Dropping Lowest Score from a Total Column

Through a simple 4-step process, instructors can automate their Grade Center to evaluate and drop a student’s lowest grade from a series of quizzes, tests, or assignments and re-calculate a new total grade that accounts for this change.

**Step 1: Create a New Grade Center Category**

In this step, you must create a new category which you will apply to like items (i.e. quizzes) that you want to evaluate and calculate point values from.

1. In the **FULL GRADE CENTER** roll your mouse over the **MANAGE** button and select **CATEGORIES** from the drop-down menu.
2. On the **CATEGORIES** page, click the **CREATE NEW CATEGORY** button.
3. On the **CREATE CATEGORY** page, give this new category a logical name and a description. In this example, I have created a category called “Best-3-Tests”, which will be used to identify 4 tests and drop the lowest from the set. Click **SUBMIT** when you are done.

**STEP 2: Organize and Assign Items to the New Category**

1. In the **FULL GRADE CENTER**, roll your mouse over the **MANAGE** button. This time, select the **COLUMN ORGANIZATION** link from the pop-up menu.
2. On the **COLUMN ORGANIZATION** page, scroll down to the **NOT IN A GRADING PERIOD** section.
   - For each column you want to add to the new category, CHECK the **CHECKBOX** next to the column’s name.
   - Then, roll your mouse over the **CHANGE CATEGORY TO** menu and select the category you created in the first step.
3. Click **SUBMIT** to save and apply your changes to the selected columns.
Step 3: Create a New Calculated Column

In this step, you will create a new, calculated column to calculate the score for your categorized items and drop the lowest scoring item.

1. In the **FULL GRADE CENTER**, roll your mouse over the **CREATE CALCULATED COLUMN** button and select **TOTAL COLUMN** from the drop-down menu.

![Create a new total column](image1)

2. On the **CREATE TOTAL COLUMN** page, give the column a name and description. Then scroll down to the part of the form called **SELECT COLUMNS**. Click the **SELECTED COLUMNS AND CATEGORIES** radio button.

![Select this option](image2)

3. A column and category picking tool will appear. In the **CATEGORIES TO SELECT** field, select just the category you applied to your columns in step 2. Click the gray arrow to move it to the **SELECTED** pane.

![Select your category and move it to the Selected pane.](image3)
4. In the **SELECTED COLUMNS** pane, under your category, there will be an area to indicate settings for dropping grades. Make sure that the **DROP GRADES** radio button is selected and **TYPE a 1 in the LOWEST GRADES** text-box.

5. Next, scroll down to where you see the words **CALCULATE AS RUNNING TOTAL**.

   ![Select Drop Grades and type 1 in Lowest Grades box]

   - **Select DROP GRADES**
   - **Type 1 in LOWEST GRADES box**

   - **Lowest test score dropped from total calculation**

   **Calculate as Running Total**
   - **Yes**
   - **No**
   
   A running total only includes items that have grades or attempts. Selecting **No** includes all items in the calculations, using a value of 0 for an item if there is no grade.

   **If you would like to include missing or non-graded items** in this total, select **NO**. Missing or non-graded items will be calculated as if they are worth **0 points**.

   **If you would like to exclude missing or non-graded items from the total**, select **YES**. These items will not count towards this total.

6. When you are done, click **SUBMIT**. A new column calculating the sum of the categorized columns by the, less the lowest score, will be created.
Step 4: Adjust Your Overall Total Column

In this step, you must adjust your course’s overall total column to account for the changes you have made in the past steps, so that a final course grade is accurately calculated.

1. Return to your FULL GRADE CENTER and locate the column labeled as TOTAL.

2. Roll your mouse over the head of the TOTAL column and click the gray arrow button that appears. From the context menu that appears, select EDIT COLUMN INFORMATION.

3. You will be taken to the EDIT COLUMN INFORMATION page. Skip down to the section called SELECT COLUMNS.

4. A column and category picking tool will appear. Under COLUMNS TO SELECT, select the new calculated total column you created in the previous steps. You may also select any of the other columns that will count towards the final grade to include them in this Total column calculation.

5. Click the SELECTED COLUMNS AND CATEGORIES radio button.

6. Include the calculated column that drops the lowest score. Leave out the columns that your calculated column uses in its calculation!
5. Next, scroll down to where you see the words **CALCULATE AS RUNNING TOTAL**. Indicate whether or not you want to include non-graded or items without grades in this running total.

   ![Options for calculating as running total]

   *A running total only includes items that have grades or attempts. Selecting No includes all items in the calculations, using a value of 0 for an item if there is no grade.*

6. When you are done, click **SUBMIT**.

7. You will be returned to you **FULL GRADE CENTER**.

   - Your new **calculated column** (i.e. “Best-3-Tests”) will display a cumulative point value, less the lowest graded item, from your categorized columns.

   - The **Total** column will now reflect this change in calculation (i.e. “Best-3-Tests” is counted towards the final grade, not each individual test in the course).