Instructions for Creating Weighted Grades in Blackboard

Objective:

1. Calculate a weighted grade with two basic components: Three of four tests eliminating the lowest and a separate writing assignment.

Solution:

1. In Blackboard (BB) Grade Center open the "category" choice in the Grade Center Management Column (3rd from the left). Create a category, e.g. drop lowest of T1-T4.
2. Then click "Add Calculated Column" and create a weighted column. Choose a recognizable title, e.g. "Weighted % Final Grade."
3. In the primary display entry box choose "Percentage."
4. Select from the list of columns and categories the items you desire to weight. In this example they are: the category "drop lowest of T1-T4" and the writing assignment grade column
5. Assign the weight to each highlighted category one at a time. In this case I assigned 75% to the category and 25% to the writing assignment grade column.
6. Click on the individual category components: T1, T2, T3, and T4 and verify that the category box contains the category created which is designed to drop the lowest grade, here, "drop the lowest of T1-T4." If you do not do this the calculations will not be computed simply from the category creation.
7. The result is a weighted grade in the Weighted % Final Grade column assigning a 75% weight to the highest of three tests and a 25% weight to the writing assignment.
8. If you wish to input a letter grade create a letter grade column and make sure to se the total points at 100. If you set the total points at 0, the logical choice for a letter grade, a number, not a letter grade will be computed.

Comparison to Microsoft Excel:

This result can be verified and also accomplished in Microsoft Excel with the following procedure:

1. Create individual cells for the student scores in T1, T2, T3, and T4 and the writing assignment (WA)
2. Create a cell that yields the minimum of T1-T4 =Min(T1:T4)
3. Create a cell that adds T1-T4 =Sum(T1,T2,T3,T4)
4. Subtract 2 from 3 =(cell3-cell2) yields the total of the three highest scores
5. Create a cell that yields the weighted total of 4 and WA. For example, say each test is worth a total of 100 points for a maximum of 300 and WA is graded on a 50 point scale. Hence the formula is: =((x/300*(0.75)+y/50*(0.25))

Follow up note: Excel, but not Blackboard has the capability to compute an arithmetical average (total points/maximum possible). Some faculty may wish to consider this alternative