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Lighthouse Gradebook

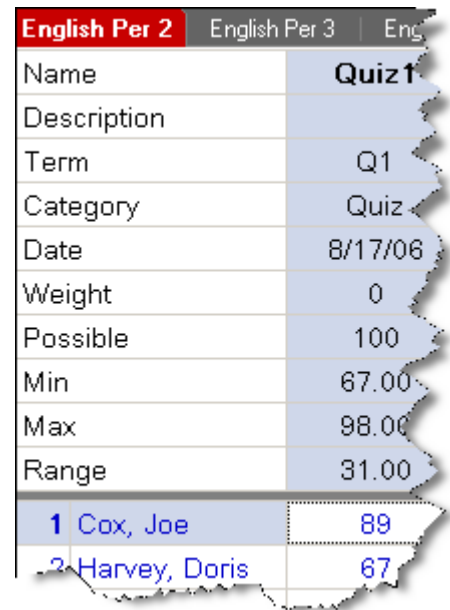
Introduction

The Lighthouse Gradebook is a program designed to emulate a standard pen-and-paper gradebook to track student grades across an entire school year. Because the program uses an industry standard look and feel teachers can start using the program immediately and be proficient in a very short time. Powerful tools are available to track a student's performance and produce professional quality reports quickly and easily.

Many screens throughout the program offer a Help button that provides you with detailed instructions on that specific screen. By clicking the Help button you will be able to read a topic covering all of the elements you see on that screen, as well as discussing some key concepts related to what you're currently working on.

For more general help press the *F1* key from anywhere in the program and you will be brought to the on-line help system. Using the navigation pane on the left hand side of the screen you can look for help topics, browse the index, or search for specific words or phrases.

If you need help beyond what is offered in this manual or in the on-line help system, you can turn to our technical support staff for assistance. If you are using the free, unlicensed version of the software you can e-mail our technical support staff at gradebook@surfsidesoftware.com and we will reply on a time available basis. Licensed users can e-mail or call our toll free number supplied to you at the time of purchase.



| English Per 2 | | English Per 3 | Eng |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|-----|
| Name | Quiz 1 | | |
| Description | | | |
| Term | Q1 | | |
| Category | Quiz | | |
| Date | 8/17/06 | | |
| Weight | 0 | | |
| Possible | 100 | | |
| Min | 67.00 | | |
| Max | 98.00 | | |
| Range | 31.00 | | |
| 1 | Cox, Joe | 89 | |
| 2 | Harvey, Doris | 67 | |

Installation

We recommend that you install the Lighthouse Gradebook by downloading the program from our website at www.surfsidesoftware.com. This will ensure that you have the latest release with the most up-to-date features. If you must use the CD to install the program be sure to check for updates when you first run the program. You can check for updates at any time by clicking *Help>Check for Updates* within the gradebook program.

Installing from the website

1. Download the gradebook software from our website at www.surfsidesoftware.com. Save the installation file to your computer. Once it has finished downloading, double-click the file to begin the installation process.
2. At the welcome screen click the Next button to move to the next screen where you can choose the target location on your hard drive. This is the folder where the program files will be installed. Unless you have a very good reason for doing so we recommend you keep the default location and click Next.
3. Click the Next button to begin the installation. Files will be copied onto your computer and a shortcut created on your desktop with which to launch the program. When the setup program has finished installing the gradebook click the Finish button to exit.

Installing from the CD

1. Insert the Lighthouse Gradebook CD into your CD-ROM drive. If the installation's welcome screen doesn't come right up then you might have auto-run turned off and will need to begin the installation manually. To do so, open My Computer, open your CD drive, and double-click the SETUP file.

2. At the welcome screen click the Next button to move to the next screen where you can choose the target location on your hard drive. This is the folder where the program files will be installed. Unless you have a very good reason for doing so we recommend you keep the default location and click Next.
3. Click the Next button to begin the installation. Files will be copied onto your computer and a shortcut created on your desktop with which to launch the program. When the setup program has finished copying the file click the Finish button to exit.

A note about access rights

The Lighthouse Gradebook was designed to be as friendly as possible on secure computer systems such as Windows Vista. The initial program installation may require local administrative rights due to the fact that several system files must be installed and registered by Windows. Once installed, the program accesses only those areas of the computer that are typically available to a restricted user. This means that no areas of the registry are accessed and file-level access for important program information is limited to certain areas of \Documents and Settings.

Checking for product updates

You should periodically check to see if any updates to your software are available by clicking *Help* › *Check for Updates*. Such updates are free of charge and include additional features or fixes.

Licensing the software

The Lighthouse Gradebook can be run in either licensed or unlicensed modes. Either way offers a fully functional gradebook system that never expires and imposes nearly no limitations on usage.

To license your software you will need to purchase a registration code from our sales department by calling 800-942-9008 ext 110 or by sending an e-mail to sales@surfsidesoftware.com.

Once you have obtained your license information you can enter it into the program by selecting *Help* › *License Your Copy*.

There are three advantages to purchasing a license for your program:

- Access to prioritized technical support via e-mail. In the case of a school-wide license you'll also gain access to telephone support via our toll free phone number.
- The removal of the wording "Unlicensed Copy" and "Trial Version" from all printed reports.
- The ability to submit final averages electronically to a compatible student information system, such as *Surfside Lighthouse*.

Tip: You must enter the license name and serial number *exactly* as they were supplied to you. The name is case sensitive, while the serial number is not. If you received the license information via e-mail it may be easier to copy/paste the information directly.

Removing the program

Should you wish to completely remove the Lighthouse Gradebook from your computer follow these easy steps:

1. Open the Windows Control Panel. On Windows XP you can do this by clicking *Start* › *Settings* › *Control Panel*.
2. Double-click the Add/Remove Program icon
3. Locate the Lighthouse Gradebook program in the list and click Remove to begin the un-install process.


Launching the Gradebook Program

The installation of the program (described above) will create a new shortcut on your desktop, called *Lighthouse Gradebook*. Double-click this icon to launch the program. You may also launch the program by clicking the Start menu, selecting Programs, and locating the Lighthouse Gradebook program group.

Creating Your First Gradebook

Whether you are running the program for the first time or you just want to start a gradebook file for the next school year you will at some point in time need to create a new gradebook file. A gradebook file contains all of your data - everything from courses to assignments, students and grades. Think of these files like a word processing or spreadsheet document – a small, self-contained file that can be placed anywhere on your computer or network.

- To create a new gradebook file click *File > New*.

Tip: As with many operations in this program there are usually multiple ways to accomplish any given task. In the case of creating a new gradebook file you could also click the  icon in the toolbar or press Ctrl-N.

Creating your gradebook from Surfside Lighthouse

If your school uses the *Surfside Lighthouse* administrative software package and you have been granted access to the Teacher Client, your gradebook file can be created for you automatically, complete with all of your courses and students.

- Login to the teacher client with your user name and password that were supplied to you by the main office.
- Click the Gradebook tab and click the *Create Gradebook* button.

You will be prompted for the name and location where you would like to store the file, such as in My Documents.

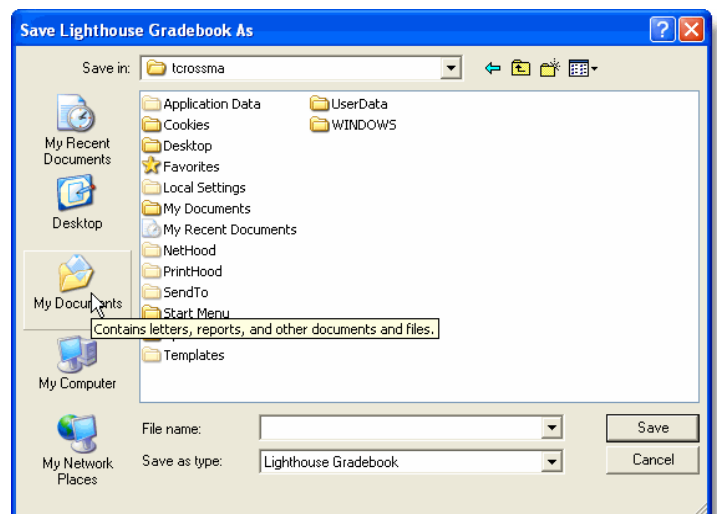
- Open the gradebook program and click *File > Open*. Navigate to the folder where you specified the file be saved, open it, and verify that your courses and rosters are accurate.

Tip: When you create a gradebook file automatically using the Teacher Client you must choose a semester for which rosters will be generated. Many teachers thus prefer to start a fresh gradebook each semester.

Gradebook wizard

The gradebook wizard is started automatically to offer its assistance whenever a new gradebook is created. The wizard will walk you through the process of creating your courses and entering students, as well as setting up your term and category structures, grading scales, grading symbols, and assignment columns. The use of the wizard is optional since everything that the wizard does can also be done using the pull-down menus in the gradebook itself, but the wizard offers a lot of functionality in one easy-to-use place.

Click Next to step through the various screens of the wizard and answer its questions and fill in as much data as you can. You can always return to the wizard at a later time to pick up where you left off. In order to begin using your new



gradebook you should enter at least one course and a few student names. When you're satisfied with your entries click the Finish button to close the wizard.

- Launch the Gradebook Wizard at any time by clicking *Help > Gradebook Wizard*

Saving your gradebook file

Once the gradebook has been created you'll want to save it. Just as with a word processor, changes that you make to your gradebook must be saved to a file in order to make them permanent. Click *File > Save* to begin the process.

You will be prompted to select the folder location where you'll store the file, which might be in your "My Documents" folder or someplace on your file server that your network administrator has recommended you place files so that they are backed up automatically.

Once you select the folder, enter a file name and click the Save button. The file name can be any valid Windows file name, such as "My Gradebook" or "My 6th Grade Classes".

If you try to either exit the program or open another gradebook file without saving the current one you will be asked if you want to save the changes. It is very important that you answer *Yes* unless you have a very good reason for discarding the changes you've made during that session.

Tip: You should make regular backups of your gradebook file to a flash drive, CD/DVD-ROM, or by e-mailing the file to yourself so that a copy is retained in your e-mail history.

Copying your gradebook to another computer

Your gradebook file is a small document file, similar to a word processing document. Because of this, it is very easy to take your gradebook home or put it on your laptop so that you can work on it while away from school.

If you know where you saved your gradebook data file (and you should!) you can open that folder in Windows and copy it to a flash drive, burn it to a CD, or e-mail it to yourself.

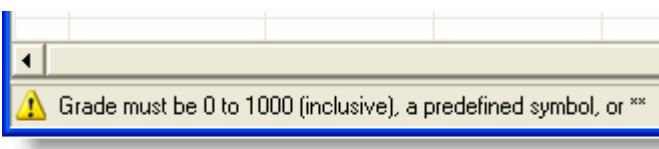
To easily e-mail the file, you can click *File > Email Gradebook*. This will launch your computer's default e-mail client and attach your gradebook data file to the e-mail. If for any reason this function does not work with the way your computer is configured, you can e-mail the file manually as described above.

Getting to Know the Gradebook Screen

The gradebook editor is similar in design to a spreadsheet program in that you enter grades into cells that are the intersection of a student name row and assignment column. Final student averages are calculated automatically whenever a grade changes.

Navigating around the editor

You can move the cursor around the gradebook by pressing the Up, Down, Left and Right arrow keys or by left-clicking the mouse in a cell. Almost all data that you see - such as grades, student names or column information - can be changed by moving the cursor to the cell and typing a new value. Press the *Enter* key to accept the new value and move the cursor down to the next row, or press *TAB* to accept the new value and move the cursor across to the next column. If you make a mistake while typing you can press the *Escape* key before leaving the cell to restore its previous value.



If you type a value that is not appropriate for the cell you're in - such as a grade that is not a number and is not in your symbols list - the original value will be restored and you'll be notified of the problem with a note in the status bar at the bottom of the screen.

Getting help

There are two primary help resource screens available in the Lighthouse Gradebook. The one you are shown will depend on what you activity you are performing in the program at the time of your help request.

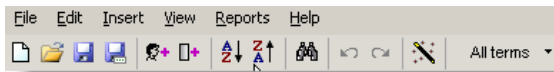
- To access help, press the F1 key on your keyboard

If you are working on the main gradebook screen you will be brought to the online help system for the program. The help system is organized with a list of topics on the left hand side of the screen and the contents of the topic on the right. Click on a topic name to read about that topic. An example would be a topic titled *Understanding the Weighting System*, which describes in detail how average grades are computed.

If you are on an activity window, such as adding a student or course, pressing F1 will show you a specialized help topic screen that explains that particular window. The overall purpose of the window is described and each field is explained in detail.

Toolbar and menu bar

The menu and toolbar contain all of the commands that you are able to utilize within the gradebook. The menu bar (file, edit, insert, etc) is a drop-down system where you click the word and a menu is displayed beneath it showing all the commands within that category. The toolbar beneath the menu bar contains some of the more common commands that are found within the menus, such as Save, Add a Student, Add an Assignment, etc.



Some commands have shortcut keys that let you press a key combination, such as Ctrl-S for Save. This means you hold down the Control key and press the letter S. If a command has a keyboard shortcut associated with it, the shortcut will be listed to the right of the command in the drop-down menu bar.

The toolbar can be customized to include other commands, and you can even create new toolbars in order to organize your frequently used commands into groups. To begin the customization process click View > Toolbars > Customize. Keyboard shortcuts can also be customized in a similar fashion. Customizations are saved on your computer so that they are loaded the next time you open the Lighthouse Gradebook program.

Keyboard Shortcuts

The following is a list of keystrokes that you can use to navigate our the program and to perform certain functions. In many cases these functions can be made using the drop-down menus at the top of the screen instead of using the keyboard, and you can feel free to use whichever method you feel appropriate for the situation.

| Keyboard | Description |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Arrow keys (up, down, left, right) | Navigates around the gradebook screen, from assignment to assignment or student to student |
| Home | Moves to the first student in the current assignment |
| End | Moves to the last student if the current assignment |
| PgUp | Moves up one page |
| PgDn | Moves down one page |
| Escape | When editing the contents of a cell, pressing Escape cancel that action and restores the original value. |
| Tab | Moves to the next column to the right |
| Shift-Tab | Moves to the previous column to the left |
| Enter | Accepts the current value and moves down one row |

| Keyboard | Description |
|----------|--|
| CTRL-Z | Undo the last edit (same as clicking <i>Edit > Undo</i>) |
| CTRL-S | Saves your gradebook |
| CTRL-N | Adds a new assignment |
| CTRL-C | Insert a “check mark” as a grade |
| CTRL-X | Insert an “x-mark” as a grade |
| CTRL-0 | Insert an “NC” grade – No Credit – averages as a zero but is counted as a missing assignment |

Course bar

The course bar lists each course you have added to your gradebook. Click a course name to select it, or right-click the course name to bring up a list of commands applicable to that course.



The currently selected course is displayed in red while the others are in gray. There are several different ways in which the course name can be displayed, such as with the period, room, or teacher names. The course bar can also be displayed along the top, left, right, or bottom of the screen. These settings and more can be adjusted by clicking *Edit > Preferences*.

Assignments area

The assignments area lists each of your assignments along with several pieces of standard information such as the name, date, description, term, etc. New assignments will appear here as you add them to your gradebook. Only a limited number of assignments can fit on a single screen so it may be necessary to scroll to the left or right using the scrollbar at the bottom of the screen or the arrow keys.

| Name | Hw1 | Quiz1 |
|-------------|-----------------|-------|
| Description | Read first t... | |
| Term | Q1 | Q1 |

You can edit any piece of data for an assignment by clicking in a cell and either typing a new value or - in the case of the term and category - selecting from the drop down list.

In addition to the standard information rows (name, description, term, category, date, weight, and possible) you can also display statistics about each column. Statistics include such computed values as the mean (average), minimum grade, maximum grade, range, variance, and standard deviation, among others. You can select which statistic rows to display by clicking *View > Statistics*. The statistic rows that you select will be display beneath the other column information rows.

Students and grades

Student names are listed down the left hand side of the gradebook. Each line can be numbered and every two rows can be displayed in a different color to help identify a student's grades and average. The numbering and coloring of the names is optional and can be changed in the preferences screen.

| | | | | | |
|---|--------------|----|----|-------|----|
| 1 | Adams, Tim | 30 | 40 | 35.00 | F |
| 2 | Fellows, Bob | ** | ** | ** | ** |
| 3 | Joe Smith | 64 | 21 | 42.50 | F |

Grades are listed to the right of each student under the appropriate column heading. If no grade has yet been entered for an assignment you'll see ** (two asterisks) indicating the missing grade.

You can enter a new grade by clicking the cell and typing a new value. Valid grades are all numerical grades (0-1000), NC, a predefined symbol, or **. NC stands for “No Credit” and will average a zero for that assignment while still counting as a missing grade. Predefined symbols can be grades such as P, F (for pass and fail) or letter grades such as A, B, C, etc. You can define your list of allowed symbols by clicking View > Symbols.

Averages

To the far right of the gradebook are two columns: the student's numerical average and letter grade. These columns display the average for the currently selected term, semester or year, which can be changed using the tabs on the left-hand side of the gradebook screen. (or by clicking *View > Show Grades For*).

The average grade is calculated automatically based upon the settings you have defined. The numerical average is a weighted computation of scores arrived at by examining each assignment's possible points, then taking into account any category or term weighting. The resulting numerical average is then compared against the student's grading scale and a letter grade is assigned. This entire process is discussed in detail in the section *Understanding the Weighting System*.

Tip: There is a vast number of different ways in which teachers calculate averages. It is important that you read and understand the section *Understanding the Weighting System* to configure the program to meet your specific needs.

Undo

The gradebook keeps track of every change you make. This means you can step backwards through your most recent activities in order to undo a mistake. Click *Edit > Undo* (or press CTRL-Z) to undo the most recent change. Press it again to undo the change before that, and so on.

Right-click context menus

You can right-click anywhere on the gradebook screen and you'll be presented with a list of options suitable for whatever it is you clicked. For example, if you right-click a course tab you can perform such course-related task as editing the course, deleting it, adjusting its grades, or moving it to another gradebook file.

Right-clicking on a student's name lets you perform operations suitable to that student. Right-clicking a selection of multiple grades lets you fill or adjust those grades, and so on. Making use of right-click context menus is not mandatory, as all of the functions contained in these menus are duplicated in the drop-down menus at the top of the screen. However, the context menus make using the program easier and more logical.

Multiple selections

If you click a cell while holding down the left mouse button and drag the mouse either left, right, up or down you'll create a selection area that encompasses one or more assignments, students, or grades. Many operations will then affect that entire area, such as filling an entire assignment with a particular grade, deleting several assignments, or changing the grading scale for multiple students. After you select an area you can right-click inside the selection and you'll see a list of commands that can be performed on that selection.

Configuring your Gradebook

Each gradebook file contains one or more courses, and each course contains one or more students and assignments. Grades are entered into assignments in a very similar fashion to a spreadsheet program. The gradebook automatically computes term, semester and/or yearly averages as you enter the grades.

You must configure your gradebook correctly in order to have it compute averages the way you want them computed. Every teacher runs their grading system in a unique way so the exact gradebook configuration will vary from teacher to teacher and school to school.

The basic premise of a gradebook program is very simple: Enter assignment grades for students in order to print reports and calculate averages. However, the reality is that - in order to work with the dozens of different grading methods that teachers employ - you must understand assignment points, categories, grading methods, grading scales and a handful of other concepts in order to ensure student averages are calculated the way that *you* want them to be calculated.

Tip: Please make sure you read and understand this section of the manual, and also read *Understanding the Weighting System*, before you publish reports or submit average grades. Do not distribute student averages until you are certain your calculations are working the way you want them to work.

Terms and semesters

“Terms” are analogous to marking periods and provide a way to group your assignments into logical units. When a new gradebook is created a default set of terms is established automatically, or if you've created your gradebook from Surfside Lighthouse the term structure will match that of your central office's system. You can make changes to this structure as necessary.

Each assignment that you add to the gradebook will be assigned to a term, with the end result being that the gradebook will then be able to compute separate term and semester averages even though your gradebook file may contain assignments spread over the entire school year. Usually you will define your term structure to be the same as the grading system adopted by your school.

You can use the gradebook wizard to manage your terms or you can click *View > Terms* from the pull-down menu. You can click the [Help](#) link above the term list to view detailed information about each item.

| Default Terms | |
|---------------|----------|
| Name | Semester |
| Q1 | 1 |
| Q2 | 1 |
| Exam 1 | 1 |
| Q3 | 2 |
| Q4 | 2 |
| Exam 2 | 2 |

- To view and manage your term definitions click *View > Terms*

All terms ▾ The gradebook can display your assignments contained in a single term, one semester, or all terms by clicking tabs on the left-hand side of the screen or by clicking the *View > Show Grades For* menu item. The average columns on the right hand side of the gradebook update to reflect whichever term is currently selected.

Terms can be assigned a weight. This weight can play a large part in how the student averages are calculated. You might want to read over *Understanding the Weighting System* for a thorough, yet easy-to-understand explanation of how average grades are computed.

Tip: You should NOT create a term entry for your semester averages. Instead you should specify the semester number in the semester column so that the program can automatically compute semester averages based on term grades. Do not create “Sem 1” or “Sem 2” entries in the term list.

Categories

Categories can be assigned to columns to specify the type of grades stored in that column. The use of categories allows you to see exactly how a student performed in each of your grading areas, such as homework, quizzes, and exams. Many reports will subtotal this category information and present category averages for your review.

| Default Categories |
|--------------------|
| Quiz |
| Homework |
| Exam |

- To view and manage your category definitions click *View > Categories*

Tip: By default the use of columns does not have an effect on the final grade calculation. If you want to weight categories and have their use affect the average you can use *Edit > Grading System* to change your category averaging method.

Grading symbols

Grading symbols are letter grades or words that can be recorded as scores for an assignment column. Most of the time you'll enter a numerical grade for a student's assignment. For example, a student might receive a 15 out of 20 possible points for a quiz.

There are situations where it might be advantageous or necessary to record a letter grade instead of a numerical grade for an assignment. Grading symbols allow you to define a letter or word that can be input directly as a score for an assignment.

You can manage your grading symbols by clicking *View > Symbols*. You can click the [Help](#) link above the symbols list to view detailed information about each item.

- To view and manage your grading symbols click *View > Grading Symbols*

Symbols can be notations such as *Pass*, *Fail*, *Inc*, or letter grades such as *A*, *B*, *C*. In order to compute the average grades, the program must know how to turn each grading symbol into a numerical grade. This is accomplished by entering the *Value %* for each grading symbol, which is the percentage of the assignment's possible points to award. The program uses that percentage to figure a numerical grade for the assignment. That numerical grade is then used in the average grade calculation.

| Default Symbols | |
|-----------------|---------|
| Symbol | Value % |
| Pass | 50% |
| Fail | 90% |

Tip: You can record a symbol as a grade for an assignment in the same way you would a number: by typing the symbol's letter or name and pressing the *Enter* key.

Predefined grading symbols

There are 5 predefined symbols that can always be assigned as a grade, even without entering them in your Grading Symbols list. This list shows each predefined symbol, its primary use, and how it will affect the student's average.

| Symbol | Primary Use | Keyboard | Average and other affects |
|--------|--------------------------------------|------------|--|
| ☺ | Positive score. | Ctrl-Alt-H | Affects the average if the symbol has a value defined in Preferences. The assignment will not show up on a missing assignment list. |
| ☹ | Negative score. | Ctrl-Alt-S | Affects the average if the symbol has a value defined in Preferences. The assignment will not show up on a missing assignment list. |
| ✓ | Assignment was turned in. | Ctrl-C | Affects the average if the symbol has a value defined in Preferences. The assignment will not show up on a missing assignment list. |
| ✗ | Assignment was not turned in | Ctrl-X | Affects the average if the symbol has a value defined in Preferences. The assignment will not show up on a missing assignment list. |
| NC | No Credit - Assignment not turned in | Ctrl-Alt-N | The grade is considered equal to 0 points earned, and will be averaged as such. The assignment will show up on a missing assignment list. |

Aside from NC (which is always a 0), each of the other symbols can be configured to be included in or omitted from the student's average. To set how each symbol is defined, click *Edit > Preferences*, click the Calculations tab, and set the symbols'

“value %” number. If you leave the value blank, the symbol will not be included in the average grade calculation. Values should be entered as a percentage of the total possible points for an assignment (i.e. 70=70%).

Tip: With the exception of NC, entering a grading symbol as a score (either a predefined symbol or one you create) will prevent that assignment from showing up on the student's *Missing Assignment* report.

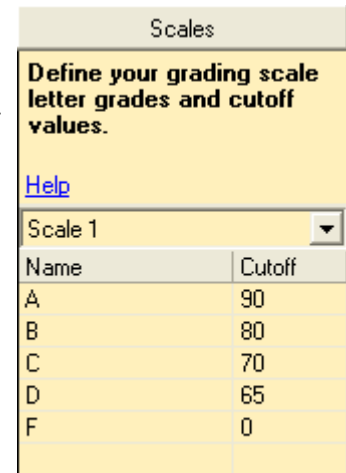
Grading scales

Grading scales convert a numerical average into a letter grade. Term, semester and final averages are first calculated in numerical form, and those averages are then compared to the each student's grading scale to derive a letter grade. A grading scale is simply a set of cutoff values where each letter grade starts. Any numerical average grade equal to or above that cutoff and below the next highest cutoff will be assigned that letter grade.

- To view and manage your grading scales click *View > Grading Scales*

You can define up to 10 grading scales, and each student can be assigned a different scale. It is possible, for example, to specify some students in a class as belonging to an “A-F” scale, while other belong to an "OSNU" (outstanding, satisfactory, not-satisfactory, and unsatisfactory) scale.

- The default grading scale for each student in a course is Scale 1. To change a student's grading scale, right-click the student's name and select Set Grading Scale.



The screenshot shows a dialog box titled "Scales" with the heading "Define your grading scale letter grades and cutoff values." Below the heading is a "Help" link and a dropdown menu currently set to "Scale 1". A table lists the letter grades and their corresponding cutoff values.

| Name | Cutoff |
|------|--------|
| A | 90 |
| B | 80 |
| C | 70 |
| D | 65 |
| F | 0 |

Tip: You can also create or modify your grading scales using the Gradebook Wizard. Click *Help > Gradebook Wizard* to launch the wizard, then click the *Scales & Symbols* tab. The wizard may make creating your grading scales easier as it has buttons you can click to create standard grading scales such as A-F, A-F with +/-, and OSNU.

Changing grading scales for multiple students

Each student in a course can have their own grading scale, which defaults to “Scale 1”. If you need to change the scale for every student (or just many students) you can hold down the left mouse button on the first student and drag the mouse down to the last student to create a multiple selection. Then right-click on one of the selected students and choose “Set Grading Scale” from the menu.

Grading system setup

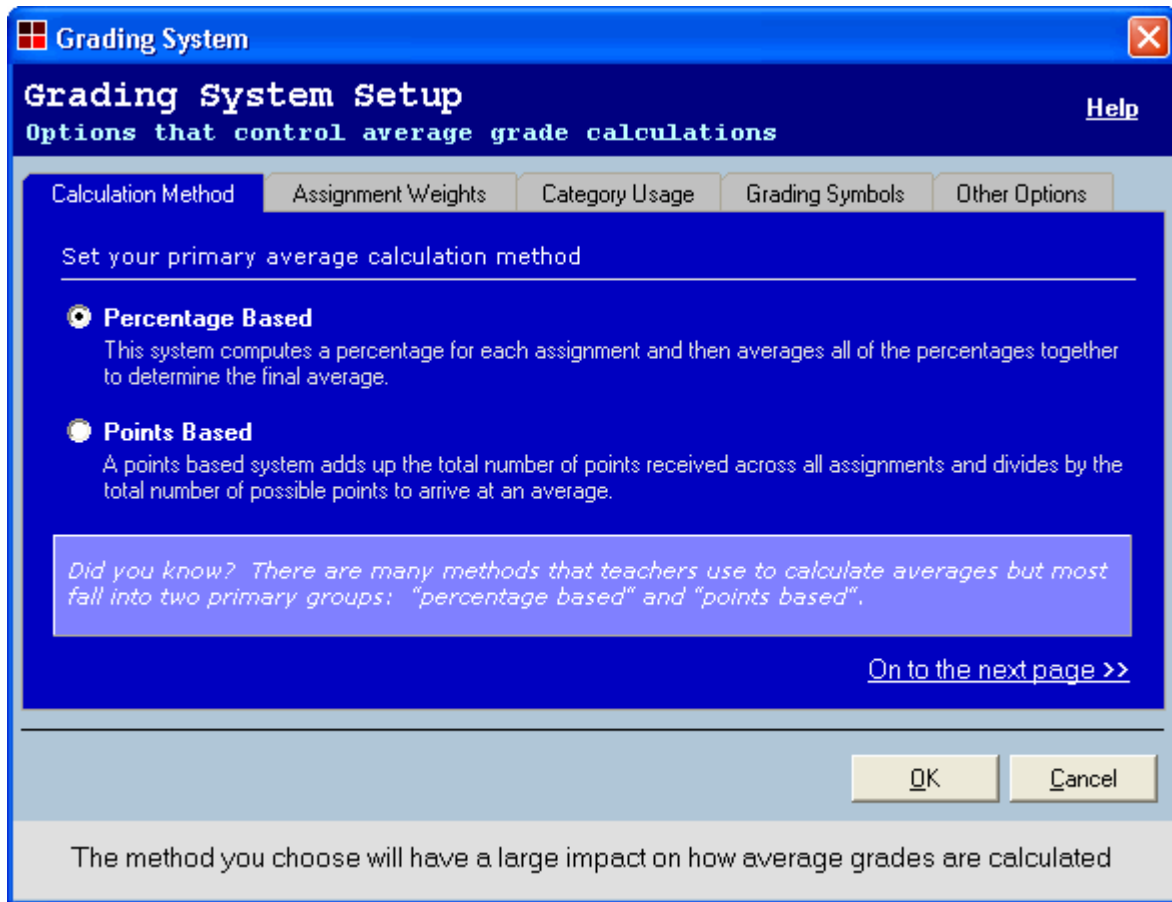
There are several very important options in the program that control how your average grades are calculated. It is critical that you understand how these options are used and make sure you set them correctly. Because of their importance all of these options are grouped together on a single screen.

To view or modify your grading system settings:

- Click *Edit > Grading System*

The grading system screen contains several tabs which let you set your grading method, assignment weighting, category usage and more. Click each tabs to review the settings on that page to ensure they are set to your preference.

See the section titled *Understanding the Weighting System* for specific examples of all of the settings on this screen.



Calculation Method

This is perhaps the most important setting and broadly determines how your average grades are ultimately calculated. Your choices are “Percentage Based” or “Points Based”. Percentage based averaging computes a percentage for each assignment and then averages all of the percentages together to determine the final average. Point based averaging adds up the total number of points received across all assignments and divides by the total number of possible points to arrive at an average.

Assignment Weights

Only applicable when using a percentage based grading system, this option adds a line to each assignment called “weight” which lets you specify that one assignment is worth more than another within the same category or term. If you choose to not allow assignment weighting the weight line will not be visible and all assignments will be treated equally within it category or term.

Category Usage

Each assignment that you create can be assigned to a category so that you, the parent, and the child can track performance in each grading area. However, the use of categories can have a dramatic effect on the average grade calculation. You can either have the use of categories affect averages, or not.

If you configure the program so that categories affect the average then grades are first subtotaled within each category, and the final grade is then an average of each category's subtotal. You can additionally (and optionally) weight each category so that its grades affect the overall average more or less than another category.

If you configure the program so that categories do not affect the average, then the use of categories is for reporting purposes only and their use will not affect how the final averages are calculated. Each assignment's category will be printed on certain reports and many reports will show each category's subtotal for information purposes, but the final average calculation will not take into consideration category subtotals or category weighting.

Grading Symbols

In addition to numerical grades which are always available, there are several predefined symbols that you can use when recording grades for an assignment. These are the Check, X, Happy Face and Sad Face. In order for one of these symbols to have an affect on the student's average you must set a value to that symbol, which is the percentage of the possible points for the assignment that the symbol is worth. If you leave a symbol's value blank it will not be included in the final grade.

Extra Credit

Each assignment is worth a certain number of points, or “possible points”. If you record a grade for a student that exceeds that value the extra points can be counted and included in the average or they can be ignored.

Preferences

There are many settings in your gradebook program that affect how the program behaves. These settings range from what you see on the screen such as fonts and colors, to password protecting your gradebook or changing terminology.

- To modify your program settings, click *Edit › Preferences*

The preferences screen is organized in a tab format, with tabs for *General*, *User Interface*, *Protection* and *Terminology*. This section of the manual will discuss the more important of these settings. For a complete description of every preference setting, click the [Help](#) link on the preferences screen.

| | |
|----------------|--|
| General | <p><i>School name</i> This is the name of your school as it will appear at the top of all reports.</p> <p><i>Number of undo levels</i> This option represents the maximum number of times you can choose the Undo option (<i>Edit › Undo</i>) to back out of a mistake you have made. For most users 20 is a sufficient escape margin but you are free to increase or decrease this number as you see fit.</p> <p><i>Automatically open last active database</i> This option automatically retrieves the last gradebook file that was open when you last exited your software.</p> |
| User Interface | This tab contains settings that affect how your gradebook looks. While many of the options are important, none of them affect the outcome of student averages or grades and as such will not be discussed here. Refer to the online help system by clicking the Help link on the preferences screen. |
| Protection | Using the Protection tab you can put a password on your gradebook file so that your data cannot be viewed with a standard text editor. When you attempt to open a password protected gradebook file, you will be prompted for a password each time. |
| Terminology | The Terminology tab lets you change the words used to describe several key program items. For example, we refer to “assignments”, “courses” and “categories”. You may prefer “subject” or “bin”, etc. |

Courses and Students

Adding courses

Each course tab contains a roster of students in your class, as well as its own set of assignment columns for which grades can be entered. You should add one course tab for each section of a course you teach. You can use the gradebook wizard (*Help > Gradebook Wizard*) to add your courses or you can click *Insert > Course* from the pull-down menu.

- To add a new course click *Insert > Course*

When adding a new course, the course name is the only mandatory piece of information but the other fields have the following uses:

- **Course Name** – The name of the course as it will appear on reports. If you will be sending your grades back to a compatible Student Information System such as Lighthouse the name should be spelled exactly as it is in the other software.
- **Section** – The course section. Be sure it is the same as listed in your Student Information System.
- **Teacher Name** – The name of the teacher as it will appear on reports. The teacher name is also very important if you will be uploading your grades to our MyStudentData.com on-line website.
- **Teacher ID** – The ID number for the teacher as it is listed in your Student Information System. It is very important this number matches your other software in order to facilitate the transfer of grades back and forth. The teacher ID is also used when uploading grades to our MyStudentData.com on-line website to associate a teacher account with a PIN number.
- **Period and Room** – These pieces of information are shown on several screens and printed on certain reports. They are optional but should be entered when possible.
- **Grading System** – Each course can have its own grading system (Percentage-based or Total Points). By default all courses use the grading system that was defined when you created the gradebook or by clicking *Edit > Grading System*.

Tip: If your gradebook was created for you automatically by the *Surfside Lighthouse Teacher Client* you will likely not have to add any new course tabs manually, nor should you change the Teacher Name or Teacher ID without good reason.

Adding students

Within each course tab is maintained a roster of students enrolled in the class. Each course has its own separate roster, so adding, editing or removing students from one course does not affect any other course.

A student must be added to the course roster before you may enter grades for that student. As with your course definitions, you can use the gradebook wizard to add your students or you can click *Insert > Student* from the pull-down menu. To edit a student, right-click the student's name and click Edit Student.

- To add a new student click *Insert > Student*

Even if you are using a student information system such as *Surfside Lighthouse* that has prepared your gradebook for you, student adds and drops throughout the year must be edited manually into your

The screenshot shows a 'Student' dialog box titled 'Detailed student record'. It contains several input fields for student information:

- Student Name: **Smith, John**
- Student ID #: **2**
- Nickname: **JS**
- Birthdate: **9/13/95**
- Address1: (empty)
- Address2: (empty)
- City: (empty)
- State: (empty)
- Zip: (empty)
- Father's Name: (empty)
- Mother's Name: (empty)
- Phone 1: (empty)
- Emergency 1: (empty)
- Phone 2: (empty)
- Emergency 2: (empty)
- Counselor: **Batenchuck**
- Grading Scale: **Scale 1**

At the bottom, there are 'OK' and 'Cancel' buttons. A note at the very bottom states: 'For sorting purposes we recommend names be entered in a Last, First format'.

gradebook. There is not a direct link between your gradebook and the main office, so changes the office makes to student schedules do not show up in your gradebook, and vice versa.

The Student ID # and Birthdate are particularly important fields. These two fields are the primary determining factor used to match students between your gradebook and the office's database, so make sure to enter them accurately.

Several student fields are very important and care should be taken when changing the data.

- **Student Name** – Usually entered as Last Name, First Name, the student's name will show up on just about every report. When sending average grades back to a student information system, the student's name will be used in the absence of a Student ID # when matching students to the main school database. If your gradebook file was created for you automatically, do not change the student's name unless you have a good reason.
- **Student ID #** - This number is used to match your students to those in the school's main database when automatically submitting average grades. You should not change this number for existing students without a very good reason. For new students joining your class after the gradebook is initially created, enter the student ID# exactly as it was supplied to you. Failure to enter a correct ID# may affect the accuracy of the term averages you submit back to the school system.
- **Birthdate** – The date of birth may be used to match your students to those in the school's main database. Specifically, if your student has a birth date that is different from the one stored in the main database, the matching system may not think it's the correct student. Do not change this date for existing students, and for new students ensure that the birth date is entered correctly.
- **Nickname** – This is the name the student may prefer to be called and may optionally be displayed on your main gradebook screen. Nicknames will never appear on reports.
- **Gender** – Male or female. This is for your reference only. When using the Grouping tool you can choose to group students evenly by gender.
- **Address** – This is for your reference only and is not used by the gradebook program in any way.
- **Parent's name and phone numbers** – For your reference only and does not appear on any reports.
- **Counselor** – For your reference only and does not appear on any reports.
- **Grading Scale** – The student's grading scale determines what final letter grade will be received for any given numerical average. You can define more than one grading scale and each student can be set to any scale.

Tip: For sorting purposes we recommend that you enter student names in a *Last Name, First Name* format.

Changing student records

If your gradebook was created for you automatically by the *Surfside Lighthouse Teacher Client*, much of each student's information may already be filled in for you. You may change any piece of information, and that change will affect your gradebook only. None of your changes will be sent back to the main school database.

You should take special care to ensure that the student ID # and Birthdate are kept up-to-date with your school's Student Information System to facilitate the transfer of grades between programs.

- You can edit a student's record by right-clicking a student name and selecting *Edit Student*

Dropping students

If a student drops from your course, you have the option of deleting the student or dropping the student. *Deleting* the student will erase the student and all grades associated with that student completely from your gradebook. *Dropping* the student preserves the existing grades for the student but prevents that student from receiving a final average and from showing up on reports.

- To drop a student, right click the student's name and click Drop Student
- To delete a student, right click the student's name and click Delete Student

Tip: If a student attended your class and received any grades, we recommended that you drop the student rather than delete her. This will preserve her grades for future reference.

Changing a student's record

A student's record contains some basic demographic information, such as birth date, gender, address, and phone numbers. Most of the field are for your reference purposes only and needn't be used unless you require them.

- To edit a student's record, right click the student's name and click Edit Student.

Sorting students

Students can be displayed in your gradebook sorted in a particular order. By default the students are arranged alphabetically from A to Z, but you can change this order. In addition to sorting by student name, you can also sort students based on their score for any assignment.

- To sort students alphabetically right-click the student name column and choose one of the *Sort Students* selections to sort either in ascending or descending order.
- To sort students based on the grades received for a particular assignment, right-click anywhere in the column and choose one of the *Sort Scores* selections to sort either in ascending or descending order.

Displaying student nicknames

Normally the gradebook screen displays the student's full name as you entered it into your course roster (typically in Last, First format). You can show the student nicknames by clicking View > Show Student Nicknames. Students that do not have a nickname entered on their student record will continue to show the full name.

Entering Grades

Adding assignments

Assignments can be quizzes, tests, exam, homework or any other grade that you want to track as part of a student's progress in your course. Columns are specific to each course, meaning that each of your courses has its own set of assignments for which to enter grades and those assignments are not shared amongst any of your other courses. To add a new assignments click *Insert > Assignment* or press CTRL-N. You can click the Help link above the scales list to view detailed information about each item.

- To add a new assignment to your gradebook click *Insert > Assignment*

Each assignment has several fields which together control how it behaves in your gradebook. For each assignment it is important that you correctly specify each field's value, as several of them can drastically affect the grading calculations.

Name - The assignment name is displayed at the head of the column when you're working in the gradebook and is printed on most reports. The column name can be any number of characters but many report will be presented better if you keep this name as short as possible.

Description - The description is a longer explanation of the assignment's meaning and also appears on many reports. While the name should be kept short the description can be any length. However, because the description also appears on some reports, verbosity can cause some reports to look cluttered.

Date - The date refers to the date that the grades in the column were due or assigned. Printed reports usually list the most recent assignments first, and the gradebook screen itself can also be sorted by date. There are no restrictions on the format of the date you use, so it's acceptable to enter dates in "8-15-06", "8/15/2006", or any other format you choose. It's best to be consistent in the format you use so that reports look better. It is not absolutely necessary to enter a date for a column, but you'll lose the ability to sort your gradebook on the date of the assignment and on printed reports you'll not see the date of missing work.

Possible Points - The possible points is the total number of points that a student can receive for that assignment. For example, a quiz may have 10 and a standard test might have 100.

Weight – If you are using a *Percentage Based* grading method (as opposed to a *Total Points* method) you can set each assignment to be weighted against one another, relative to other assignments within the same category, term or semester. For example, if you have a particular homework that is worth more than most other homework assignments you could give that assignment twice the weight as the others. Note that if you assign a weight to even one assignment then you should be consistent and assign a weight to them all so that it is clear exactly how the final average is computed. When using a *Total Points* method of grade calculations (as discussed in *Understanding the Weighting System*) assignment weighting is disabled and not available for use.

Term – The term (marking period) to which the assignment belongs. You must specify a term in order for the assignment to be placed into your gradebook properly.

Category – The use of categories allows you to see exactly how a student performed in each of your grading areas, such as homework, quizzes, and exams. Because the use of categories can drastically affect your averages, you should read *Understanding the Weighting System* before using categories.

Extra credit assignment – If this box is checked then the assignment is considered to be worth extra credit and may help but will not hurt the student's average. In the case of a *Total Points* grading system the number of points the student received will be added to his or her total, without adding to the total number of possible points, thus increasing the average. For *Percentage Based* grading the non-extra credit average is first calculated and then the extra credit assignments are included only if they do not bring down the average.

Entering grades

Grades are entered at the intersection of a student row and assignment. Select the desired cell by left-clicking the mouse or using the arrow keys, and then type a numerical value or the name of a pre-defined symbol into that cell. Press the *Enter* key to accept the grade and move to the next student or press the *Tab* key to accept the grade and move to the next column. If you want to edit an existing value instead of typing a new one then double-click the cell to go into edit mode.

To delete a grade, select the cell and either press the *Del* key or type an asterisk (*). An asterisk is considered a no-grade symbol and indicates that the student is missing a grade for that assignment column. Missing grades do not count for or against the student are a completely omitted from the average grade calculation.

Tip: As you add, change, or delete grades the students' averages will be updated automatically to reflect the new grades.

Extra credit assignments

When you add a new assignment to your gradebook it does not affect a student's average until you enter a grade for that assignment. That is because each cell in a new column has a default grade of **, which does not factor into the average. What this means is that any assignment can be treated like an extra credit assignment simply by leaving the grade blank for those

students who do not turn in the assignment. If a grade is entered it will be factored into the average, and if a grade not entered it will not affect the average.

When you add a new assignment you can place a check mark in the “extra credit assignment” box which takes extra credit a step further. For any student who receives a grade for the assignment it will help but never hurt that student's average.

Tip: Lighthouse Gradebook now supports a “help but not hurt” extra credit system. When you add a new assignment place a check mark in “extra credit assignment” and the grade they receive may help but will never hurt that student's average.

Sorting columns

As you add new columns to your gradebook they are added as the rightmost column in your gradebook. That is unless you have specified a column sorting setting, in which case the column will be positioned according to your sort settings. You can sort your columns by name, date, category, weight, and possible points.

- To sort your gradebook columns click *View > Sort Columns* and select one of the sorting methods.

For the most part, sorting the columns only affects the screen display and not printed reports. Most reports list assignments in date order.

Tip: You can remove column sorting from your gradebook and return the columns to their originally entered order by selecting *Unsorted* from the column sorting options.

Filling an entire assignment with a default grade

Usually you will enter grades for an assignment one student at a time. However there are times when it is faster or easier to fill an entire assignment with a single grade, and then go back and make changes to those students who have a different grade.

- To fill grades for an assignment, right click anywhere in the column and click *Fill Column*. Type a numerical grade or symbol to fill and click the *Ok* button.

When filling a column you can choose whether to fill a grade for every student or for only those students who are missing a grade. If it's a new assignment that you are filling the choice will not matter, but if it's one that already has grades you must make sure to not accidentally erase your grades. If you do make a mistake, click *Edit > Undo* and try again.

Tip: You can also fill a student, a selection, or even an entire course with a grade. Clicking the right mouse button on a student's name, a course tab, or a selection of grades will allow you to select that object's *Fill* function.

Adjusting student grades for an entire assignment

You can adjust grades for an entire assignment, such as to add a certain number of points to a test or adding a percentage to each student's grade. Adjusting grades can be useful when you need to rescale a test or quiz.

- To adjust grades for an assignment, right click anywhere in the column and click *Adjust Column*. Type an adjustment amount, specify how the amount will affect the existing grades (add or subtract a value or percentage), and click the *Ok* button.

Override a student's average grade

Student averages are calculated automatically whenever you add, change or delete grades. Your gradebook can calculate term, semester and yearly averages and you control the way that average is determined as described in *Understanding the Weighting System*.

You will usually want to let the program calculate your averages automatically, but there are times when you might want to override this calculation in order to consider factors such as class participation, improvement, or other subjective concerns. To do so, click to select the average grade you wish to override in the far-right grade column and then type the new letter grade. The newly entered grade will be underlined to indicate that it is an override.

When you have created an override for a student, changes you make to that student's grades will not affect his average. In order to remove the override and revert that student to using the automatic calculation, select the overridden grade and press the *Delete* button.

If when you enter or change grades for a student it is not updating the final average look to see if the average grade is underlined. If it is, then it means that the grade has an override that you must delete before the program will continue to calculate the average automatically.

Tip: If you find that you are entering manual overrides for a large majority of your students you may want to look at how you have configured the program to calculate your averages and make adjustments as necessary.

Copying students to another course

If you have a student that moves to another section of a course you can copy that student to the new course complete with all of the grades that have already been entered.

To copy a student:

- Select the student that you wish to copy to another course section
- Click Edit > Copy to Another Course

If the student already exists in the new course, or if any of the assignment names do not exist in the new course then you'll be prompted to confirm the process.

Moving or copying a course to another gradebook

There are times when you might want to copy an entire course - complete with student records, assignments and grades – to another course.

To move or copy a course to a new gradebook:

- Right-click the course tab and select Move or Copy Course

You will have the option of copying the course, which will leave all of grades alone in the current gradebook, or moving the course, which will delete the entire course record from your current gradebook.

Copying a course within the same gradebook

You can create a copy of any course in the gradebook, which will copy all student records, assignments and grades to a new course tab.

To copy a course within the same gradebook:

- Right-click the course tab and select Duplicate

Understanding the Weighting System

At the simplest level the student's average is be the sum of all the grades in your gradebook, divided by the total number of grades. However, that wouldn't allow you to produce separate term and semester averages or to specify that exams count more toward the average than homework assignments. For these and other such tasks you need to turn to the weighting and grouping systems provided in Lighthouse Gradebook.

Attention: It is *very* important that you read and understand the weighting and grouping system before you publish any grades or submit any averages. There are many ways that teachers calculate averages. You must configure the program properly in order to produce the results that you need. Lighthouse Gradebook computes averages *exactly* as you have instructed it. If your instructions are incorrect, the averages will be incorrect.

Grouping

There are two primary levels of grouping that occur when grades are calculated: *term grouping* and *semester grouping*. A third grouping of *categories* can be enabled in the Grading System setup screen, but it is disabled by default. Before going on to discuss the weighting system it is important to understand how these groupings can affect the students' final averages.

Term and semester grouping involve the program taking all of the grades within a particular term and averaging them together to produce a *term subtotal*. All of the term subtotals are then averaged together to produce the semester average. In the same way, each semester's subtotal is calculated and then averaged together to produce the yearly average. So in essence all term grades are “grouped” together, and all semester grades are grouped together.

$$((\text{Term 1 subtotal}) + (\text{Term 2 subtotal})) / 2 = \text{Semester Average}$$

$$((\text{Semester 1 subtotal}) + (\text{Semester 2 subtotal})) / 2 = \text{Yearly Average}$$

Weighting

The weighting system allows you to count more heavily one assignment, category subtotal or term subtotal over another. Through the use of weighting you can tell the program that you want *Exams* to count more towards the term average than *Homework*, or that you want *Term 1* and *Term 2* to count twice as much as the *Mid-Term Exam* grade.

There are 3 types of weighting that you can employ: category, and term and assignment.

Category weighting

By default category weighting is disabled and the use of categories is for reporting purposes only and does not affect the average grade calculation. If you want to enable the use of categories for grouping and weighting purposes you can use *Edit > Grading System* and turn on category averaging.

Each category that you create can be assigned a weight. When calculating averages each category is first subtotaled and averaged together with all the other category subtotals. By using weights you can specify exactly how much each category is figured into the term average.

- To weight your categories, click *View > Categories*.

There are two important points to remember when using category weighting:

1. If you assign a weight greater than zero to *any* category, then you should assign a weight to *all* categories so that it is clear exactly how each category subtotal affects the average grade.
2. A categories weight is proportional to those from other categories. For example, if you want *Tests* to be counted twice as much as *Quizzes*, enter a value for *Tests* that is twice as much as the value for *Quizzes*. You could use 2 and 1, 4 and

2, or 100 and 50. So long as you are consistent in your use of weights the actual numbers used don't matter, only their relation to the other categories. It may be convenient to have all of your category weights add up to 100.

Note: If you have not enabled category averaging as defined in *Edit > Grading System*, then categories are effectively ignored in the average grade calculation and any weights you enter will be discarded.

Term weighting

Each of your terms (also called marking periods) can be weighted in order to compute a semester average. Without weighting, the semester average is each term's subtotal divided by the number of terms. With weighting you can, for example, indicate that *Term 1* and *Term 2* should have equal weight and count for 80% of the semester, while the *Mid-Term Exam* counts for 20%.

- To weight your terms, click *View > Terms and Semesters*.

There are two important points to remember when using term weighting:

1. If you assign a weight greater than zero to *any* term, then you should assign a weight to *all* terms so that it is clear exactly how each term's subtotal affects the semester average.
2. A term's weight is proportion to those from other terms. For example, if you want *Term 1* and *Term 2* to be counted twice as much as the *Mid-Term Exam*, enter a value for *Term 1* and *Term 2* that is twice as much as the value for *Mid-Term Exam*. You could use 2/2/1, 4/4/2, or 40/40/20. So long as you are consistent in your use of weights the actual numbers used don't matter, only their relation to the other terms. It may be convenient to have all of your term weights add up to 100.

Tip: You can have the program tell you exactly how it is calculating a student's average by printing the *Explain Student's Average* report. This report is invaluable in diagnosing discrepancies between your personal calculation method and the one you told the program to use.

Assignment weighting

Each assignment can be weighted so that it counts more towards the average than other assignments within the same category or term. Note that assignment weighting is *disabled* by default, and is not applicable when using a Total Points grading method. If you want to use enable assignment weighting you must turn it on using *Edit > Grading System*.

When enabled, each assignment has a “weight” line, which is where you can specify how that assignment's grades relate to the other assignments within the same category or term. If you leave the weight line at 0 (the default) then all assignments within that category will be treated equally. If you want one assignment to count more than another, you can enter a weight for the assignment that is proportionally more than the other assignments. Each assignment will then be weighted based on how the assignment's weight relates to the other columns.

| | | |
|-------------|---------|---------|
| Name | Quiz1 | Quiz2 |
| Description | | |
| Term | Q1 | Q1 |
| Category | Quiz | Quiz |
| Date | 8/17/06 | 8/18/06 |
| Weight | 2 | 1 |
| Possible | 100 | 100 |

- To weight an assignment, enter a number into the column's “weight” line

There are three important points to remember when using assignment weighting:

1. Assignment weighting applies only to assignments within the same category. This means that weights within the “homework” category will not be factored against weights in the “tests” category.
2. If you assign a weight greater than zero to *any* assignment, then you must assign a weight to *all* assignments within the same category. Failure to do so will cause all assignments with a weight of 0 to be excluded from the average.

- An assignment's weight value is proportion to those in the other assignments. For example, if you want Quiz1 to be counted twice as much as Quiz2, enter a value for Quiz1 that is twice as much as the value for Quiz2. You could use 2 and 1, 4 and 2, or 100 and 50. So long as you are consistent in your use of weights the actual numbers used don't matter, only their relation to the other assignment weights.

Tip: If you find that you are assigning the same weight to all assignments within a given category, such as all Tests with a weight of 2, then you might be better served using category weighting instead of assignment weighting.

Averaging methods

There are many ways in which teachers compute their averages - so many that it's not possible just to choose your averaging method from a list and have the program adjust itself accordingly. Instead, you will tell the program how you want the averages calculated through the use of a calculation method, assignment weighting, category usage, and extra credit – in essence all of the settings available in *Edit > Grading System*.

If you have not yet read through the rest of this *Understanding the Weighting System* section of the manual we suggest you do so. It contains very important information that you need to know in order to have the program calculate accurate averages the way that *you* want them calculated.

Following are several of the more popular types of averaging systems, with an explanation on how to configure your gradebook to use that system. These should be used as a guide in setting up your own gradebook.

| Method name | Percentage-based <u>with categories</u> |
|-------------|--|
| Description | The <i>percentage-based with categories</i> method uses categories to subtotal all assignments within each category, and then each category's subtotals are averaged together to produce a term average. Each assignment is treated equally within its respective category, with the student's grade being calculated as a percentage of 100% |
| Steps | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Click <i>Edit > Grading System</i> and on that screen set the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the <i>Calculation Method</i> tab set Percentage based. On the <i>Assignment Weights</i> tab set whichever preference you desire, with the default being Do Not Allow Assignment Weighting. On the <i>Category Usage</i> tab set Categories Affect Averages Create your category names and weights using <i>View > Categories</i>. The use of weights is optional, but if you assign weights then the term average will be a weighted average of all the category subtotals. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For each assignment you create: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Be sure to assign a category to every assignment. Student grades for the assignment will be factored as a percentage of the Possible Points. For example, an 8 out of 10 possible equals 80%. This 80% will be averaged with the other assignments within the category. |

| | |
|-------------|---|
| Method name | Percentage-based <u>without categories</u> |
| Description | The <i>percentage-based <u>without categories</u></i> method uses categories for reporting purposes only and their use does not affect the average grade calculation. Each assignment is treated equally within its respective category, with the student's grade being calculated as a percentage of 100% |
| Steps | <p>2. Click <i>Edit</i> › <i>Grading System</i> and on that screen set the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On the <i>Calculation Method</i> tab set Percentage based. ● On the <i>Assignment Weights</i> tab set whichever preference you desire, with the default being Do Not Allow Assignment Weighting. ● On the <i>Category Usage</i> tab set Categories Do Not Affect Averages <p>You may create categories using <i>View</i> › <i>Categories</i> and each assignment can still be given an category, but their use will not affect the average grade calculation. If you assign a weight to a category it will be ignored.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● For each assignment you create: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assign a category to each assignment if you wish. 2. Student grades for the assignment will be factored as a percentage of the Possible Points. For example, an 8 out of 10 possible equals 80%. This 80% will be averaged with the other grades across the entire term. |

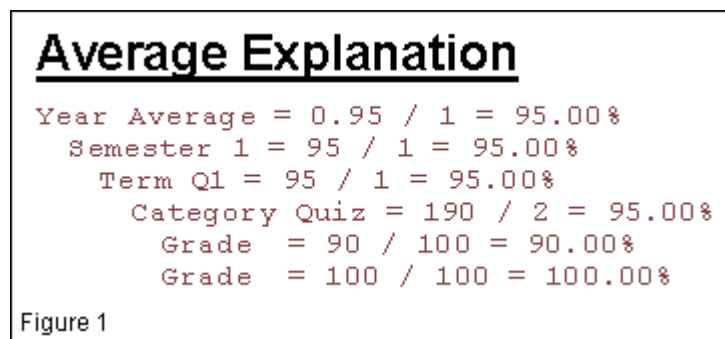
| | |
|-------------|---|
| Method name | Total points method <u>with categories</u> |
| Description | The <i>total points <u>with categories</u></i> method has each assignment valued at a certain number of points. Each grade a student receives for an assignment is added to his total, and the final average is the total received divided by the total possible. This method uses categories, so all assignments within each category are added up and subtotaled, and then divided by the total number of categories to produce the term average. |
| Steps | <p>Click <i>Edit</i> › <i>Grading System</i> and on that screen set the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On the <i>Calculation Method</i> tab set Points based. ● On the <i>Assignment Weights</i> tab set whichever preference you desire, with the default being Do Not Allow Assignment Weighting. ● On the <i>Category Usage</i> tab set Categories Affect Averages <p>Create your category names and weights using <i>View</i> › <i>Categories</i>. The use of weights is optional, but if you assign weights then the term average will be a weighted average of all the category subtotals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● For each assignment you create: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be sure to assign a category to every assignment. 2. Enter the possible points for the assignment. Student grades for the assignment will be added to all other assignments within the same category. The category subtotal will then be the total points received divided by the total number possible. Example: 8 of 10 and 7 of 10 equals 15 of 20, or 75% for the homework category. |

| Method name | Total points method <u>without categories</u> |
|-------------|---|
| Description | The <i>total points without categories</i> method has each assignment being valued at a certain number of points. Each grade a student receives for an assignment is added to his total, and the final average is the total received divided by the total possible. This method uses categories only to designate the type of each assignment, but does not use category subtotals to affect the term averages |
| Steps | <p>Click <i>Edit > Grading System</i> and on that screen set the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On the <i>Calculation Method</i> tab set Points based. ● On the <i>Assignment Weights</i> tab set whichever preference you desire, with the default being Do Not Allow Assignment Weighting. ● On the <i>Category Usage</i> tab set Categories Do Not Affect Averages <p>You may create categories using <i>View > Categories</i> and each assignment can still be given an category, but their use will not affect the average grade calculation. If you assign a weight to a category it will be ignored.</p> <p>For each assignment you create:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assign a category to an assignment if desired. Since the use of categories do not affect the average grade it does not hurt to use categories for some assignments but not others. 2. Enter the possible points for the assignment. Student grades for the assignment will be added to all other assignments across the entire term. The term average will be the total points received divided by the total points possible. Example: 8 of 10 and 7 of 10 equals 15 of 20, or 75%. |

Explain student's average report

The *Explain Student's Average* report is designed to assist you in understanding exactly how the program has computed a student's term or semester average. If you find that the program's average does not agree with your calculations, this can be an invaluable tool in diagnosing the problem.

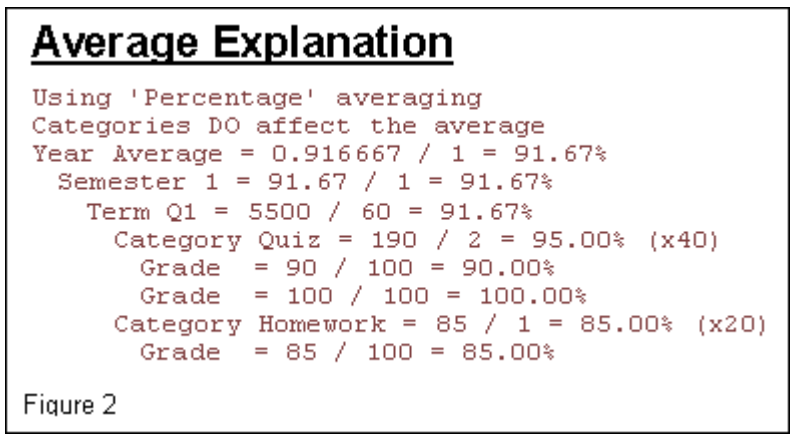
- To run the average explanation report, click *Reports > Explain Student's Average*



The average grade explanation shown in Figure 1 is for a very simple average grade calculation in which a student received grades in two columns within the *Quiz* category for *Term Q1*. The grades are 90 and 100.

As you follow from the top to bottom, notice the indenting of each section of the report. The indenting shows that a new subtotal section has been started - such as a semester, term or category grouping. In this example, the two grades are shown at the bottom under the *Quiz* category. The *Quiz* line prints the total points for all grades in that category and divides by the number of grades to produce a *Quiz* category subtotal of 95.00. This being a very simple example there are no grades in any

other category or term, so the 95.00 average is raised upwards through each subsequent level of grouping – term, semester and finally year.



In Figure 2, we've added a grade of 85 to the *Homework* category. In this example, the *Quiz* category is weighted at 40% and the *Homework* category at 20% (an unused *Exam* category is weighted at 40% for a total of 100% across all categories). In the Grading System screen we've set categories so that they affect the average grade calculation.

Once again looking at the indentation shows the various levels of grouping. The furthest indented lines are the grades themselves. Each category subtotals its own grades to derive a category average. In this case, the *Quiz* category subtotals to 95 and the *Homework* category subtotals to 85.

Since in this example the categories are weighted as 40% and 20%, the term average is not a simple average of the two category subtotals. That would not take the weighting into account. Instead what happens is that each category subtotal is multiplied by its weight to produce a weighted subtotal. The weighted subtotals are then divided by the total weight to produce a term average. If you look at the "Term Q1" line you'll notice a value of 5500 / 60.

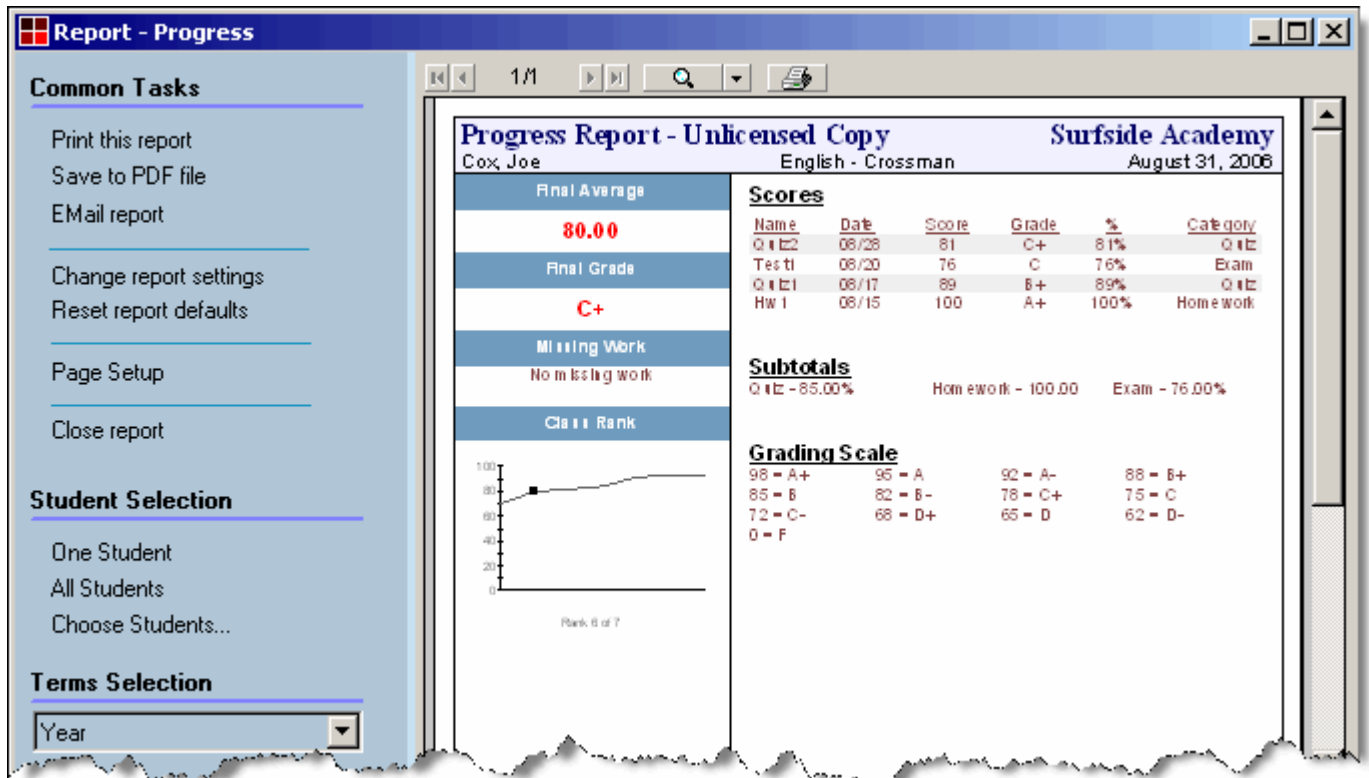
In this example, the *Quiz* category is weighted at 40% so we multiply 95 * 40 = 3800. The *Homework* category is weighted at 20% so we multiply 85 * 20 = 1700. The total of the weighted category subtotals is 3800 + 1700 = 5500. This number is divided by the total of all category weights, in this case 40 + 20 = 60. 5500 / 60 = 91.68, which is our final average.

Both of these examples are fairly simple in that there are not many grades and all of the grades are assigned to the same term. However, even when printing an explanation for a student with a complete set of yearly grades all of the same principles apply, and if you step through each level of subtotals you can figure out exactly how you've instructed the program to calculate your averages.

Reports

Lighthouse Gradebook offers many reports that contain different views of your data. All reports share a common interface that lets you zoom in and out, scroll, change the report settings and layout, print or e-mail the report, and other tasks.

To produce a report click the Reports menu and select the desired report from the drop-down menu.



Navigating the preview screen



The navigation bar across the top shows you the current page and total number of pages in a Current/Total Pages format. You can click the left and right arrows to move forward and backwards through the pages in your document, or directly to the beginning and end. If there is only one page in the document these buttons will be dimmed and not available (as shown above).

The magnifying glass controls the zoom, which lets you move in to see a bigger view of the document or zoom out to see more of the page. Clicking the magnifying glass once will zoom to 100% scale, which is actual size. Clicking it again will zoom to "whole page" which lets you see the layout of the entire page, usually at the expense of not being able to read the text. You can click the down arrow button next to the magnifying glass to select from a few preset zoom levels. You can also double-left click anywhere in the document to zoom in, or double-right click to zoom out.

If the entire page does not fit within the current window then scroll bars will appear on the right hand side of the page and/or at the bottom. Use these scroll bars to uncover areas of the document that you can't see. You can also click and hold the mouse button anywhere in the document and drag the mouse to scroll.

Common report tasks

Every report screen has the same set of common tasks that let you interact with the report in various ways:

Print this report - Sends the report to the printer. After clicking this link a standard Windows Print dialog will be shown that lets you select the destination printer as well as adjust certain printer settings. The exact settings that you can change - and even the look of the print dialog screen - will depend on your version of Windows and the type of printer you're using. But in most cases you can at least select the pages to print, the number of copies, and the page orientation (portrait or landscape).

Save to PDF file - Saves the entire document to an Adobe Acrobat (PDF) file. PDF files are industry standard files that can be shared with other users. All that is required in order to view a PDF file is a free piece of software called Acrobat Reader which is available on [Adobe's website](http://adobe.com).

Email report - The option first automatically saves the report to a PDF file, then launches your e-mail client (such as Outlook) and attaches the report file. If for any reason the program is not able to locate your e-mail client software to automate this process you can still save the file to a PDF and e-mail the file yourself.

Change report settings - Each report can be customized in various ways, from wording to colors, fonts, and content. The options are grouped together with each other so that it's easy to locate those in which you are interested. The groupings are Captions, Colors, Content (not shown), Font (not shown) and General (not shown). Clicking any item displays at the bottom of the window a short explanation of what it does.

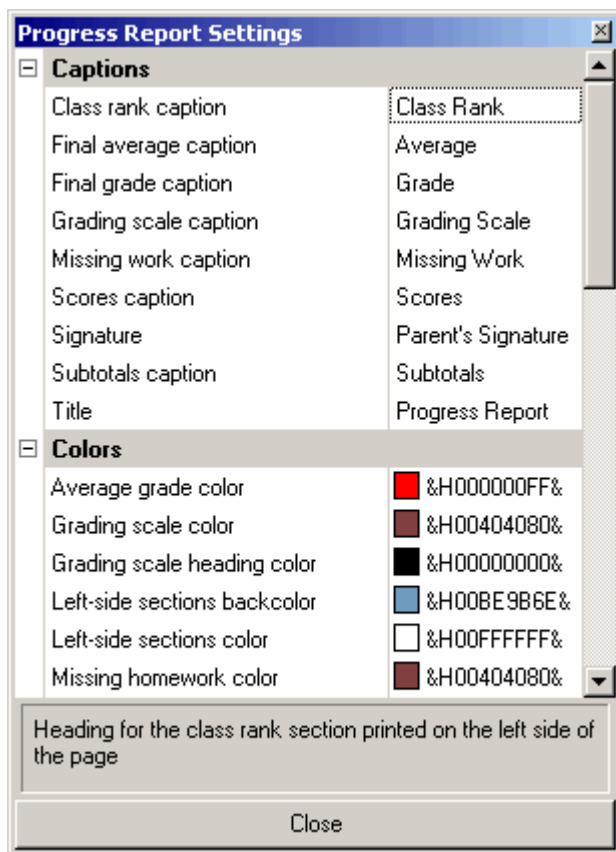
As you make change to the various settings the report will be automatically updated to reflect the new values. Usually the update takes place immediately letting you get instant feedback about how the report will look, but if the report takes a long time to generate it will not be redrawn with your changes until you click the Close button.

When making changes to colors, fonts and yes/no values you can double-click the item to change its value.

Reset report defaults - Any changes that you make to the report settings will be saved along with the gradebook file and applied the next time you produce the report. This is usually a good thing and allows you to customize your reports to your liking and use that format throughout the year. However, if for any reason you want to revert back to the default layout then click this link.

Page setup - This launches the printer's page setup dialog that typically lets you adjust the paper size and source, page orientation (portrait or landscape) and margins. The exact settings that you can change will depend on your version of Windows and the type of printer you're using. Any changes that you make in the page setup dialog will be saved along with the gradebook and reapplied the next time you produce the report.

Close report - Closes the report preview and brings you back to your gradebook screen.



Student selection

When you select a student-based report, only the currently selected student in your gradebook will be processed. If you want to include all students or select certain students then you can click the *All Students* and *Choose Students* links, respectively. Clicking the *One Student* link will always revert back to the student that is currently selected in the gradebook.

Term selection

Certain reports gather their data from one or more terms (marking periods) or semesters. This data might be column scores, missing assignments, or averages. The currently selected term or semester being viewed in your gradebook will be used when producing a new report, but you can select a different one if desired. The report itself will always in some way indicate from where it is gathering its data with wording such as "Final Average" or "Q1 Grade".

Progress report

The progress report is designed to show an individual student's performance in your class. Printed is the term or semester average, any missing work, that student's rank in the class, and information about the most recent assignments. Each category is subtotaled at the bottom of the report, and your grading scale is printed in order to explain the number to letter conversion.

This report only prints on a single page. If you need to print more assignments than will fit on a single page, use the Scores report.

Scores

The scores report is designed to show all of an individual student's assignment grades in your course. Printed is the term or semester average, any missing work, that student's rank in the class, and all assignments.

Missing assignments

The missing assignments report is designed to show a list of any missing assignments for an individual student. Printed is the term or semester average, a list of the most recent completed assignments, that student's rank in the class, and a list of all the missing assignments.

Assignment report

The assignment report is designed to show the details of an individual assignment. Printed is the basic assignment information (name, category, term, date, and possible points), statistics (average, min, max, etc), students who have not completed the assignment, a breakdown of grades, and the scores for each student.

Class summary

The class summary report is designed to show each students' current progress in your course. Printed is some basic course statistics, a break of grades, and the term average for each student.

Spreadsheet of columns

The spreadsheet report is designed to print your gradebook in a manner similar to what you see on your screen. Printed is a column for each assignment, and each student shows all assignment grades plus the term, semester, or final average.

Explain student's average

The explain averages report is designed to assist you in understanding exactly how the program has computed a student's term or semester average. There are many ways in which averages can be calculated, and for a complete explanation of all those options you should read *Understanding the Weighting System*. If you find that the gradebook program's average does not agree with yours, this can be an invaluable tool in diagnosing the problem.

Sending averages to Surfside Lighthouse

If you have licensed your copy of Lighthouse Gradebook then you can submit your term or semester averages back to the *Surfside Lighthouse Teacher Client* in order to help speed entry of grades to the office.

Your gradebook program may be located on your school computer, your laptop, or maybe on your home computer. Because of this flexibility it is not possible for the Lighthouse Teacher Client to directly read your gradebook file and extract the student averages.

Instead, you will create an "averages file" that contains student averages in a standard format that the Lighthouse Teacher Client can understand. Once the file has been created, you can then bring that file to your computer at school and use the gradebook tab of the Teacher Client to import the averages file.

If Gradebook is installed on the same computer as your Lighthouse Teacher Client

- Click **File=>Send Averages to Lighthouse**

- A file containing your student averages will be saved automatically to your computer in a location your Teacher Client knows about. The next step is to open your Teacher Client, click the Grades or Mid-Term tab, then click the "Import Grades" button to begin the process of reading your averages into Lighthouse.

If Gradebook is not installed on the same computer as your Lighthouse Teacher Client

- To create your averages file that will be sent to Lighthouse on a different computer, click **File > Save Averages for Student System**
- You must specify which term or semester averages you want to submit to Surfside Lighthouse by placing a check mark next to each item.
- Click the **Select** button to specify where the “averages file” will be placed. A good place to save this file is on your Desktop with a name of “Averages”.
- Click the **OK** button to save the averages to the file.
- Open your Teacher Client, click the Gradebook tab, then click the Import Gradebook button to begin the process of reading your averages into Lighthouse.

Uploading grades to MyStudentData.com

If your school subscribes to Surfside's MyStudentData.com Internet student data access service you may be able to upload your grades to the website so that parents and students can view the grades securely from their home computer.

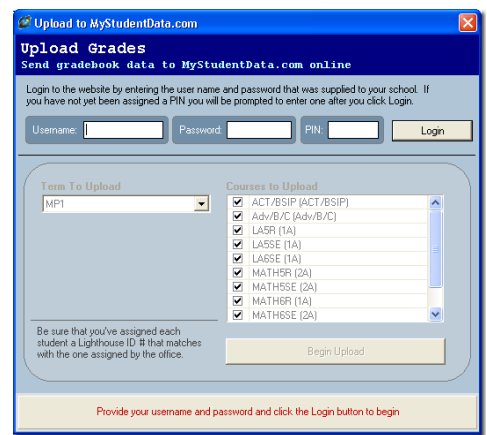
- To upload grades to MyStudentData.com, click *File > Upload to MyStudentData.com*

Logging in

You will be required to enter a username and password, which will be supplied to you by your school's administration. This username and password is shared by every teacher in your school.

The first time you login you will be required to create a PIN number. This PIN number can be any number 3 or more characters in length. This PIN number belongs to you alone and it will be required each time you upload. The PIN will ensure that no other teacher can affect the grades you have uploaded.

Once you enter your username, password and PIN, click the Login button to attempt to login to the website. Any login errors will be reported at the bottom of the screen.



The PIN number is associated with the Teacher ID that is entered into the first course in your gradebook. In other words, since all teachers share a username and password the way that each individual teacher account is distinguished from each other is by each having a unique Teacher ID and PIN number. It is important that you ensure that you fill in the Teacher ID field with the number supplied to you by the main office.

Preparing your gradebook for uploading

When you upload your gradebook to MyStudentData.com you are sending individual student assignment grades to the website so they can be viewed by parents and students. Each course that you select will be uploaded and the grades for all assignments within the term you chose will be uploaded, along with each student's current term average grade.

But there's more to the puzzle than just uploading your gradebook and having parents be able to view the grades. Your data by itself is not sufficient for a parent to be able to retrieve the student record, because your gradebook does not contain all of the important data associated with each student; most of that information resides in your school's main Student Information System software, such as Surfside Lighthouse.

To provide the extra information not contained in your gradebook, the office uploads the student records from their software and you upload the grades from your software, and the two together combine to provide all of the information necessary to retrieve a student and view the grades.

Importance of Student ID numbers

In order for your student records to match the student records uploaded by the office there has to be some way to link a student record contained in one system to the same student record from a different system. Matching students by their name is not a very good idea because not only do some students have the same name, more commonly there are differences in the way that one person might enter and spell a name versus another person. To a computer, "Joe Smith" does not equal "Joey Smith".

To combat this problem of matching students we use unique student ID numbers. The main office records an ID number for each student, and you record that same ID numbers for each student in your gradebook. Then when you upload your gradebook the program will be able to match your students with those uploaded by the office and ensure that the grades are placed into the correct student records.

It is extremely important that you ensure that each student has a valid, up-to-date ID number in your gradebook before uploading. At any time you can view your student ID's by clicking *Help* > *Gradebook Wizard* and clicking the Students tab. If you initially created your gradebook using the automatic function in the Lighthouse Teacher Client then your student ID numbers will likely be filled in and correct since that data is coming directly from the main office. However, it is ultimately your responsibility to ensure that your data is accurate. Anytime you add a new student you must get that student's ID from the office and enter it as part of the student's record otherwise his grades will not be uploaded.

Course name, teacher name and teacher ID

When you upload your grades you are sending more than just the student records – you are also sending some basic course information as well as your name, which will all be displayed to the parent or student. You should ensure that each course is spelled correctly, and that each course has your name listed in the Teacher field. You can click *Help* > *Gradebook Wizard* and click the Courses tab to view and edit this information.

In order to match you with your PIN number you must enter a valid Teacher ID for each course. This ID is usually supplied to you by the main office, and if you have used the Lighthouse Teacher Client to create your gradebook then it will already be filled in. This ID is used, along with your PIN number, to ensure your authenticity. The ID number should be unique across all teachers in your school. In you do not enter a Teacher ID for a course you will not be able to upload its grades.

Uploading grades

Once you enter your username, password and PIN and click the *Login* button you will be able to choose the term and select which courses to upload. Place a check mark next to each course and click the *Begin Upload* button to start the upload process.

Depending on the speed of your Internet connection and how much data you are uploading it can take anywhere from a few seconds to a few minutes to complete the process. Make sure you do not interrupt the upload process, even if it looks like the program has stopped responding.

If you do not see one of your courses listed, be sure the course has been assigned a Teacher Name and Teacher ID. Without these pieces of information the course cannot be uploaded and will not be visible on the list. You can view your course settings by clicking *Help* > *Gradebook Wizard* and then clicking the Courses tab.

Errors

Once it has finished uploading the program will notify you of any errors that might have been encountered. The most common error is that a student will have been uploaded that does not have a matching record as uploaded by the main office. This is usually caused by a having an incorrect student ID number listed in your gradebook. Correct the mistake and re-upload, or contact the office to help resolve the situation.