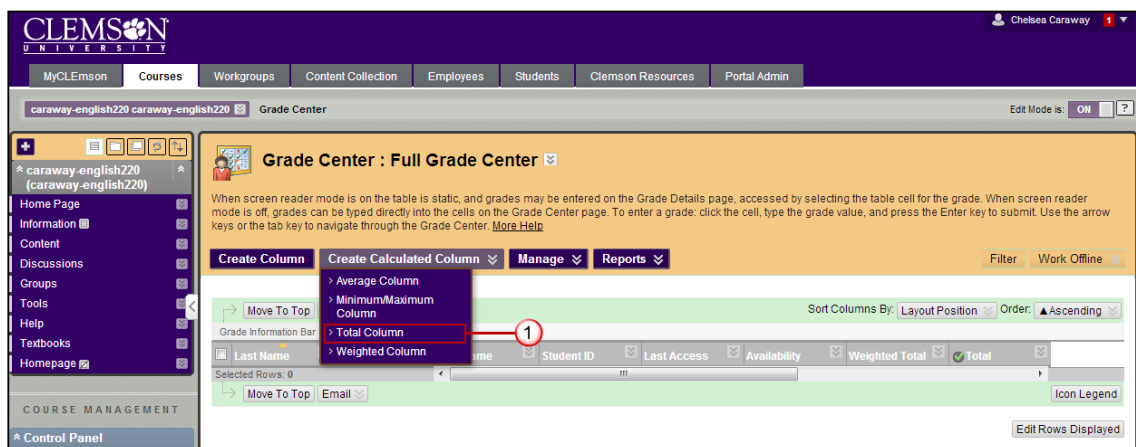
2) Enter a **Column Name**. This is a formal name, and is displayed in the Grade Center if no **Grade Center Display Name** is entered. This field will accept 15 characters.

3) Enter the **Grade Center Display Name**. This appears as the column header in the Grade Center. This field will accept 15 characters in the column header. The Grade Center is the only area where this name is used.

4) Enter a **Description** for the Total Column.
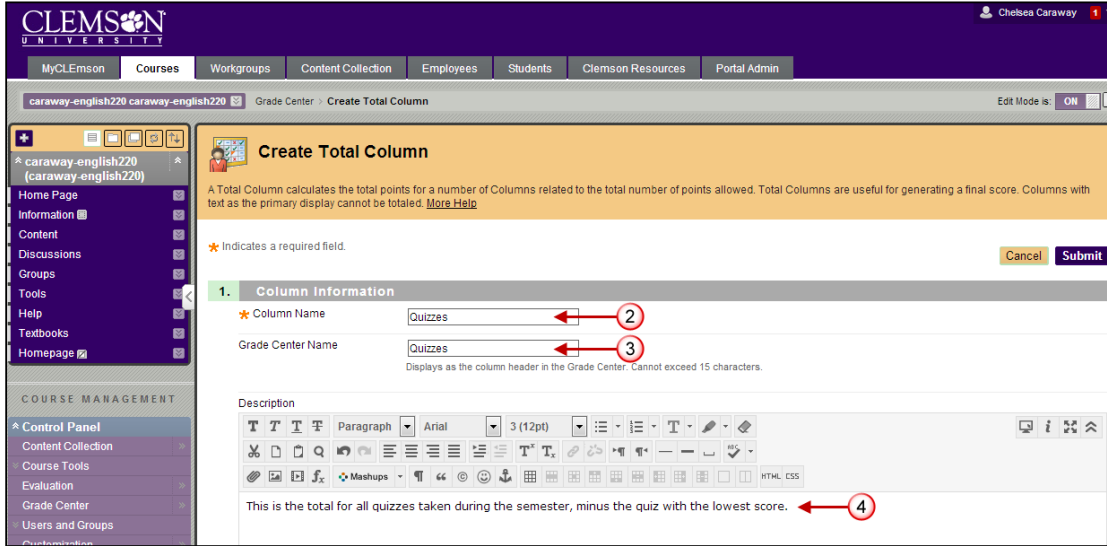
5) Select a **Primary Display** from the drop down menu. The default choice is Score. The format chosen is the primary or only format displayed to Students.

6) Select a **Secondary Display** from the drop down menu. This selection displays the secondary format for this Grade Item in the Grade Center in parenthesis.

- Use the drop down list to select a **Grading Period**. This selects all the columns associated with a Grading Period. The Grading Period list will not display unless Grading Periods have been created.

7) **Date Created** is automatically populated based on the system date and time.

8) Click the radio button to select which Columns, Categories or Grading Periods to include when calculating the Total Column. In creating a Total column, the Faculty can select from the following:

- **All Grade Columns** – Includes all Grade Columns in the total.

- **All Grade Columns in Grading Period** – Includes All Grade Columns in a specific Grading Period in the calculation of the total.

- **Selected Columns and Categories** – Includes specific columns or categories in the total.

  Note: Columns and Categories that are not set to "Include in Grade Center Calculations" are ignored when calculating the Total.
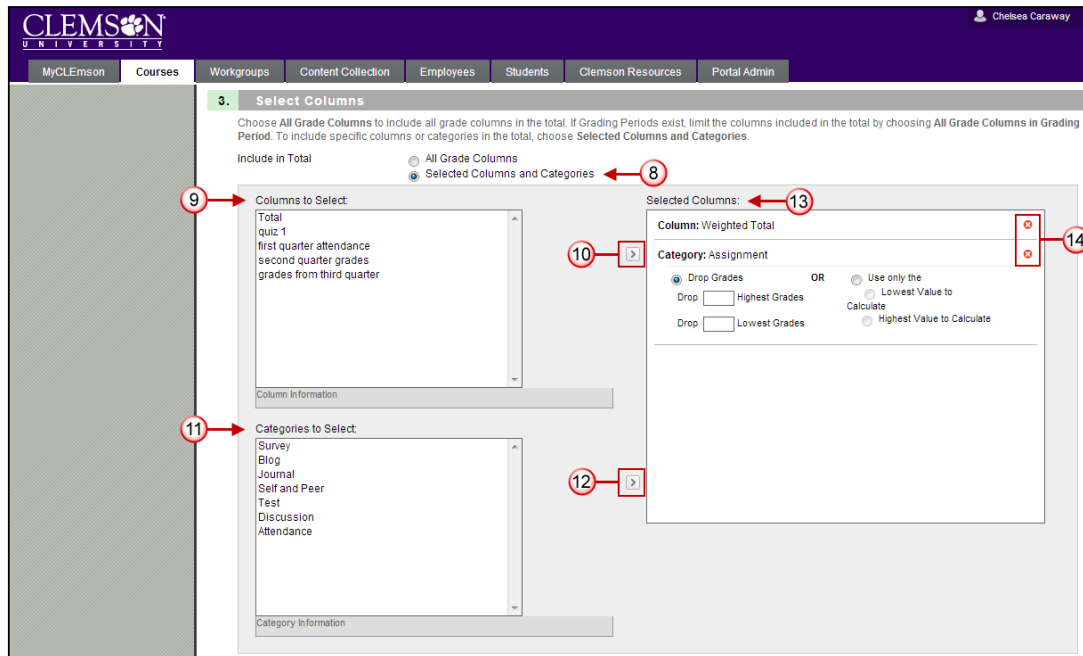
9) In the **Columns to Select** box, select the Columns to include in the calculation of the Total Column.

10) Then click the right arrow button to move the columns to the **Selected Columns** area.

11) In the **Categories to Select** box, select the Categories of Columns to include in the calculation of the Column type you chose to select and move to the **Selected Columns** box.

12) Then click the right arrow button to move the columns in the selected categories to the **Selected Columns** area.

13) If you choose a category to include in the Total Column, additional options will be available in the **Selected Columns** area.

- Select a **Grading Period** for the Category is only available when Grading Periods have been created.

- **Drop Grades** removes a number of either the highest or lowest grades for the Category from the calculation.

- **Use Only the Lowest or Highest Value to Calculate** removes all grades from the calculation except for the best or worst score.

14) To remove items from the **Selected Columns** area, click ⊗ for the item to remove.
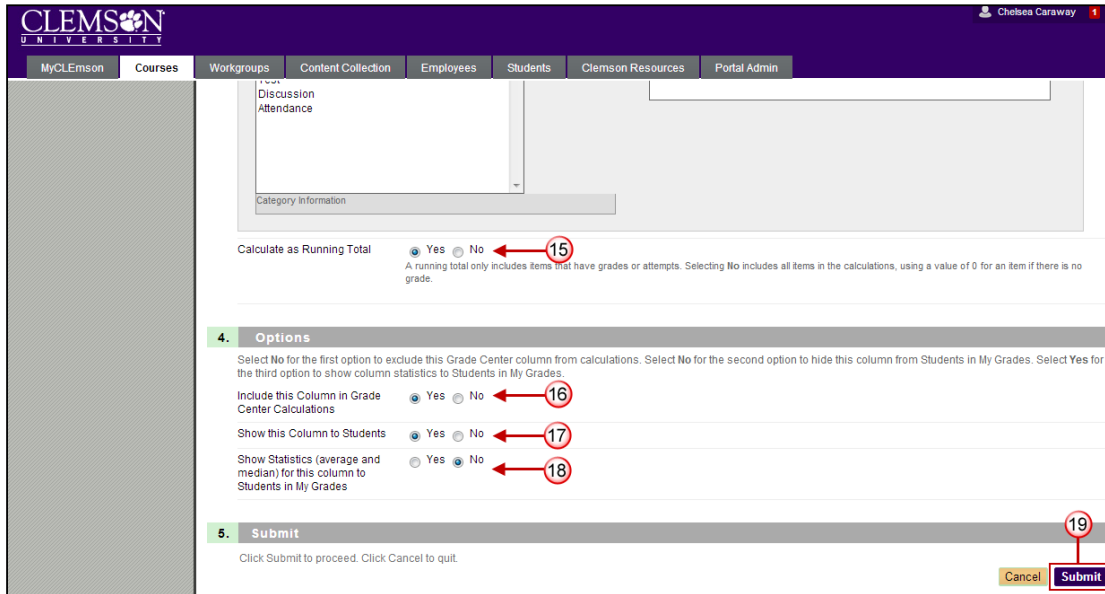
15) Click **Yes** for **Calculate as Running Total** to include only items that have grades or attempts in the Running Total. Selecting No includes all items in the calculations, using a value of 0 for an item if there is no grade.

16) Click **Yes** to **Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations**.

17) Click **Yes** if you want to **Show this Column to Students**.

18) Click **No** if you do not want to **Show Statistics (average and median) for this column to Students in My Grades**.

19) Then click **Submit**.
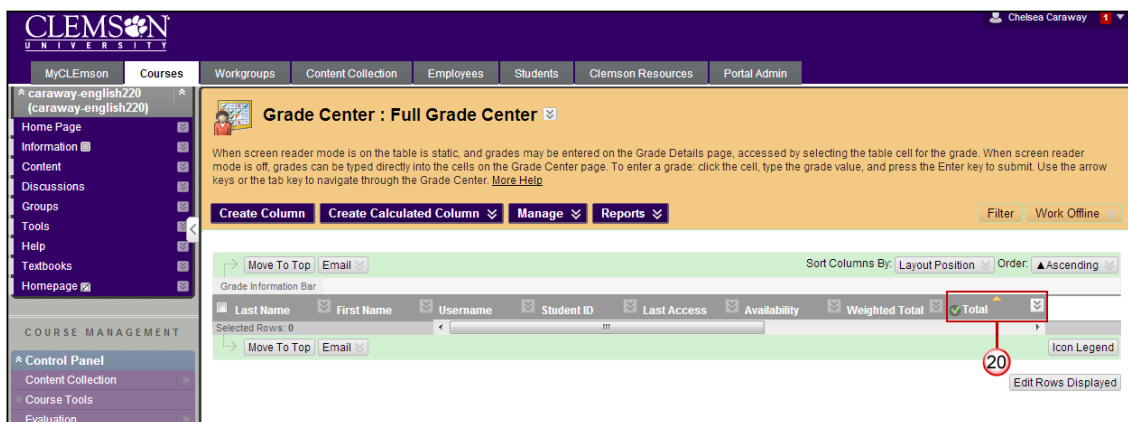
20) The Grade Center is displayed with the new Total Column at far right.

Creating a Weighted Column

Most faculty identify in their syllabus for students the categories that their overall grade will be composed of. Students might see something similar to this:

- Quizzes: 20%

- Exams: 50%

- Attendance: 5%

- Group Projects: 15%

- Assignments: 10%

These are the weights assigned to specific categories. In Blackboard Learn you can create not only categories to assign to items in the Grade Center. You can also use these categories to create weighted columns and weighted totals.

For example, Faculty may create a Weighted Grade column that calculates a quarterly grade (grade for one quarter of the year), in which each Category, such as Test, Survey, and Assignment are given a certain percentage of the final quarter's grade. Alternatively, the Faculty may create a Weighted Grade that is the final grade for a course, with the quarters and exams included in the Weighted Grade.

Faculty can create any number of Weighted Grade columns, including Weighted Grade columns that include other Weighted Grade columns. For example

(Quiz = 20%) + (Homework = 10%) + (Participation = 20%) + (Exam = 50%) = (Quarter Grade)

(Quarter 1 = 25%) + (Quarter 2 = 25%) + (Quarter 3 = 25%) + (Quarter 4 = 25%) = (Year Grade)

Faculty can create a Weighted Grade based on any column, or any Category in the Grade Center.

To create a Weighted Column:

1) Hover your mouse over the **Create Calculated Column** action link and select **Weighted Column**.
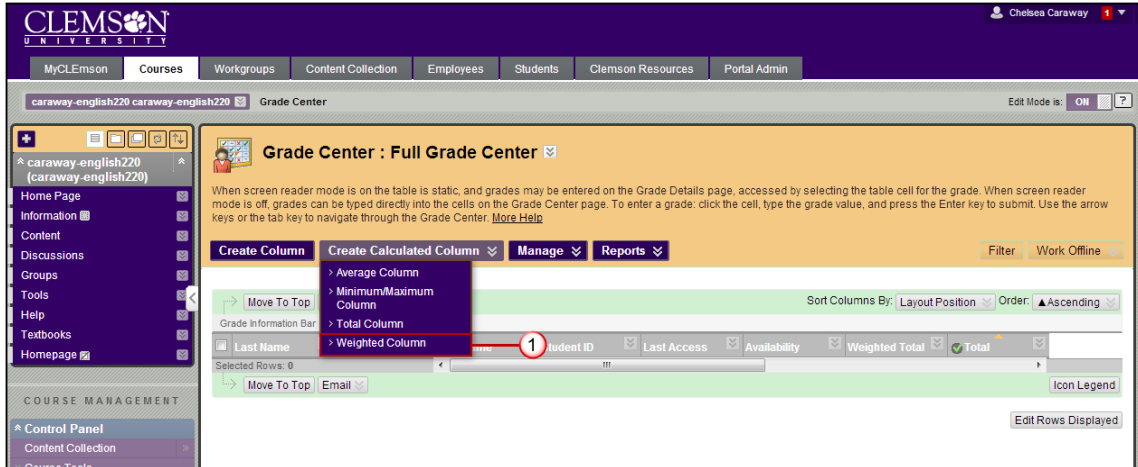

2) The Create Weighted Column page is displayed.
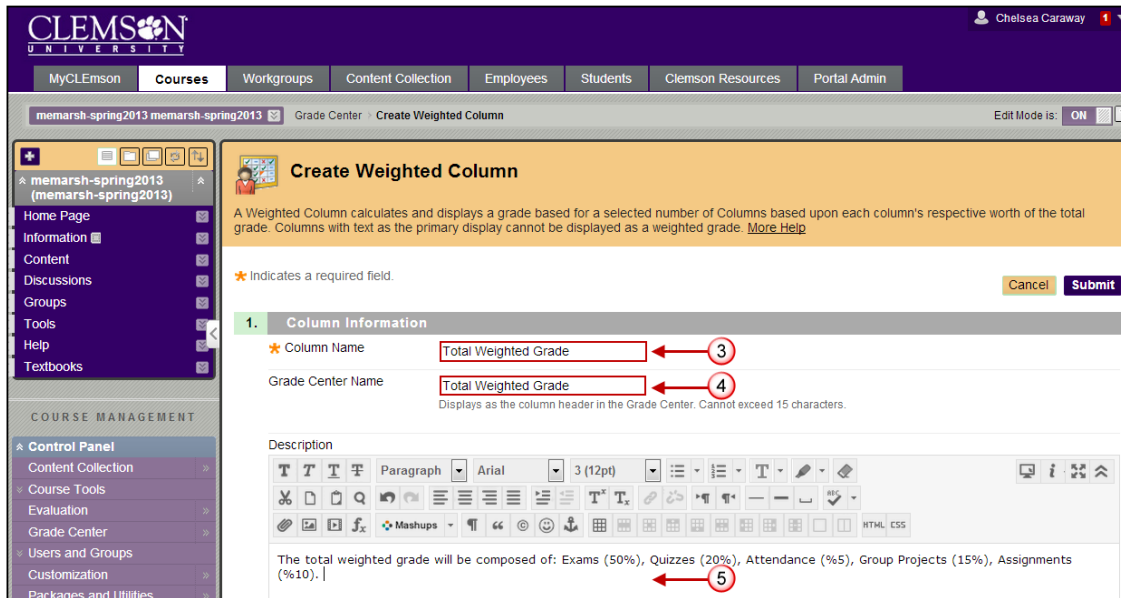
3) Enter a **Column Name**. This is a formal name, and is displayed in the Grade Center if no **Grade Center Display Name** is entered. This field will accept 15 characters.

4) Enter the **Grade Center Display Name**. This appears as the column header in the Grade Center. This field will accept 15 characters in the column header. The Grade Center is the only area where this name is used.

5) Enter a **Description** for the Weighted Column.
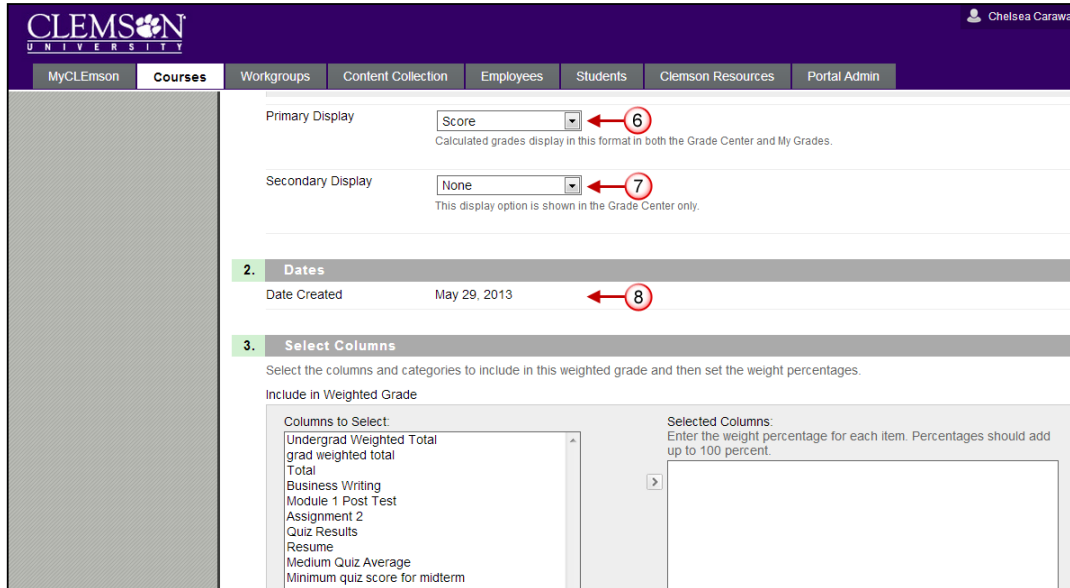
6) Select a **Primary Display** from the drop down menu. The default choice is Score. The format chosen is the primary or only format displayed to Students.

7) Select a **Secondary Display** from the drop down menu. This selection displays the secondary format for this Grade Item in the Grade Center in parenthesis.

8) **Date Created** is automatically populated based on the system date and time.

   Use the drop down list to select a **Grading Period**.   This selects all the columns associated with a Grading Period. The Grading Period list will not display unless Grading Periods have been created.
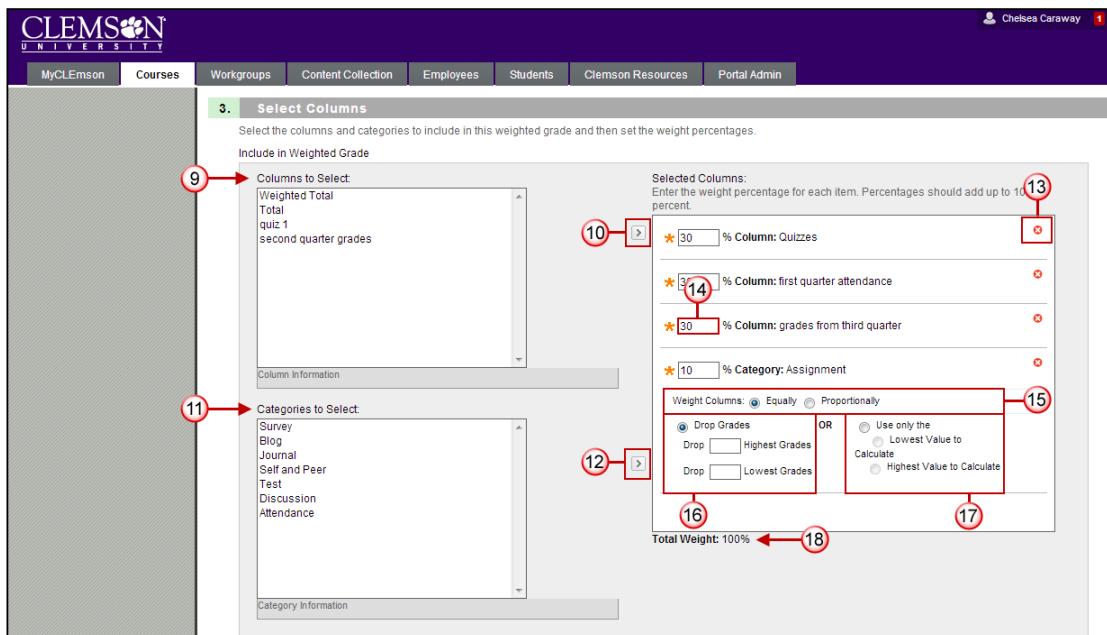
> **Note:** In Blackboard Learn Weighted Columns can consist of a combination of both Columns and Categories. You do not have to choose one or the other.

9) In the **Columns to Select** box, select the Columns to include in the calculation of the Weighted Column.

10) Then click the right arrow button to move the columns to the **Selected Columns** area.

11) In the **Categories to Select** box, select the Categories of Columns to include in the calculation of the Weighted Column.

12) Then click the right arrow button to move the columns in the selected categories to the **Selected Columns** area.

13) To remove items from the **Selected Columns** area, click [×] for the item to remove.

14) Enter a percentage that reflects the weight for each selected Column.

15) If you chose categories, **Select how to Weight Columns within the Category**:

    a. **Equally** applies equal value to all columns within a Category.

    b. **Proportionally** values each Column based on its points possible compared to other Columns in the Category. Choose this option when you have assignments within a given category that have different point values.

16) **Drop Grades** removes a number of either the highest or lowest grades for the Category from the calculation.

17) **Use Only the Lowest or Highest Value to Calculate** removes all grades from the calculation except for the best or worst score.

18) The percentages of all Columns and Categories together should add up to 100 percent (or more).
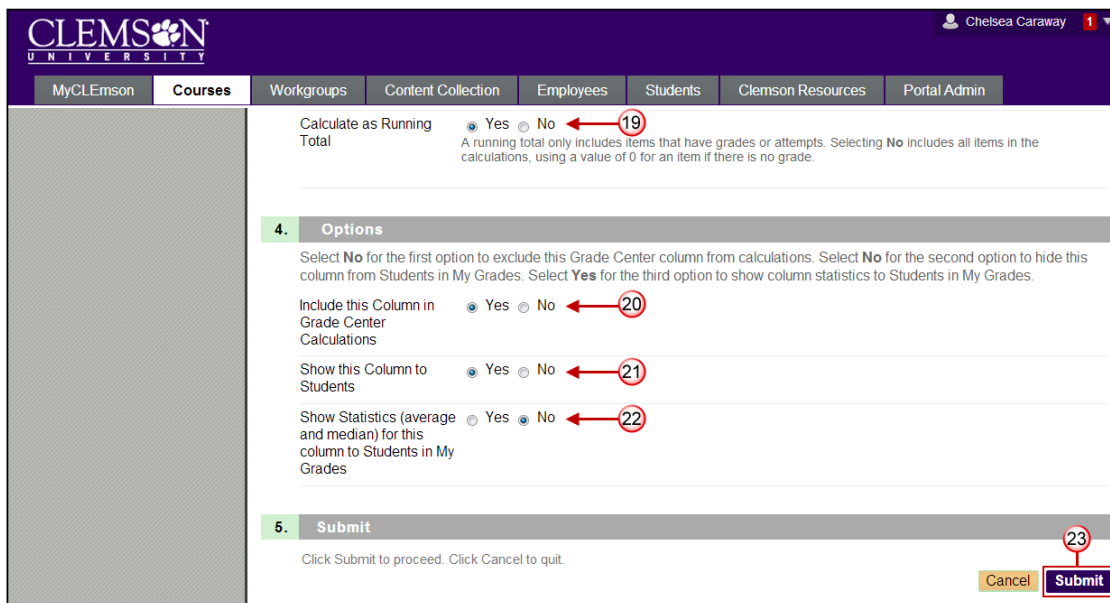
19) Click **Yes** for **Calculate as Running Total** to include only items that have grades or attempts in the Running Total. Selecting No includes all items in the calculations, using a value of 0 for an item if there is no grade.

Note: The **Calculate as Running Total** can affect the Grade Distribution on the Column Statistics report.

20) Click **Yes** to **Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations**.

21) Click **Yes** if you want to **Show this Column to Students**.

22) Click **No** if you do not want to **Show Statistics (average and median) for this column to Students in My Grades**.

23) Then click **Submit**.

24) The Grade Center is displayed with the new Weighted Column at far right.

Creating a Text Column

A Text Column will display in the grade in alphanumeric format. An example may be Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. Text Columns can contain non-graded information like a student's home town, their lab partner, or their preferred name. Text Columns cannot be included in Calculated Columns such as Weighted Grade, Total Points, Average Grade, and Minimum/Maximum grades.
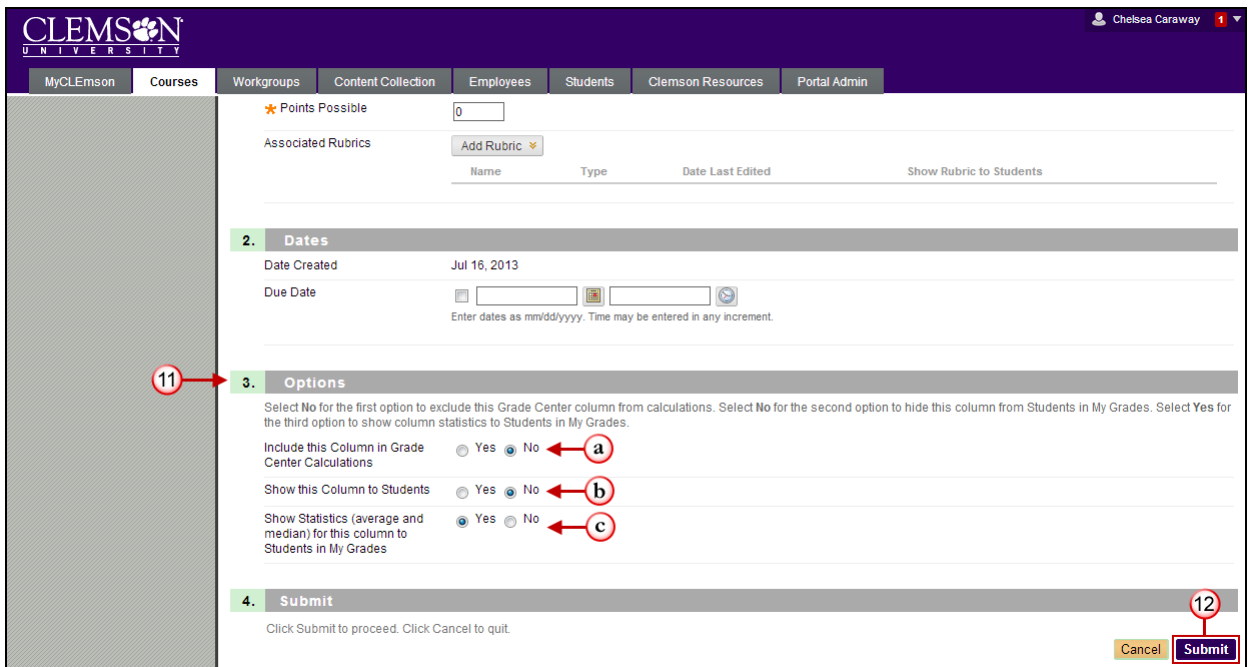
To create a Text Column:

1) Click **Create Column**.
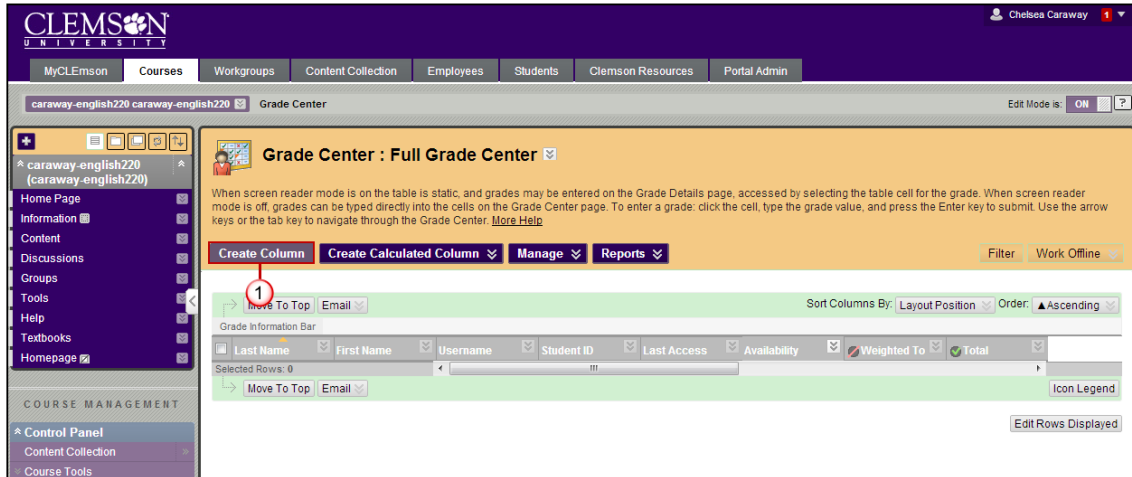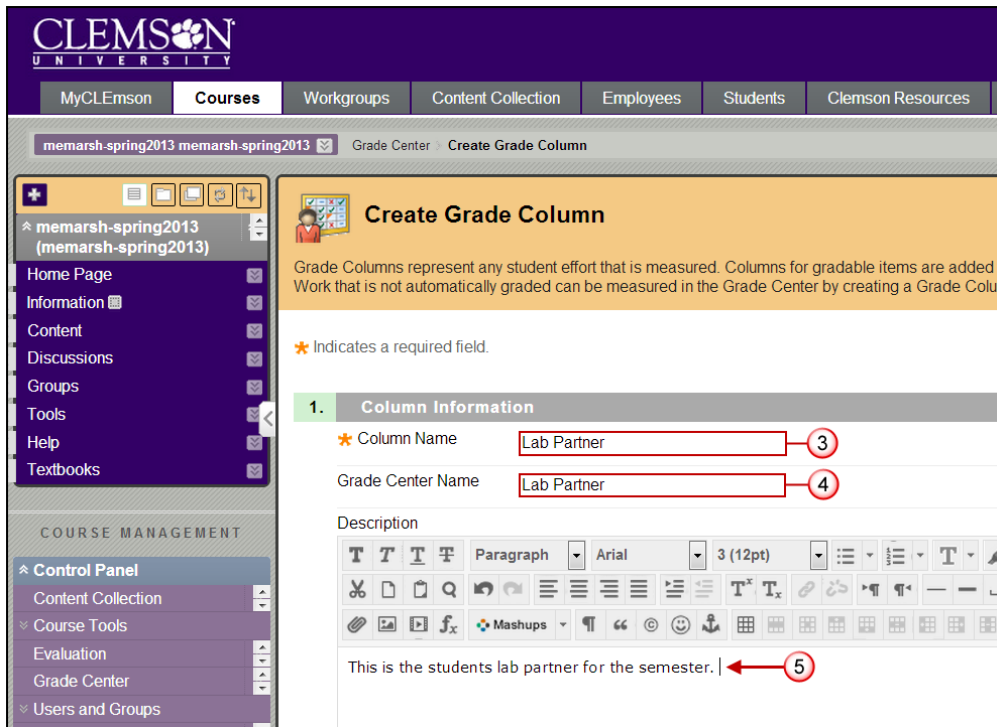
2) The Create Grade Column page is displayed.

3) Enter a **Column Name**. This is a formal name, and is displayed in the Grade Center if no **Grade Center Display Name** is entered. This field will accept 15 characters.

4) Enter the **Grade Center Display Name**. This appears as the column header in the Grade Center. This field will accept 15 characters in the column header. The Grade Center is the only area where this name is used.

5) Enter a **Description** for the column.
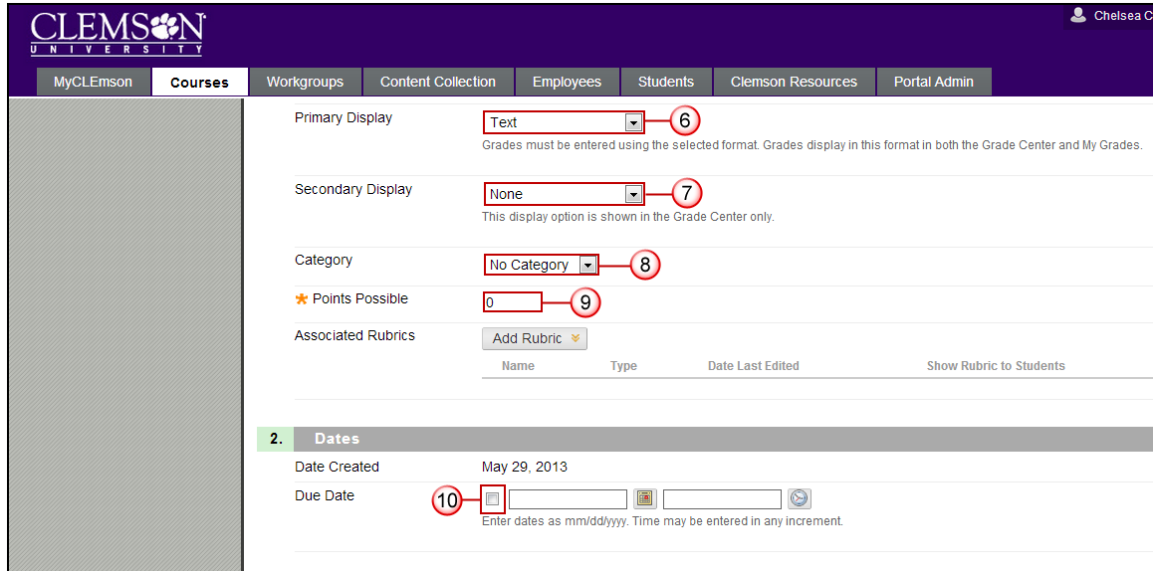
6) Select **Text** from the **Primary Display** drop down menu.

7) Select **None** from the **Secondary Display** drop down menu

8) Select **No Category** from the **Category** drop down menu.

9) Enter **0** for the **Points Possible**.

10) Leave the box unchecked for **Due Date**.

11) Set additional **Options** for the column by clicking **Yes** or **No** for the following:

a. **Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations** – the column is included in the possible selections of items when creating Calculated Columns, such as Weight Grades Columns or Total Point Columns.

b. **Show this Column to Students** – Grades will appear in My Grades, View Grades and the Report Card module when available.

c. **Show Statistics(average and median) to Students in My Grades** – includes statistical information with the grade value when shown to students.

12) Click **Submit**.

The new column is added to the far right side of the Grade Center. However, you can always change the order of this column by clicking **Manage** and selecting **Column Organization**.

Column Organization

The Column Organization page allows you to configure the columns in the Grade Center display. The Grade Center display can be customized to:

- Freeze or unfreeze columns. If a column is frozen, when scrolling through the Grade Center view, that column will remain stationary.

- Hide or show columns

- Edit the Categories of columns

- Edit the Grading Periods of columns

Some of these technologies are also available through the drag-and-drop capabilities of the page.

To organize columns in the grade center:

1) Hover your mouse over the **Manage** action link and select **Column Organization**.

2) The Column Organization page is displayed.

Freezing/Unfreezing Columns

Grade Center columns can be frozen in place so they do not move while scrolling the other data. The columns containing students' first and last names are frozen by default. Frozen columns remain in position on the left side of the Grade Center while the rest of the columns can be scrolled through.

To freeze or unfreeze a column in the Grade Center:

1) Hover your mouse over the **Manage** action link and select **Column Organization**.
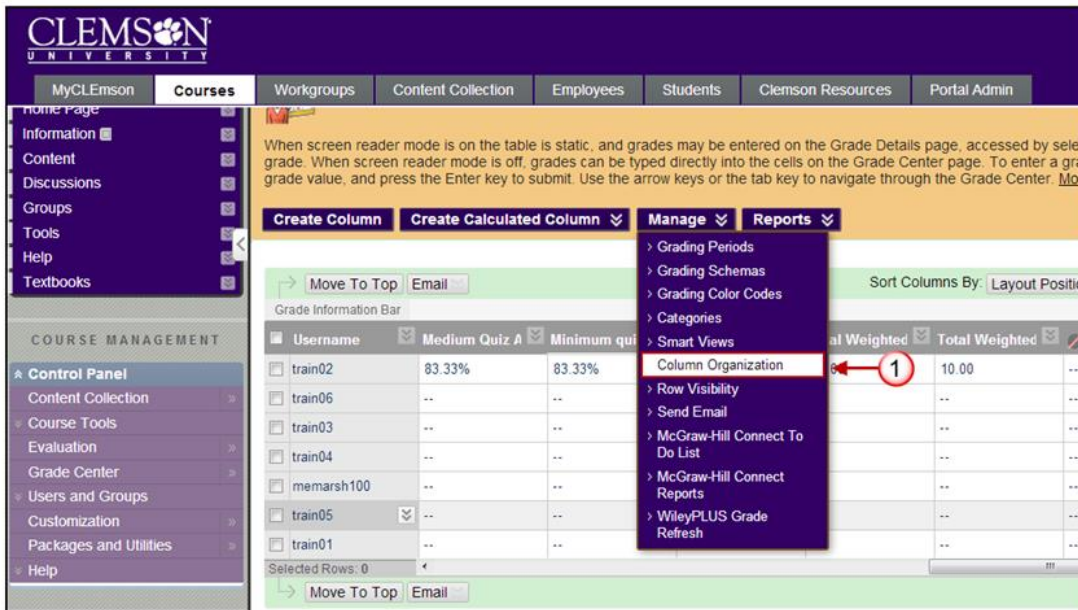
2) The **Column Organization** page is displayed.

3) To freeze a column:

   a. Click ⊞ for the gray bar and drag it below the desired row.
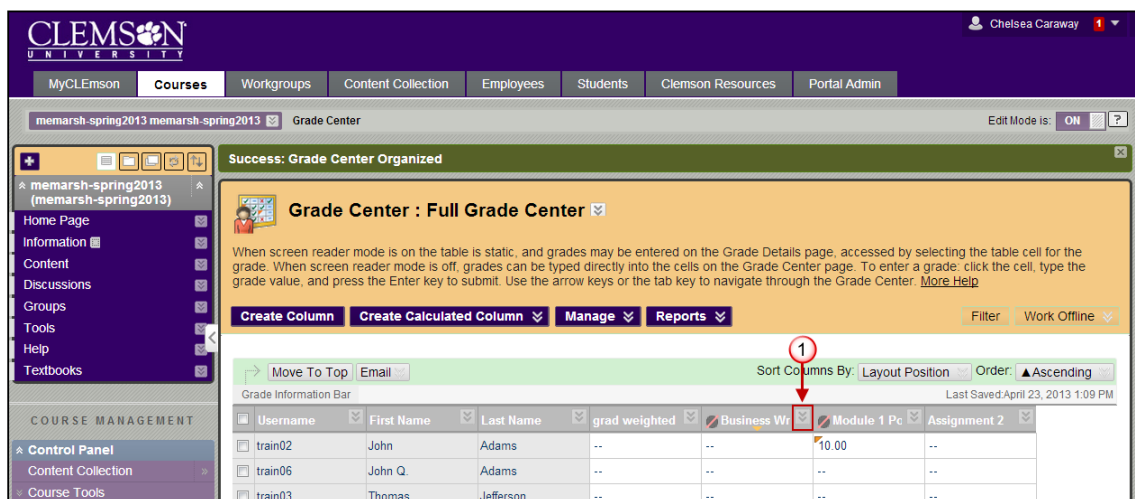
   b. Click ⊞ for the row and drag it above the gray bar.
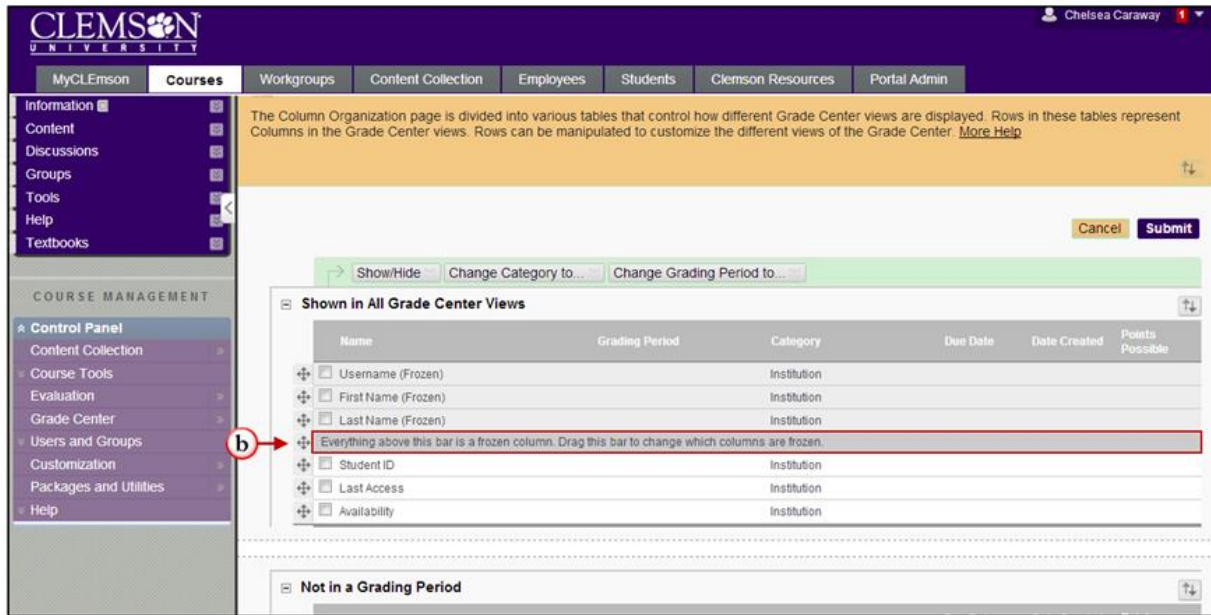
4) To unfreeze columns:

    a. Click ⊞ for the gray bar and drag it above the desired row.

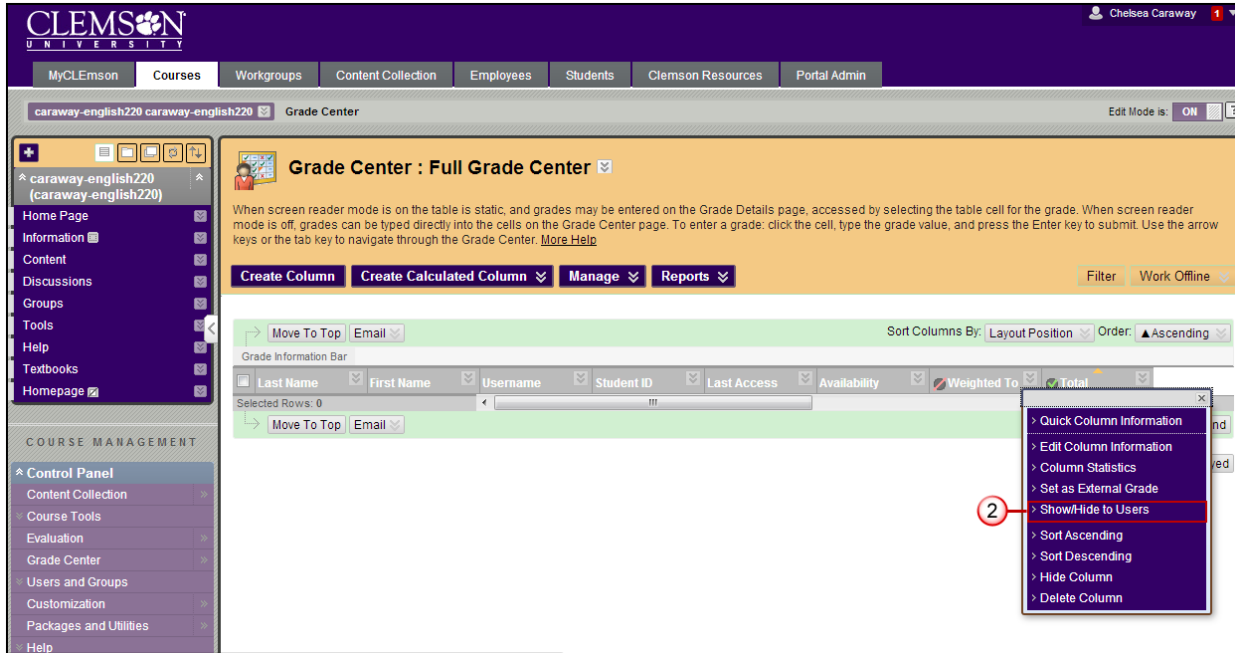   b. Click ⊞ for the row and drag it below the gray bar.

Hide the column from students

To hide a column from the student's view of the Grade Center:

1) Click the action menu for the column to hide from the student view of the Grade Center.


2) Then select **Show/Hide to Users**.

3) The system disables the selected column from the student view of the Grade Center.

4) The system also puts the **Column Not Visible to Users** icon at the top of the column in the view that Faculty see.

Hide the column from the Grade Center

To hide a column from the Grade Center:

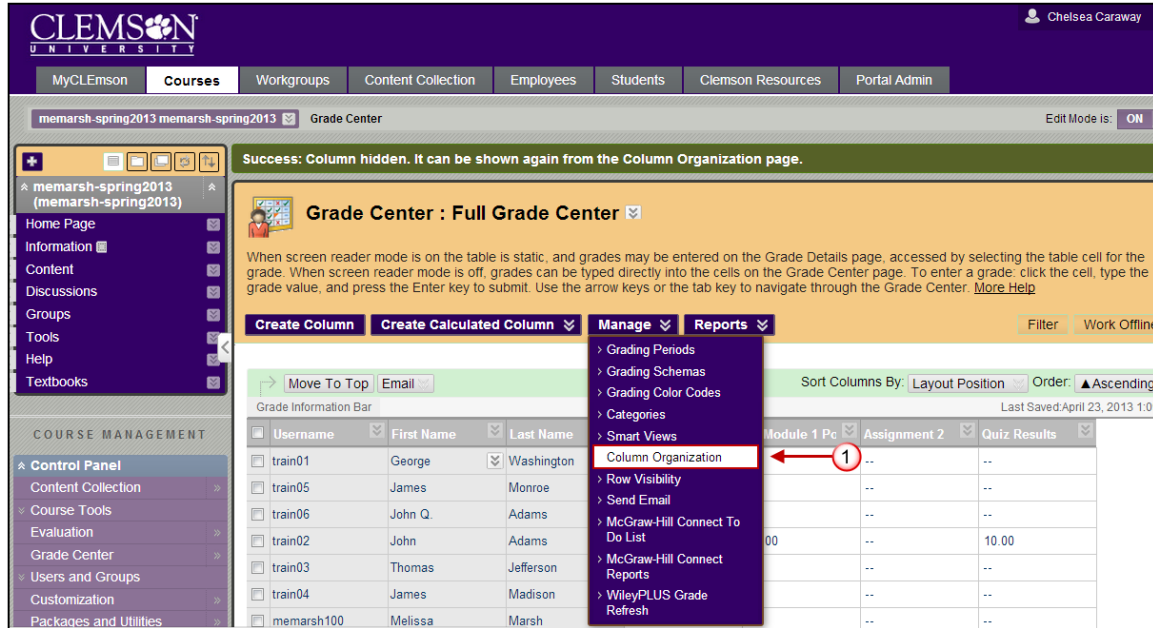1) Click the action menu for the column to hide from the Grade Center.
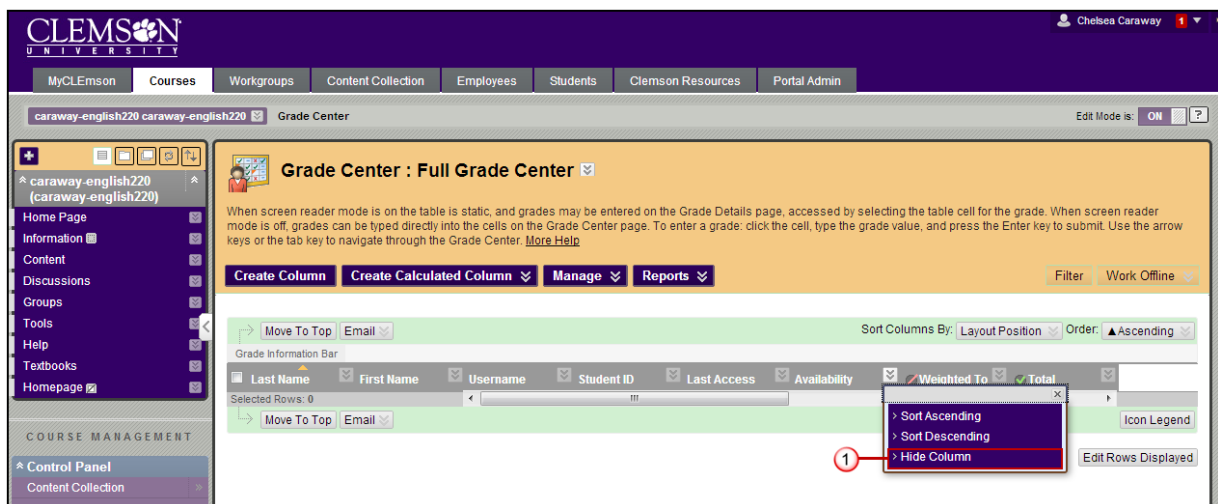
2) Then click Hide Column.

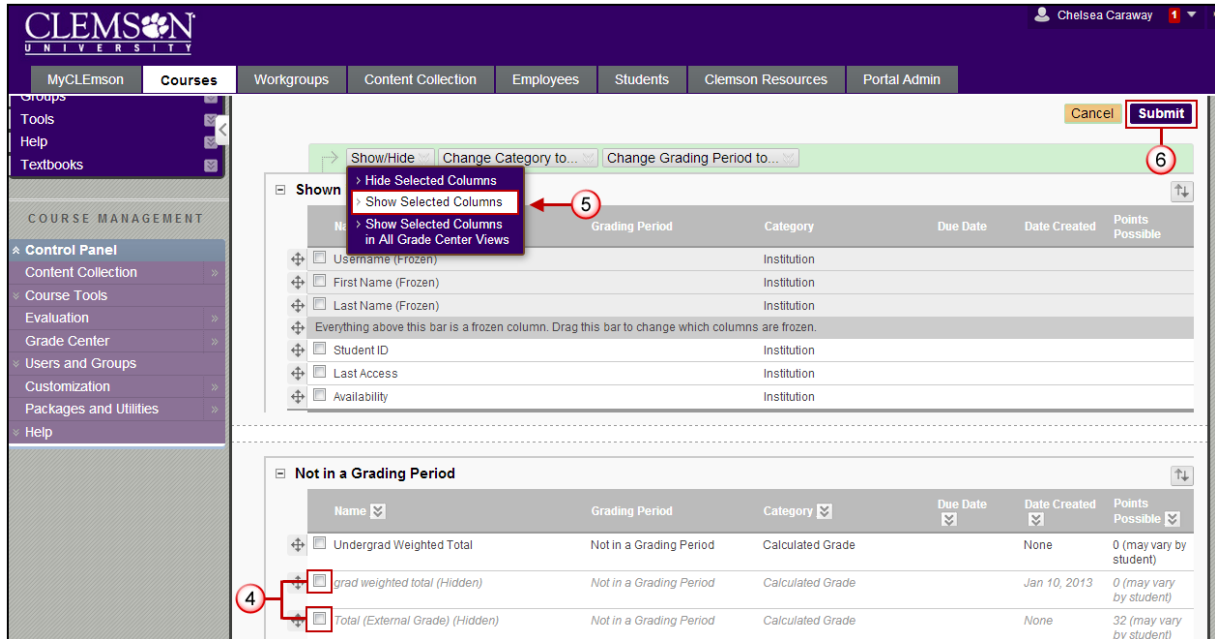3) The Grade Center refreshes with the selected column removed.

Displaying a hidden column in the Grade Center

To display a column in the Grade Center that has been hidden:

1) Hover your mouse over the **Manage** action link and select **Column Organization**.
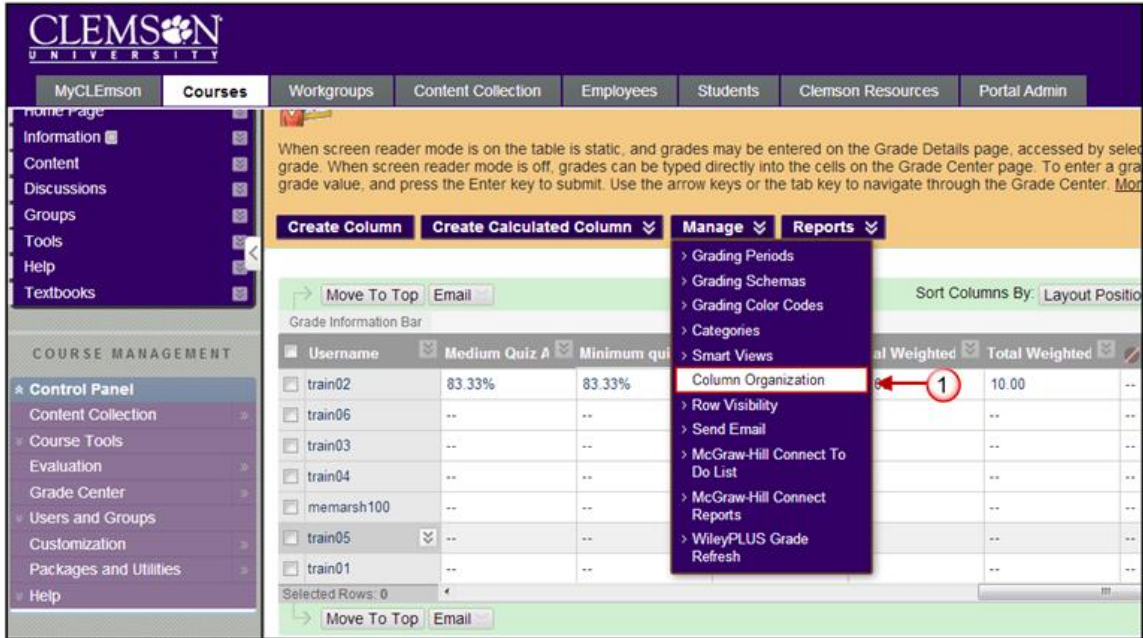
2) The Column Organization page is displayed.

3) The columns that are hidden can be identified by the italic text and the word (Hidden) after the column Name.

4) Select the checkbox for the hidden column to display in the Grade Center.

5) Hover your mouse over the **Show/Hide** action link and select **Show Selected Columns**. The Column Organization page automatically updates to show the column.
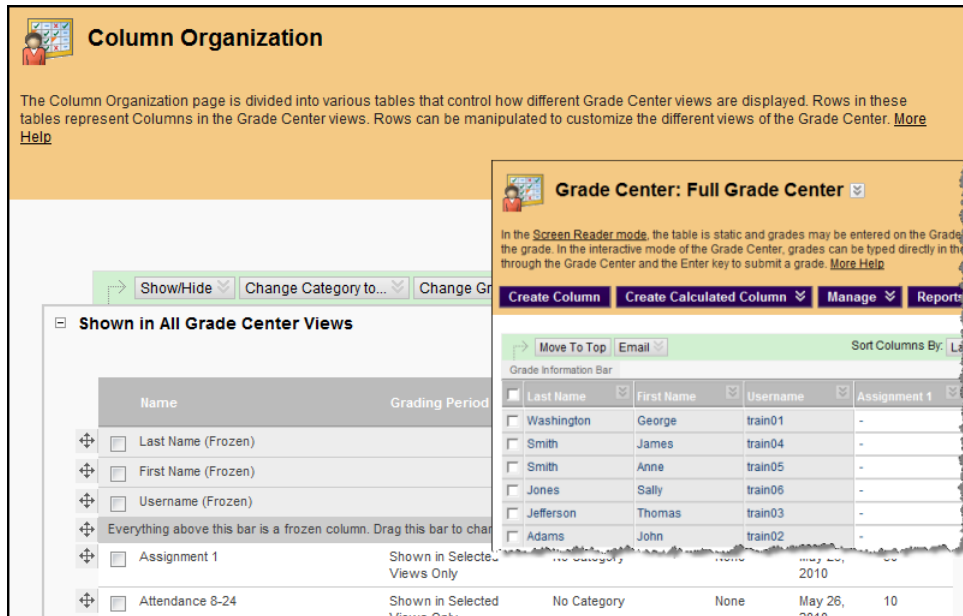
6) Then click **Submit**.

Moving or Re-arranging Columns in the Grade Center

To move or re-arrange columns in the Grade Center:

1) Hover your mouse over the **Manage** action link and select **Column Organization**.

2) The Column Organization page is displayed.

3) Click ⊕ for the column to move.

4) Then drag the column up in the list to move it to the left in the Grade Center. Drag the column down the list in order to move it to the right in the Grade Center.

5) Drop the column in its new location in the Grade Center.

Deleting Columns from the Grade Center

> **Note:** You can only delete columns from the Grade Center that were created in the Grade Center. If a column was automatically generated as part of an assignment, test, etc. The item associated with the column has to be removed first before the column can be deleted from the Grade Center. For example, if Assignment 1 is under the Module 1 link in the menu, Assignment 1 has to be removed from Module 1 before you can delete the related column from the Grade Center.
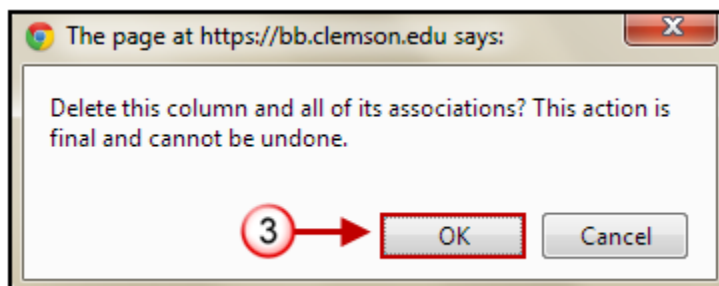
> **Note:** There are specific columns used by Blackboard Learn that cannot be removed from the Grade Center. These columns include: First Name, Last Name, Username, Student ID, Last Access, Availability, and Total. Some of these columns can be hidden if necessary.

To delete a column from the Grade Center:

1) Click the action link for the Column to delete from the Grade Center.
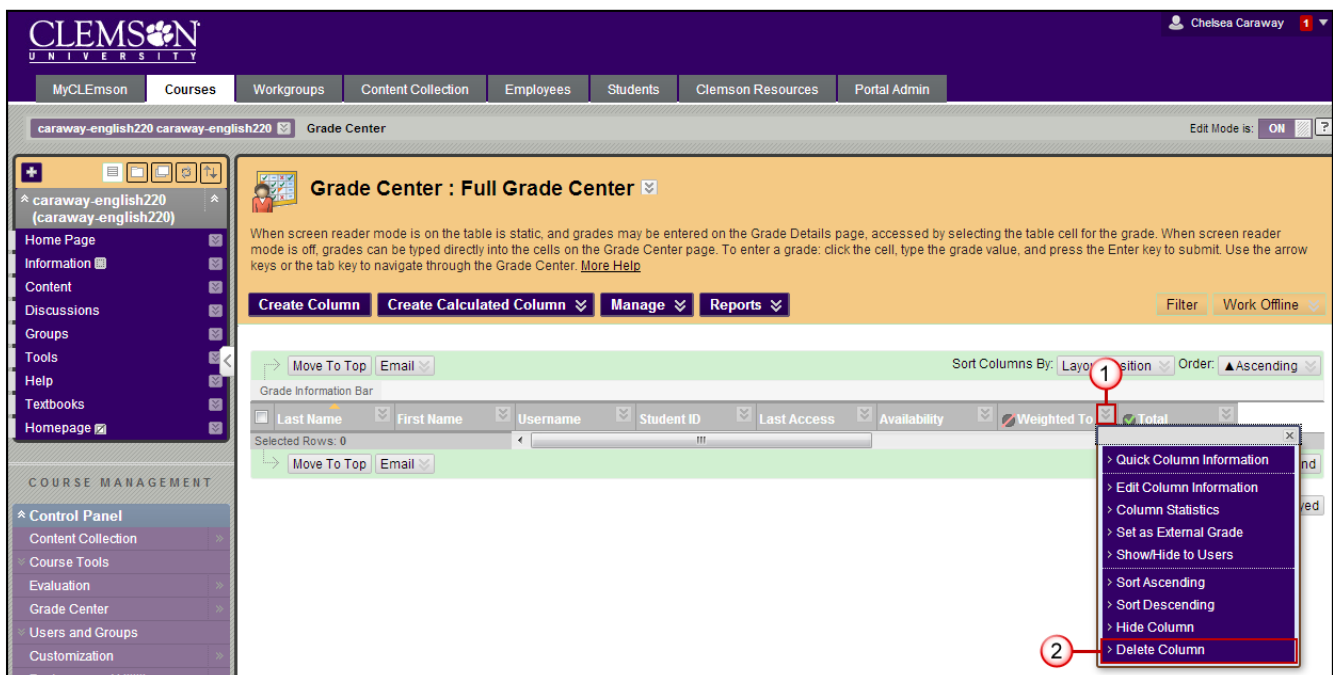
2) Then click **Delete Column**.

3) Click **OK**.