Using the Toolbar in PLS
Across the top of every PLS course, is a gray bar called the Toolbar.

The toolbar contains many of the administrative functions of the course in relation to the course content located in Course Home and the Weekly Units.

Gradebook Organization
The Gradebook tool provides a shared dashboard for tracking and communicating grades for all student activities in a PLS course. After clicking the Gradebook tool, the initial view is organized into three tabs: View Gradebook, User Activity and Setup Gradebook & Rubrics.

View Gradebook Tab
This tab organizes all grades according to Weeks/Units. The Select Gradebook View (see red arrow above) selects the Week/Unit that you want to view. This can be done by selecting from the dropdown: Week/Unit, Item or for the entire course. Remember to click Go to view your selection.
A few extra features of this page:

- Grades for an individual student may be viewed by clicking on their name.
- **Export view** (upper right hand corner) can be used to export the selected grade view into a printable spreadsheet.

Grades will be automatically submitted to the Gradebook via Dropboxes and Quizzes.

**User Activity Tab**

User activity tracks the amount of time (in minutes) that individual students spend in the course and where in the course they spend their time. With the User Activity feature, you can see how much time a student spent in an individual unit or content item, as well as the dates on which the student accessed the course. You can export this data to a spreadsheet.

Remember, user activity time may not necessarily reflect the time students were actually working in the course. User activity provides information regarding how long a student spent in each area of the course. A short user activity time may be due to a student quickly entering a course area, printing the material, and then working offline. If a student does not log out of their course or logs out infrequently, the user activity time displayed may be higher than the student's actual time spent in a particular area of the course.

View user activity the following ways:

- **View by Unit or Course Tool** - View how much time a student spent in a particular unit or tool.
- **View by Date** – View how much time a student spent in the course for a specific date range.
- **View by Student** - View a bar chart graph of how much time one particular student spent in each unit or in a specific content items. This option is available from the **View by Unit** view and the **View by Date** view.

**Export view** (upper right hand corner) can be used to export the selected grade view into a printable spreadsheet.

**Setup Gradebook & Rubics Tab**

The setup tab has many settings for grading assignments. **All graded items should originate in your course schedule, on the left side of your course.** Example: An assignment or quiz in Week 2 should be created directly in Week 2 before visiting the Gradebook.

The initial view of the Setup Gradebook tab will include 6 tabs: Current Setup, Add New Items, Select Gradable Items, Assign Point/Weights, Rubrics and Preferences.
Current Setup:
View the grades and setup of the current Gradebook for the course. All gradable items and their point values are displayed here.

Add New Items:
Displays a dashboard with the titles of all content items for the entire course. Selecting one will add it to the Gradebook. Instructors may also “Add Custom Item” or “Edit Existing” items below.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Custom items should only be added if there is not an appropriate corresponding content item. Example: A custom item for “Participation.” Otherwise, all items in the Gradebook should be directly linked to a content item.

Select Gradable Items:
This dashboard allows selection of the gradable items throughout the course.

Assign Point/Weights:
Assign point values to all gradable items. Click Save Changes to complete.

Assigning Points

2. Click Setup Gradebook, and then click the Assign Points/Weights tab.
3. Enter the points possible for each gradable item. Gradebook calculates student percentages based on the Total Points assigned to each gradable content item. If you click Insert Points, you can see the assigned points to the exam content items you created. If you have not created an exam yet in your course, the Insert Points link is not visible.
4. Click Save Changes.

To Apply Weighted Values:

2. Click Setup Gradebook, and then click the Assign Points/Weights.
3. Enter a weighted percentage for each gradable item.
   For example... To make an assignment worth half of a student's grade, enter 50 in the % field for that assignment. Note that you will need to enter possible points for the assignment, too, so the gradebook will know how the student did on the assignment before applying his or her weighted percentage.
4. Click Save Changes. Although it is not required, the sum of your weighted percentages should equal 100%. Assign weighted percentages to the items you want counted toward the final course grade. If the weighting feature is turned on and you do not assign a weight percentage to a gradable item, that item is not counted toward the final course grade (essentially, the item carries a weight of 0%).
**Extra Credit**

Select this to award extra credit that is used to weight an activity outside of the grading structure of assigned content. The Gradebook then includes these points in its calculation of the final grade, but not the total points.

**Exclude from Course Grade**

Exclude items from the course grade when you want to provide a grade for the assignment but *not* include the grade in the final course grade. This feature is excellent for practice assignments you want to grade but not count.

**Rubrics:**

Outline the expectations and grading criteria for an assignment with a rubric. Rubrics contain point levels for quality and quantity criteria within an assignment grade. Once a rubric is developed, it can be assigned across multiple content items. Example: A discussion Rubric can be applied to all discussions throughout a course.

**Create a Rubric:**

1. Click the “+ Assign Rubric” button next to the desired content item.
2. Click the “+ Add a new rubric” button.
3. Name the Rubric and click “Add as new rubric.”
4. Fill in the Description, Criterion, Criterion Description and assign point Levels for each Criterion and click Save when complete.

**Preferences:**

Settings for use of points, weights and scales for grading.

- **Use points and calculations** – (default: ON) Assigns points to content items; alternatively, the content items would be graded by participation.
- **Use weighted calculations** – (default: OFF) Option to assign weights to individual assignments. Example: A small assignment would be graded using 100 points, but only be given a weight of 5% of the final 1000 point total for the course.
- **Show Item Summary View** – (default: ON) Item Summary is available in the initial Gradebook View and it will group similar items together based on type.
Grading
Assignments and Quizzes are NOT created in the Gradebook. Gradable items appear in the Gradebook when a corresponding content item has been created in a Weekly Unit. The gradable content items are:

- Assignments with a Dropbox (Text/Multimedia, Microsoft Office Document or Web Content Upload)
- Threaded Discussions
- Exam/Quiz

Efficient Workflow
Instructors can grade all current submission for any content item by navigating in the Gradebook View (or the Dropbox, for assignment submissions) by clicking on the title (see red area below) of the content item. (Below: we see Week 3 examples of an exam, dropbox proposal and discussion response.)

In the next view, click one student name to reveal the grading panel:

When finished with reviewing a submission, enter the **Numeric** grade and click the **Comment** button to include comments for the student to see. Click the **Save** button.

**IMPORTANT TIP:** Without closing this panel, click the arrows next to the student name (see above) to move to the next student submission.