

Beginning of the Year Gradebook Checklist



At the beginning of each school year, once your classes are appearing in your gradebook, you will want to complete the following steps in order to set up your gradebook for this year:

1. _____ [Define the details for each class section](#), such as class nicknames, average mode, default grade scale, and if you want to drop lowest scores.
2. _____ [Link class sections on the Details page](#). For example, if you teach three CP English classes, link them so you only have to create assignments once, and they apply to each class.
3. _____ [Import assignment categories from last year, and create any new categories you might want to use](#). If you import categories for a class you linked to other classes in Step 2, Aspen imports the categories for all of the linked classes too.
4. _____ [Import assignments from classes from last year](#). If you import assignments for a class you linked to other classes in Step 2, Aspen imports the assignments for all of the linked classes too.
5. _____ [Check your gradebook preferences](#) to make sure they are set correctly. Be sure your default average mode is set correctly.
6. _____ Make sure any [special codes](#), such as **Missing**, and any [footnotes](#) you like to use for scores are ready to go on your **Tools** tab.

View Class Details in the Gradebook

In the gradebook, you can view details such as room, day schedule, and term for each of your current classes.

You can also link a section to other sections. Linking sections lets you create categories and assignments for one section, and automatically add them to other sections linked to it.

To view class details:

1. Log on to the Staff view.
2. Click the **Gradebook** tab, and select the checkbox next to the class.
3. Click the **Details** side-tab. The details for that class appear.

Note: On the **Options** menu, click **Change History** to view a list of changes made to the section.

- In the **Course Nickname** field, the default class section number from your school's schedule appears. You can replace this course and section number with a nickname so this class is easily identifiable throughout your gradebook.

For example, if you teach two sections of Calculus, and one section is more crowded than the other, you might name the smaller section CalSM and the larger section CalLG. Or, if sections always meet during the same block or period, you might name them after that block or period.

- If you don't type a nickname, Aspen identifies the class with the default class section number from your school's schedule.
- To apply a different averaging mode than the default you have defined in your user preferences, use the **Average mode** drop-down to select the mode for this course section.

Note: If you co-teach this section, you cannot select **Gradebook default** at the **Average mode** field. The average mode you select appears for the other teachers who share the class.

- To link this course section to another section, click **Select**:

Class List :: PD1s - English 9 C

Details

Course Nickname: PD1s

Description: English 9 C

Classroom: 217

Schedule: 1(A-F)

Schedule term: FY

Team:

House:

Average Mode: Gradebook Default

Classes linked for assignments and categories:

Course	Description	Term	Schedule
010-01	English 9 H	FY	7(A-F)
011-02	English 9 C	FY	4(A-F)

Enter a name for your linked sections.*
ENGLISH LIT

Drop mode: Do not drop scores Drop lowest overall score Drop lowest score by category

A pick list containing a list of any other sections the teacher is responsible for appears.

Note: To unlink a course, click **Select**, and deselect the checkbox next to the course. Click **OK**.

- Select the sections you want to link, and click **OK**. The sections appear on the page.
- In the **Drop mode** box, select one of the following to determine if you want to drop the lowest scores for this class:
 - Select **Do not drop scores** if you do not want the system to drop any scores for this class.
 - Select **Drop lowest overall score** if you want the system to drop the lowest score(s) for a term. The following options appear:

Drop mode Do not drop scores Drop lowest overall score Drop lowest score by category

	Term - 1		Term - 2		Term - 3		Term - 4	
Category	Available	# to drop	Available	# to drop	Available	# to drop	Available	# to drop
All	10	1	7	1	0	1	0	1

For each term, the number of scores appears in the Available column. Type the number of scores you want to drop for that term in the # to drop column.

- Select **Drop lowest score by category** if you want to determine how many scores to drop each term by assignment category. For example, you might drop the two lowest homework scores each term. To do so, type the number in the # to drop column for each category, for each term:

Drop mode Do not drop scores Drop lowest overall score Drop lowest score by category

	Term - 1		Term - 2		Term - 3		Term - 4	
Category	Available	# to drop	Available	# to drop	Available	# to drop	Available	# to drop
Project	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Quiz	6	1	3	1	0	0	0	0
Essay	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Part	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
HWK	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0

Note: On the Scores page, the system indicates dropped scores with ↓ because they fit the criteria you determined in the Drop mode box:

Pages My Info Student Attendance **Gradebook** PD Tools

Options Reports Help

Class List :: 2009-2010 - 00415-001 - Humanities

Student Fields Grade Columns Term Status

Default Fields All 1 Enrolled Withdrawn

Name	YOG	1	quiz 10/01 Lit. Quiz 100 pts.	Part. 10/01 Part 100 pts.	LitQuiz2 10/02 Lit. Quiz 100 pts.	LitQuiz3 10/02 Lit. Quiz 100 pts.	art quiz 1 10/02 Art/MusicoAssess. 100 pts.	Mus. Test 10/16 Art/MusicoAssess. 100 pts.	Quiz4 10/16 Lit. Quiz 100 pts.	HandsOn 10/20 HandsOn1 100 pts.	IlliadAsses 10/28 Lit. Assess. 100 pts.
Barry, Anne	2009	96.0	105	87	105	105	108	100	105 ↓	96	90
Gale, Taylor	2009	91.0	65 ↓	94	105	105	69	98	100	95	92
Harrington, Hsiaclu	2009	96.0	105	93	105	105	102	96	105 ↓	96	90
Pacheco, Kayla	2009	84.0	105	94	85 ↓	85	81	47		95	87

10. Click **Save**.

Create Assignment Categories in the Gradebook

Define the types of assignments you give in all of your classes by creating categories. For example, you might assign homework, quizzes, tests, term papers, and a presentation. Define a category for each one.

To define a category:

1. Log on to the Staff view.
2. Click the **Gradebook** tab.

3. Click the **Categories** side-tab.
4. On the **Options** menu, click **Add**. The New Category page appears:

Note: You can also import categories from another section. To import categories, click **Import Categories** on the **Options** menu.


5. Type a code and a description for the category.

Note: Because the code can appear in the column header on the Scores page, type a short value.

6. If you set your gradebook preferences to calculate term averages by weight, type a **Weight** if you want the system to [weight any grades you enter for an assignment in this category](#). For example, if you create the assignment type **Homework**, and homework is 15% of the students' final grade, type **15**. Then, when you enter a grade for a homework assignment, the system automatically weights that grade 15% towards the current grade for the term. This field does not appear if you calculate term grades using total points.

Note: Weights do not have to add up to 100. A category's weight need only be relative to other category weights. For example, you might weight tests 50%, quizzes 25%, and homework 25%. You could also weight those same values as follows: tests 2, quizzes 1, homework 1.

7. In the **Assignment Defaults** box, you can determine the default values for any assignment you create for this category. This can save you time when creating assignments:

- At the **Grade Scale Name** field, click  to select the grade scale you want to use when entering grades for assignments in this category. For example, you might enter a **1, 2, or 3** for a homework assignment. Therefore, you would create a grade scale named **Homework** with the grades **1, 2, and 3** and their point values. Then, you would select that grade scale at this field.

Note: District grade scales are available for you to use for all assignments. [Create grade scales only if you have a personal grading scheme that is not defined by a district grade scale.](#)


- At the **Entry mode** drop-down, select **Both**, **Numeric Only**, or **Letter Only** to determine the grade values you can enter for any assignments in this category.
- Type the **Total** (maximum) **points**.
- Type any **Extra credit points** a student can earn for an assignment.

- Select the **Score cannot be dropped** checkbox if you do not want the system to drop any lowest scores from this category.
 - Select a **Visibility type** for this assignment category. **Private**: Assignments do not appear in the Student or Family portals; **Public**: Assignments and grades appear in portals; **Public– no grades**: Assignments appear in portals but without grades.
8. If you [linked this section to any other sections on the Class Details page](#), select the **Also add this category to linked sections** checkbox.
 9. Click **Save**.
 10. Repeat steps 4-9 to create all the categories you use in your classes. Then, you can create assignments to add actual assignments of this type to your gradebook.

Import Assignments from Another Class or Year

You can import assignments into your class sections from one of your current sections or from a previous year in your gradebook.

To import assignments:

1. Log on to the Staff view.
2. Click the **Gradebook** tab.
3. Click the **Assignment** side-tab.
4. On the **Options** menu, click **Import Assignments**. The Import Assignments dialog box appears.
5. At the **Import from** field, click  to select the section you want to copy assignments from. A list of your course sections sorted by year appears.
6. Select the course section you want to copy assignments from, and click **OK**.
7. Select one of the following to indicate which assignments you want to copy:
 - **Selected**: to select specific assignments from the section. The Assignment pick list appears in descending order. Select the checkbox next to each assignment you want to copy, and click **OK**.
 - **Category**: to select entire categories of assignments to copy from the section. The Category pick list appears in descending order. Select the checkbox next to each category of assignments you want to import, and click **OK**.
 - **All Assignments**: to copy all assignments from the section.

Note: The system updates the value for each date of the assignment to the current schedule term and school year. The system uses the student calendar shared by the majority of students in the section to determine the dates.

8. Click **OK**.

To Set Your User Preferences in the Gradebook

To set your preferences on the Gradebook tab:

Note: The **Gradebook** preferences are only available from the Staff view.

1. Click the **Gradebook** tab:

The screenshot shows a configuration window with the following settings:


Setting	Value
Shade alternate lines	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Track administrator updates	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Tab direction	Down
Show studies	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enable gradebook features	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assignment column order	Date due (ascending)
Show points in headers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Show category names in headers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Publish assignment statistics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Show student alerts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Show course selection recommendation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Anchor averages	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Missing Assignments	
Show missing column	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Count empty as missing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Averages	
Default weighting	Total points
Decimals	0
Grade scale	Standard A-F Grade Scale
Semester running total	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Buttons: OK, Cancel

2. Use the following table to fill in the fields:

Field	Description
Shade alternate lines	Select this checkbox if you want the system to shade every other row of your Grade Input page. Otherwise, deselect this checkbox.
Track administrator updates	Select this checkbox to have an Exclamation point appear next to any grades a staff member in the office changes in the School view.
Tab direction	Select whether you want the Tab key to move you across a row or down a column when you are entering grades on the Grade Input page.
Show studies	Select this checkbox if you want courses with a category of Study to appear in your gradebook.
Enable gradebook features	Select this checkbox if you want to use the Grade Input page to enter scores for assignments. If you do not select this checkbox, the gradebook only displays post columns (Term 1, Term 2, etc.).
Assignment column order	Select if you want assignments to appear in Date due (ascending) , Date due (descending) , or Sequence number order on the Scores page.
Show points in headers	At the Default weighting field, if you select Total Points , you can select the Show points in headers checkbox if you want to view the number of total points in the column header of an assignment.
Show category names in headers	Select this checkbox to display the names of assignment categories in the assignment headers.
Publish assignment statistics	Select this checkbox if you want low, median, and high assignment scores to appear for parents and students when they view grades using the Family and Student portals.
Show student alerts	Select this checkbox to display alert icons next to student names.
Show course selection recommendation	Select this checkbox to display the Recommendation column on the Scores page. Staff can only make recommendations during the date range defined by the school.
Anchor averages	Select this checkbox to left-align average columns on the Scores page. This way, the averages always appear next to the student information, and the assignments appear to the right:

Field	Description																																								
	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; margin-bottom: 5px;"> Student Fields Grade Columns Term Status </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-bottom: 5px;"> Default Fields <input type="button" value="..."/> All <input type="button" value="..."/> All <input type="button" value="..."/> <input type="button" value="Er"/> </div> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr style="background-color: #ffffcc;"> <th style="width: 25%;">Name</th> <th style="width: 5%;">YOG</th> <th style="width: 5%;">1</th> <th style="width: 5%;">2</th> <th style="width: 5%;">3</th> <th style="width: 5%;">4</th> <th style="width: 10%;">Part 10/01 Part 100 pts.</th> <th style="width: 10%;">HWK 10/01 HWK 100 pts.</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Anower, Connor</td> <td>2010</td> <td>83.0</td> <td>83.0</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>78</td> <td>92</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Carlucci, Christine</td> <td>2010</td> <td>74.0</td> <td>75.0</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>80</td> <td>80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fougere, Danielle</td> <td>2010</td> <td>87.0</td> <td>93.0</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>92</td> <td>98</td> </tr> <tr> <td>French, Bianca</td> <td>2010</td> <td>77.0</td> <td>89.0</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>88</td> <td>88</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div>	Name	YOG	1	2	3	4	Part 10/01 Part 100 pts.	HWK 10/01 HWK 100 pts.	Anower, Connor	2010	83.0	83.0			78	92	Carlucci, Christine	2010	74.0	75.0			80	80	Fougere, Danielle	2010	87.0	93.0			92	98	French, Bianca	2010	77.0	89.0			88	88
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Show missing column	<p>If you create special codes that you enter for missing assignments, select this checkbox to view the Missing column on the Scores page.</p> <p>For each student, the Missing column displays the total number of assignments you have entered those special codes for.</p> <p>The values in this column might help you when determining students' final grades for the term.</p> <div style="background-color: #e0e0e0; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Note: This column appears for you only. Students and family members do not see it in the portals, and office and administrative staff members do not see it in the School or District views.</p> </div>																																								
Count empty as missing	<p>If you selected the Show missing column checkbox, select this checkbox to count any assignments that were due before today, and that you have not entered scores for, as missing.</p> <div style="background-color: #e0e0e0; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Note: You might want to select this checkbox at the end of a term when you have finished entering all assignment scores. Otherwise, the Missing column will include scores for assignments you have not graded yet.</p> </div>																																								
Default weighting	<p>To indicate to the system how you calculate averages, do one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select Categories only if you want to weight categories only in your gradebook. For example, assume you create three categories: Homework, Tests, and Quizzes. All homework assignments are worth the same amount, as are all tests and quizzes. To determine student term averages, Homework is worth 25% of the grade, Tests are worth 50% of the final grade, and Quizzes are worth 25% of the final grade. Select Category and assignments if you want to weight both categories and assignments within those categories. For example, a student's homework average is worth 25% of the term grade, but each homework within the category is weighted differently. For example, you weight reading homework assignments 1, and intensive writing homework assignments 3. Select Total points if you calculate averages by dividing the total points a stu- 																																								

Field	Description
	<p>dent earns by the total number of points possible. For example, a student receives a 100, 90, and 80 for grades. The student's average is $270/300=90$.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select Category total points if you want to use total points for individual assignments within categories that you weight. For example, assume you have a Homework category. The homework average counts as 25% of the student's final grade. Within the Homework category, you grade each individual assignment using points (HW 1 is worth 10 points, HW 2 is worth 20 points). <p>Note: This value becomes the default average mode for the teacher. Teachers can then assign a different average mode to different course sections in the gradebook.</p>
Decimals	Type the number of decimal places you want the system to use for calculated averages.
Grade scale	Click  to select the grade scale you want to use to calculate term averages. If you use a grade scale different than the district grade scale, when you update post columns, the system translates the grades to the district grade scale.
Show semester averages	<p>Select this checkbox to show semester running averages on your Scores page. Aspen calculates semester running averages based on the assignment grades within each of the terms inside of it, not on the average for each term.</p> <p>Students and family can view this column in the Student and Family views.</p> <p>Note: Your school must enable the School Grade preferences (for Show semester averages in the gradebook) for this user preference to be activated. See your Aspen system administrator for details.</p> <p>Aspen uses the column header Semester # (for example, Semester 1) for semester running average columns.</p>

3. Click **OK**.

Create Special Codes for Assignment Grades

Teachers can create special gradebook codes to exempt an assignment score from a student's average or to count as a zero (0). For example, you might create the MED (medical) code to explain why a student did not complete an assignment, and then determine that the score does not affect the student's average.

Note: Be careful not to create a code that is already represented in your grade scale. For example, you do not want to create a cheating code C if your grade scale contains a C grade.

To create special codes:

1. Log on to the Staff view.
2. Click the **Tools** tab.
3. Click the **Special Codes** side-tab.
4. On the **Options** menu, click **Add**. The **New Gradebook Special Code** page appears:

5. Enter the code.
6. Click the **Behavior** drop-down to select one of the following:
 - **Exempt from calculations** to determine that the system should not count this assignment when calculating the student's average.
 - **Calculate as zero** to determine that the system should count this as a zero when calculating the student's average.
7. Select the **Report as missing** checkbox if you want assignments with this code to appear on reports that list missing assignments (such as a progress report). These assignments appear in addition to assignments with no score.

Note: If you select the **Show missing column** checkbox in your user preferences, Aspen includes any assignments you enter this code for in the calculation for the **Missing** column that appears on the Scores page. The **Missing** column can also include assignments that were due before today that you did not enter a score for, if you also select the **Count as missing** checkbox in your user preferences.

8. Select the **Color** you want the system to display the code in after you click **Save**. For example, you might want the **CH** (cheated) code to appear in red so that you can easily locate it on the Scores page.
9. Click **Save**.

Create Footnotes

Create footnotes to add special notes to scores on the Scores page. The notes do not add or subtract any points, or affect the student's average. They simply offer you a place to record notes regarding an assignment grade.

For example, a student might receive a C for an assignment - two grades lower than he actually earned, because he submitted it two weeks late.

After you enter a footnote for a score, the code you select appears next to the score. To view the footnote, put your cursor, or hover, over the footnote code:

Name	VOG	Recommendation	Comment	Q1	SP 1 09/15 Small Project 100 pts.	LP 1 10/01 Large Project 100 pts.	SP 2 10/15 Small Project 100 pts.	SP 3 11/01 Small Project 100 pts.	LP 2 11/05 Large Project 100 pts.	Add...
Anderson, Patric	2011			80.0 B-	85	86	83	85	91	
Brown, Jerome	2011			84.2 B	85	78	84	85	90	
Dionne, Samuel	2011			78.3 C+	78	78	78	82	78	
Duarle, Andrew	2011			80.0 B-	85	72	83	86	85	
Fallon, Andrew	2012	128 History of filmmaking		86.4 B	76	78	88	94	95	
Gendreau, Kelley	2011			91.4 A-	92	93	98	79	91	
Glover, Nora	2011			85.9 B	85	80	91	87	85	
Jezard, Stephen	2011			85.7 B	83	85	87	88	91	
Madden, Andrew	2012	128 History of filmmaking		87.5 B+	85	92	77	58	93	
Morgan, Gianna	2011			78.6 C+	81	78	73	92	77	
Nassise, Leigh	2011			71.9 C-	94	46	83	78	89	
O'Brien, Alfonso	2012			68.5 D+	85	85	85	45	50	
Quinn, Zachariah	2012			62.6 D	87	88	91	55	25	
Ring, Zachary	2011			83.7 B	85	78	82	77	91	
Teneine, David	2012			84.5 B	88	78	83	88	81	
Average score				80.6 B-	84.7 B	79.0 C+	83.1 B	77.6 C+	81.8 B-	

To create footnotes:

1. Log on to the Staff view.
2. Click the **Tools** tab.
3. Click the **Footnotes** side-tab.
4. On the **Options** menu, click **Add**. The New Gradebook Footnote page appears.
5. Type the code. This is the code you can enter on the Scores page by pressing **CTRL+N**.
6. Type the description.
7. Click **Save**.