How to Use Canvas Lesson 3: Course Access and Grade Reporting

In this lesson, you'll learn how to add terms and set term dates to manage course access for users. You will also learn how to create a grading period set, associate it with a term, and create a grading period within that set.

Terms can only be created at the root account level. Once terms are created, grading periods will allow you to establish date ranges for grade reporting.

Notes:

- You can create terms using the SIS Import Tool, but not grading periods.
- Term access dates can only be added manually.
- This lesson outlines a manual process for uploading information in your account. To learn more about using the Canvas API to automatically integrate with your SIS, talk with your CSM and visit the Canvas Guides, review Canvas API documentation, and visit the Canvas Developers Group in the Canvas Community.

Lesson 3 Outline

Terms

Grading Periods

Additional Resources

Terms

What are Terms?

Terms define start and end dates that apply to any course added to that term. For that reason, term dates should be set before adding courses to your account. Terms can be created manually or by using SIS imports.

Additionally, terms are used to filter data in account analytics and account reports.

Add New Term

To manually add a term to your account:

1. Click the **Terms** link in Account Navigation.
2. Click the **Add New Term** link.

Add Term Details

In the Term Details page, add the following information:

1. **Term Name:** Enter a name to display in the Terms page and in the Course Settings page
2. **SIS ID (Optional):** Enter an ID associated with SIS data to enhance searching and filtering for terms in an account
3. **Term Runs From Dates:** Specify the beginning and end dates for your term

4. **User Can Access Dates (Optional):** Enter beginning and end dates that specify when course-level users can access courses within the term. Learn more about [user access dates](#).

Notes:

- Canvas includes a default term that cannot be removed or renamed.
- Use caution when editing Term Runs from and User can access dates, as the fields cannot be left empty they are edited.
- Instructors and students cannot view the Terms page, so please ensure users in your institution are aware of term dates for your institution publicly.
- Not all courses within a term conform to the term dates. Learn more about [course dates](#) and [section start dates](#).
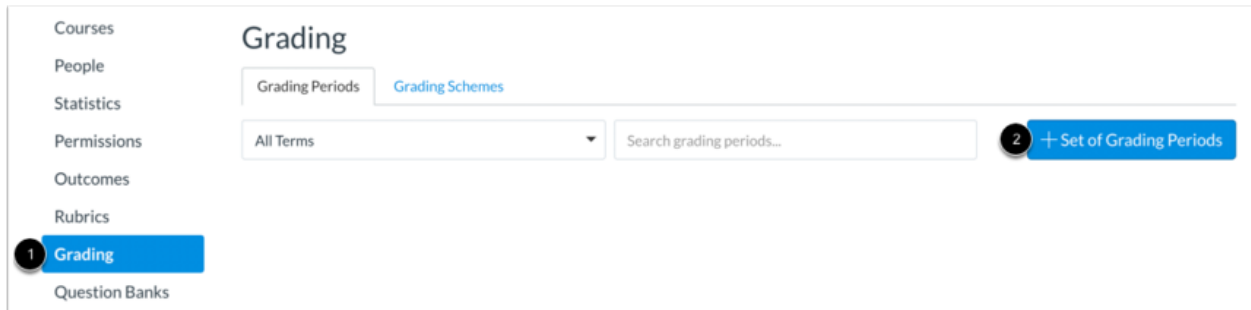
Grading Periods

What are grading periods?

Grading periods specify date ranges used for student grade reporting. Student grades are calculated using course assignment scores with due dates that fall within the grading period's start and end date range. Grading period close dates prevent grade modification after a specified date.

Grading periods are created within grading period sets. When creating a grading period set, you can associate it with terms, and any courses within that term automatically inherit the grading periods.

Add Grading Period Set

To create a grading period set:

1. Click the **Grading** link in Account Navigation.
2. Click the **Add Set of Grading Periods** button.

Add Grading Period Set Details

Enter or select the following details for your grading period set:

1. **Set name:** Enter a searchable name to display in the Grading Periods page.
2. **Attach terms:** Type and select a term name(s) to associate with the grading period. Courses associated the selected terms inherit grading period set dates.
3. **Weighted grading periods** (optional): Assign a weight to individual grading periods.
4. **Display totals for All Grading Periods** (optional): Allow users to view total grades and any assignment group totals in a course associated with the grading period set.

When you are done entering grading period set details, click the **Create** button [5].

Add Grading Period

Your grading period set displays on the Grading Periods page. To add one or more grading periods to your grading period set, click the **Add Grading Period** link.

Add Grading Period Details

Add the following for each grading period you wish to include in a grading set:

1. **Grading Period Title:** differentiate between grading periods
2. **Start Date and End Date:** specify start and end dates for the grading period; any course assignment that falls within these dates will be included in the student's reported grade
3. **Close Date:** specify a date when reported grades can no longer be modified for the grading period

When finished, click the **Save** button [4].

Learn more about adding grading periods and viewing existing grading periods in an account.

Additional Resources

Canvas Guides

For more in-depth information about the topics covered in this chapter, check out the Canvas Admin Guides chapters on Terms and Grading.

You can also watch the Canvas Admin overview videos about [Terms](#) and [Grading Periods](#).

Canvas Community

The [Canvas Community](#) is an online community of Canvas users from around the world. It houses a space for [Questions and Answers](#) about Canvas and a variety of groups, including the [Canvas Administration group](#).

Up Next in Lesson 4: Grading and Learning Standards

You may prefer to configure your account to standardize learning expectations and measurements as much as possible. In [the next lesson](#), you'll learn about the following:

Grading Schemes

- Grading schemes establish the criteria ratings used to measure student achievement in a course. This helps ensure that student grades are based on a standardized scale.
- Accounts can house multiple grading schemes, and a course can enable one grading scheme to measure student achievement.

Outcomes

- Outcomes are statements that describe the knowledge and skills students will gain from the courses they take at your institution.
- You can provide outcomes for a variety of subjects, skills, and courses at the account level. Instructors can then find and apply account-level outcomes in their courses.

Rubrics

- Rubrics are tools used to measure student growth and achievement on individual assignments in a course.
- You can create a standard set of rubrics for instructors to use across courses.

Question Banks

- Canvas allows users to create question banks, or quiz question repositories. Questions can be grouped and saved for easy access and use when creating a new quiz.
- You can create question banks for instructors to use in their courses, ensuring that students across courses can be assessed on standardized quiz questions.