## Experiences with Lab Notebooks in Blackboard 9.1: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

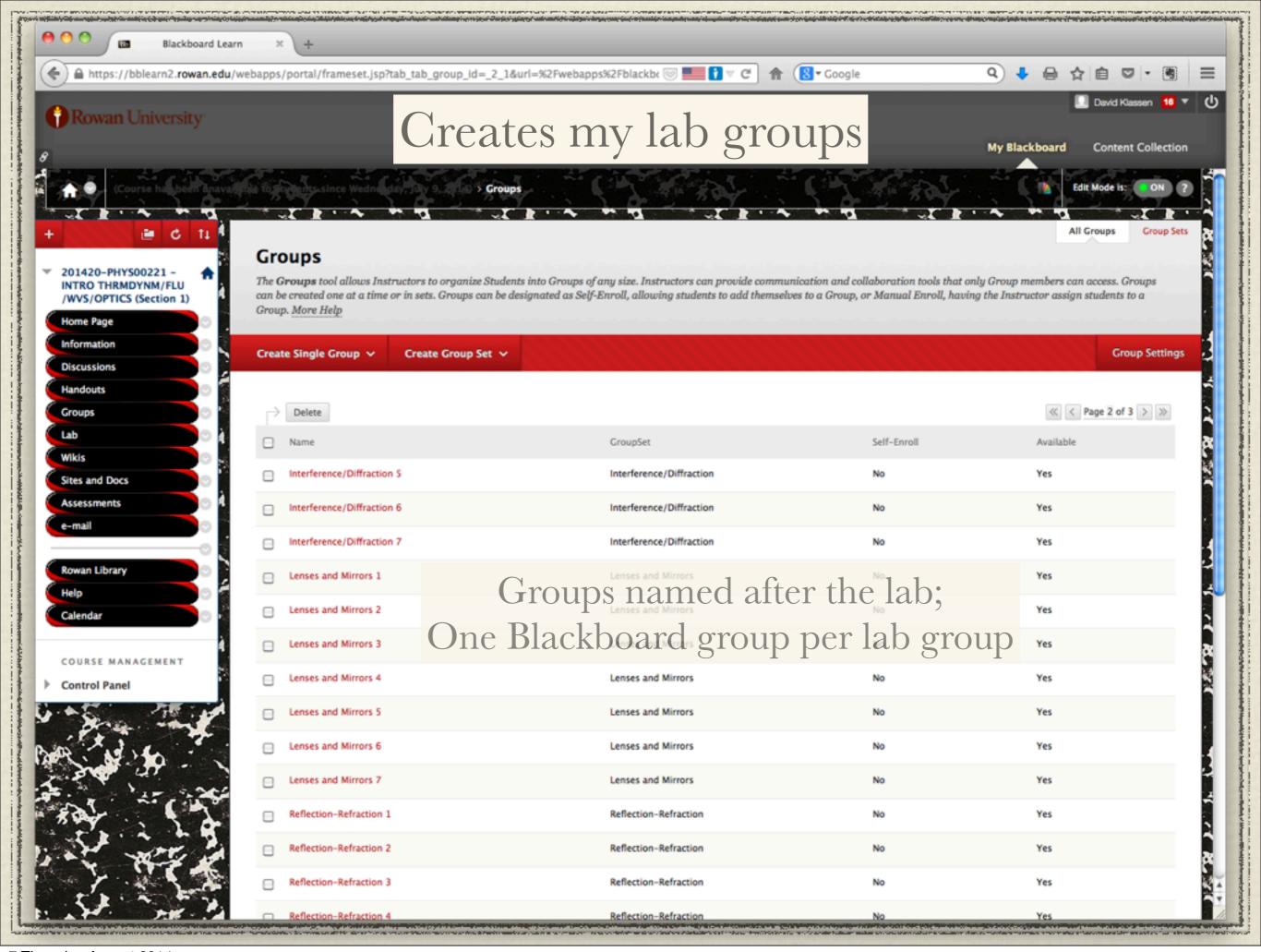
- 91h

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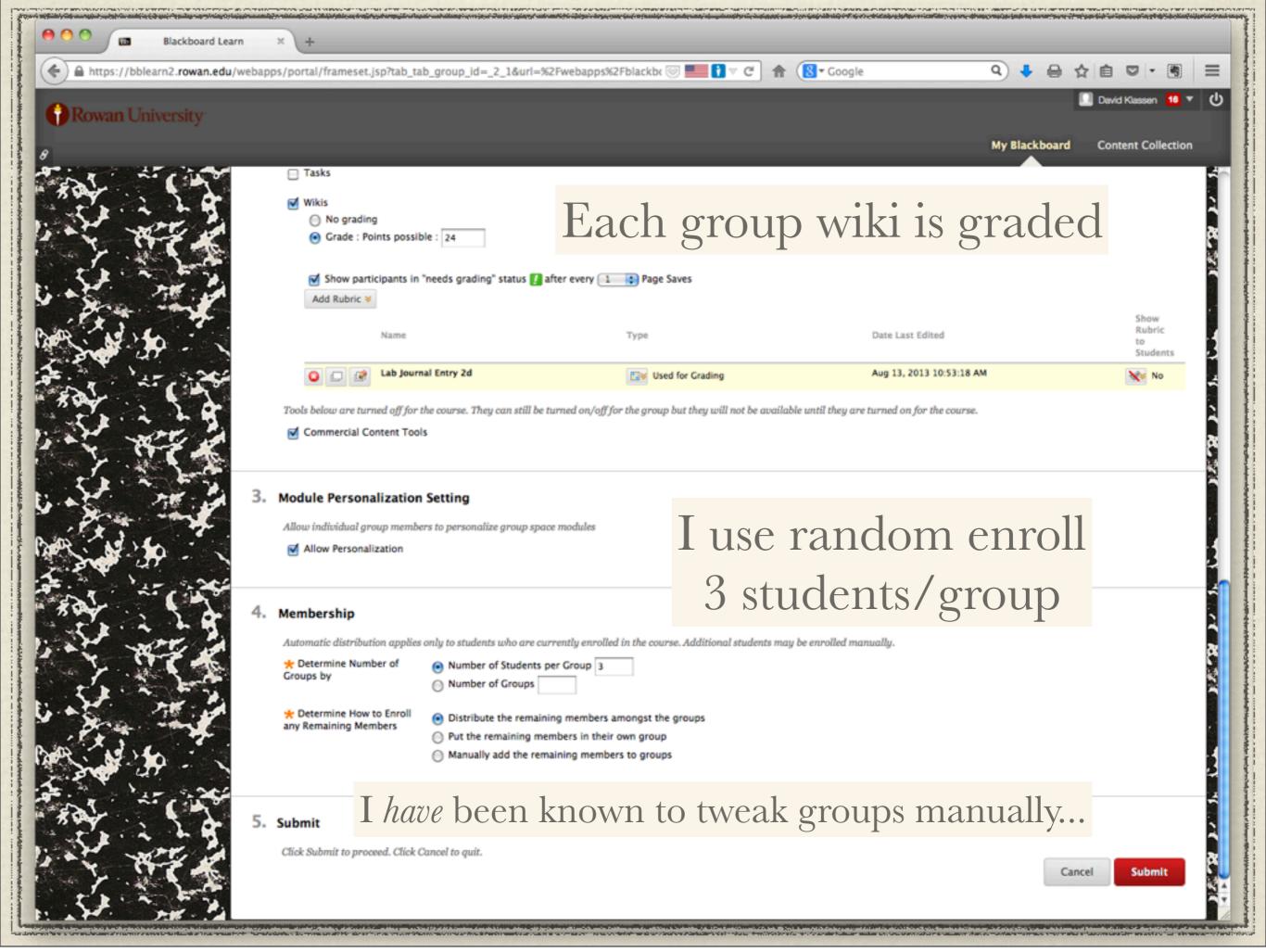
## BlackBoard 9.1

- Why?
  - \* Because it's what we have on campus
  - So I'm really curious what others are using!)
- \* Has "group" capability and "group tools"
  - \* Use Wiki for lab notebook
  - BlackBoard also has Journals and Blogs...
    - ❖ But they lack tracking features of Wikis



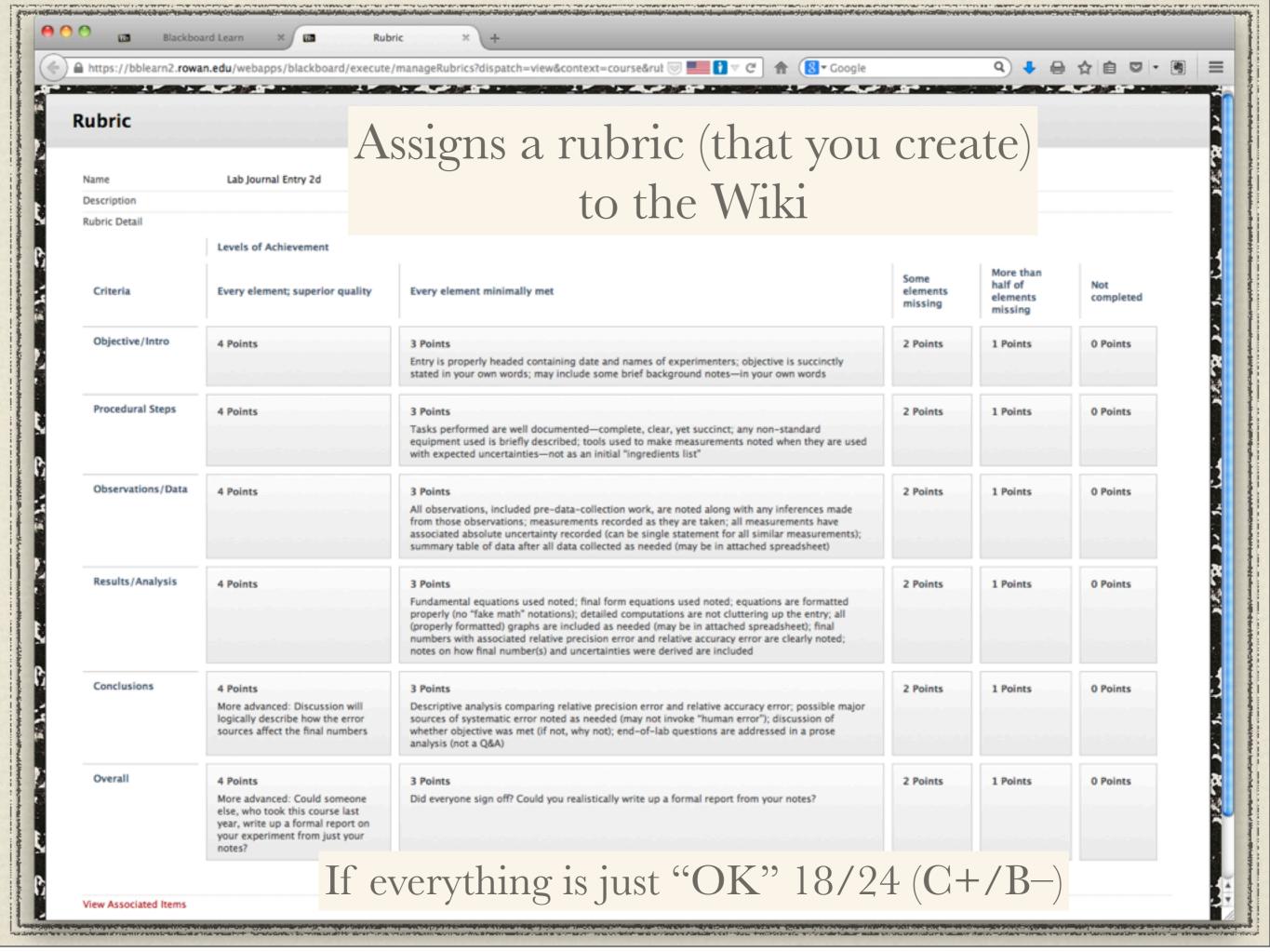


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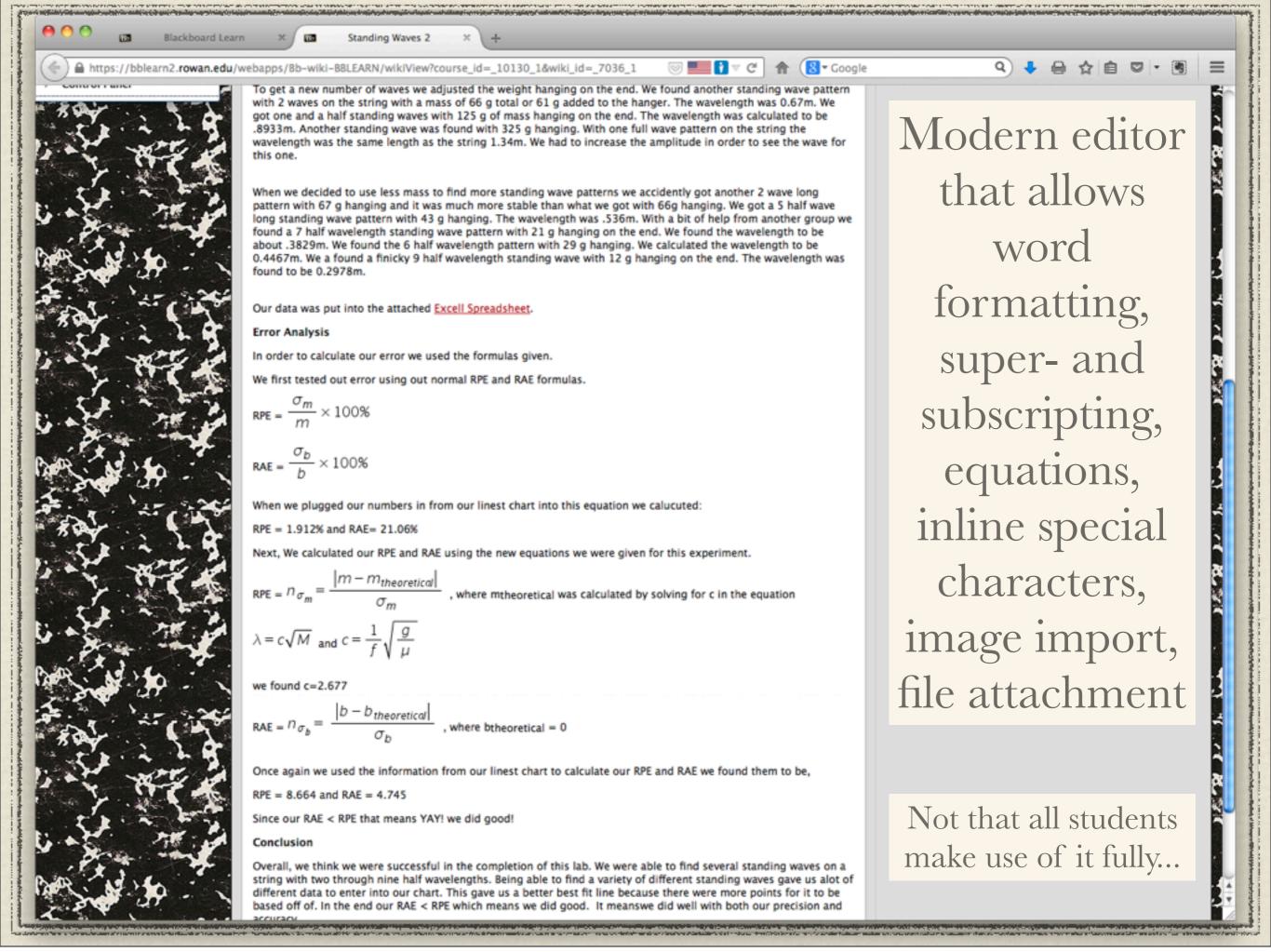


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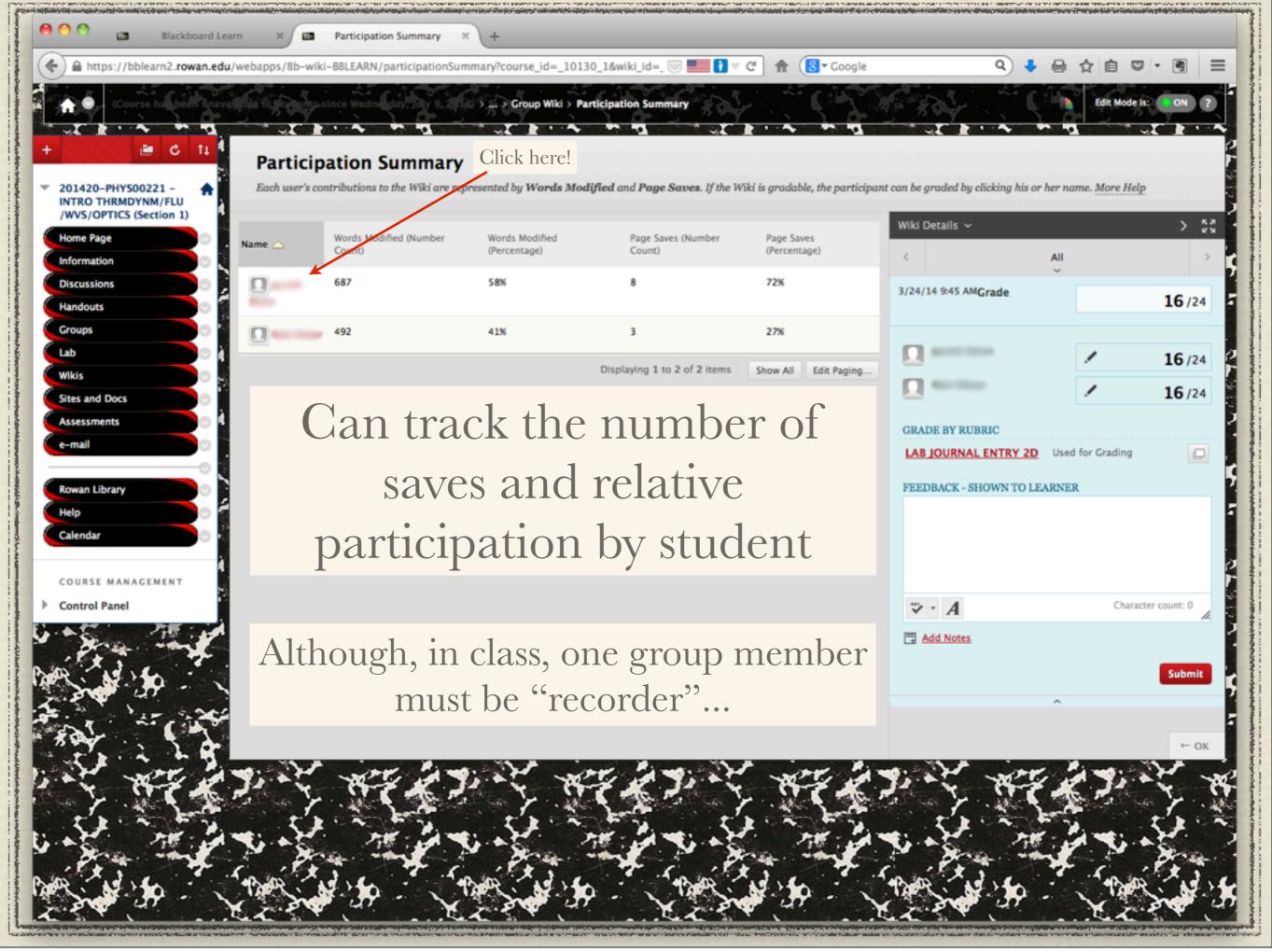
Can move students in/out of groups quickly. I make them the night before and have had to shuffle in class due to absences; really easy! Also tweaked if I know there are other "conflict issues" between students.



Of course, I can always normalize course grades at the end of the semester if I feel my overall scoring has been too harsh

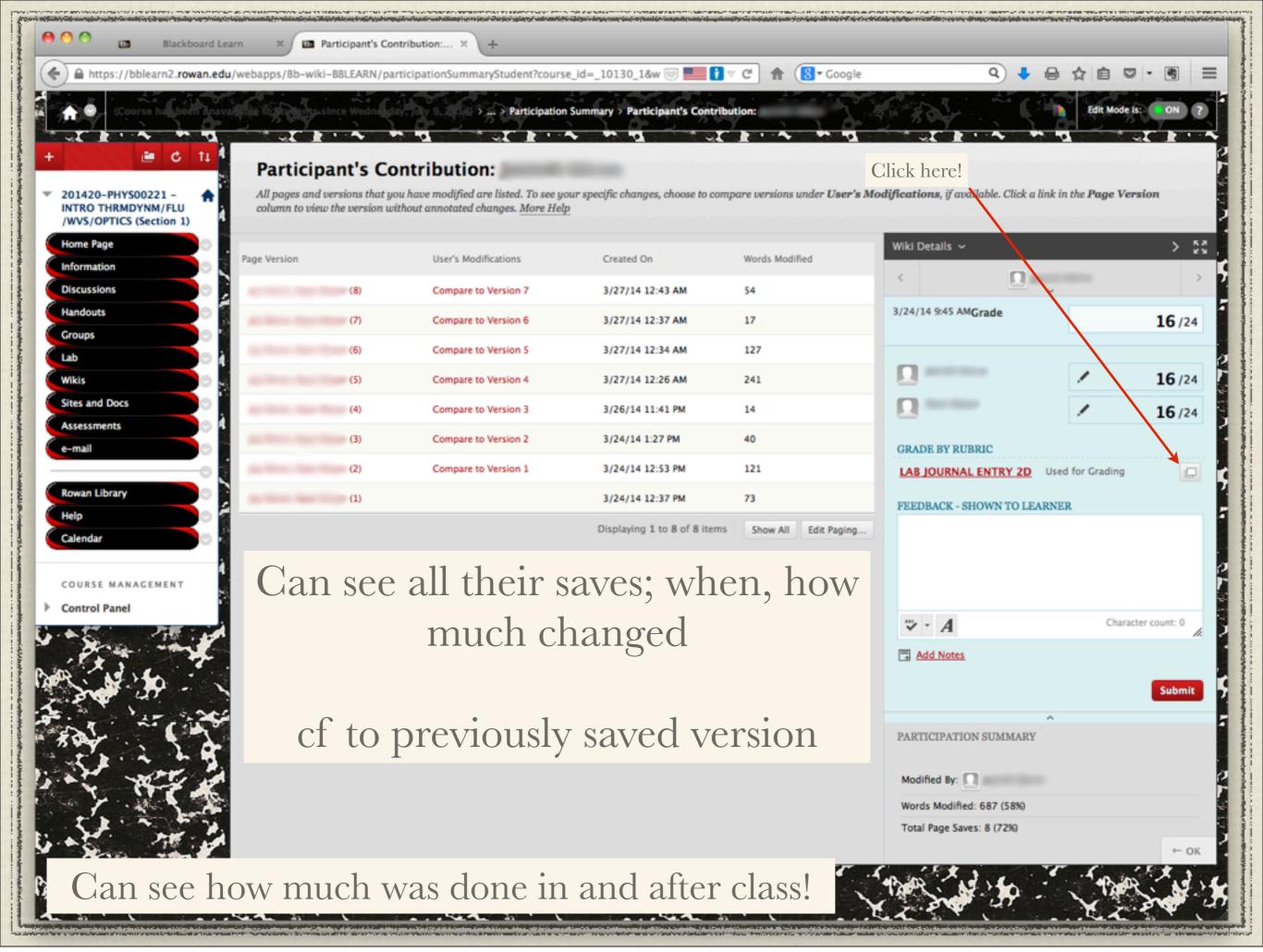


I look at each entry as they are working to point out how to get equations and characters

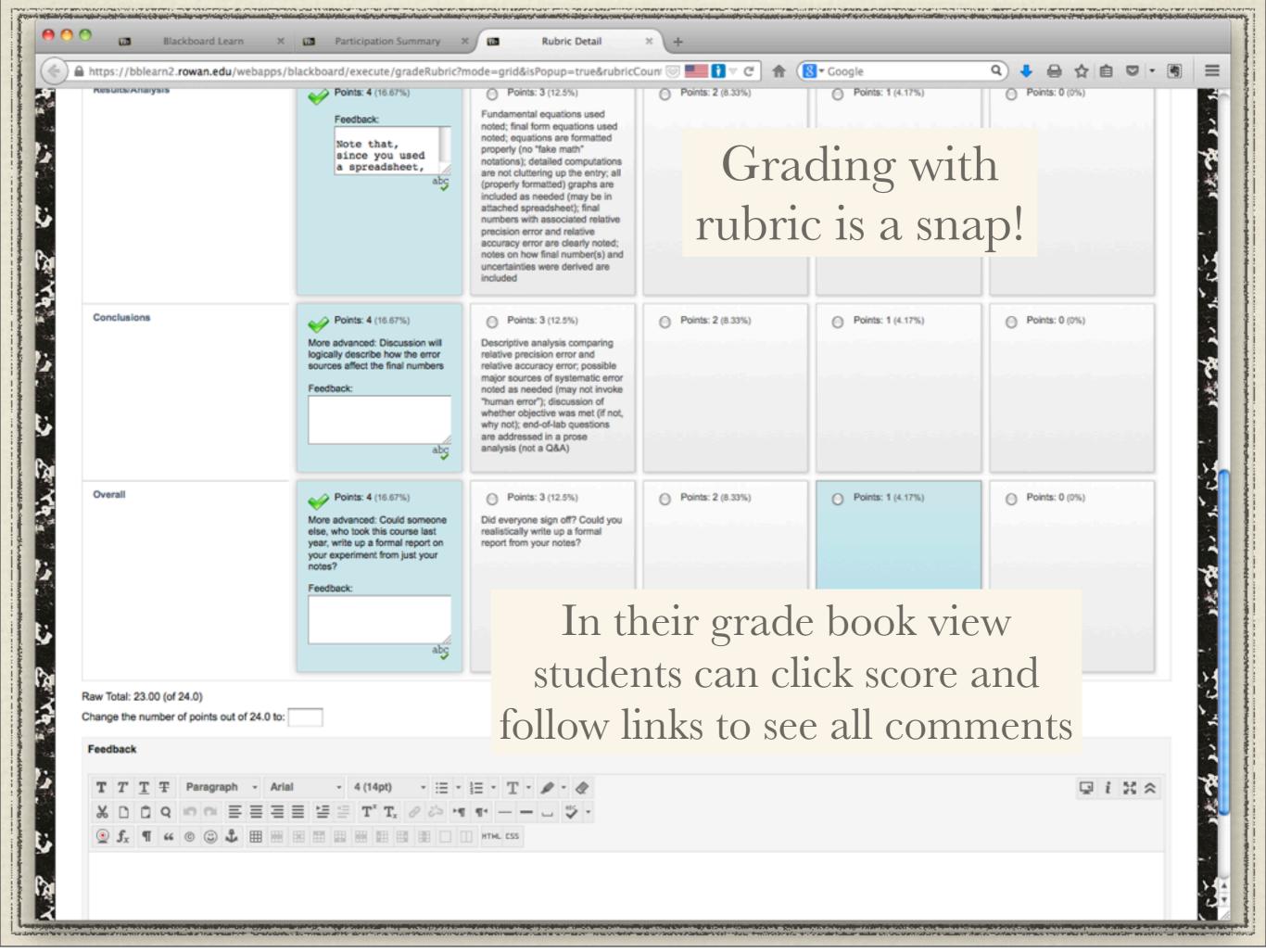


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...so this means one can't really use these values as a measure of actual contribution. Plus, those who are not doing the recording are the ones getting the data. There has been some discontent voiced by "recorders" who feel disconnected from the experiment so in future I'll be encouraging trading off the duties, but without changing whose logged in.



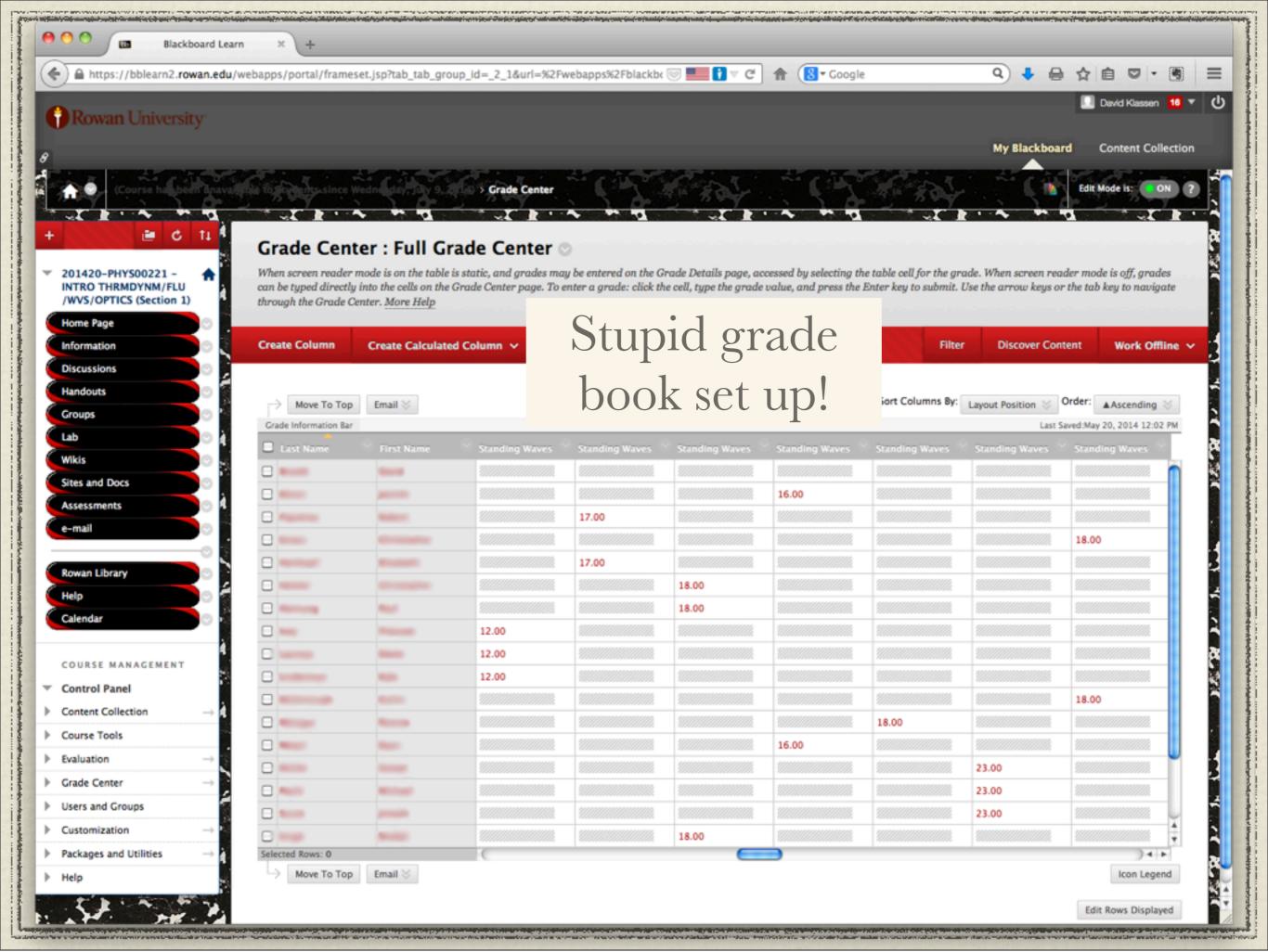
I tell them, since it's a notebook, 90% of it should be done before they leave class; need to be more intentional about checking that before letting students go



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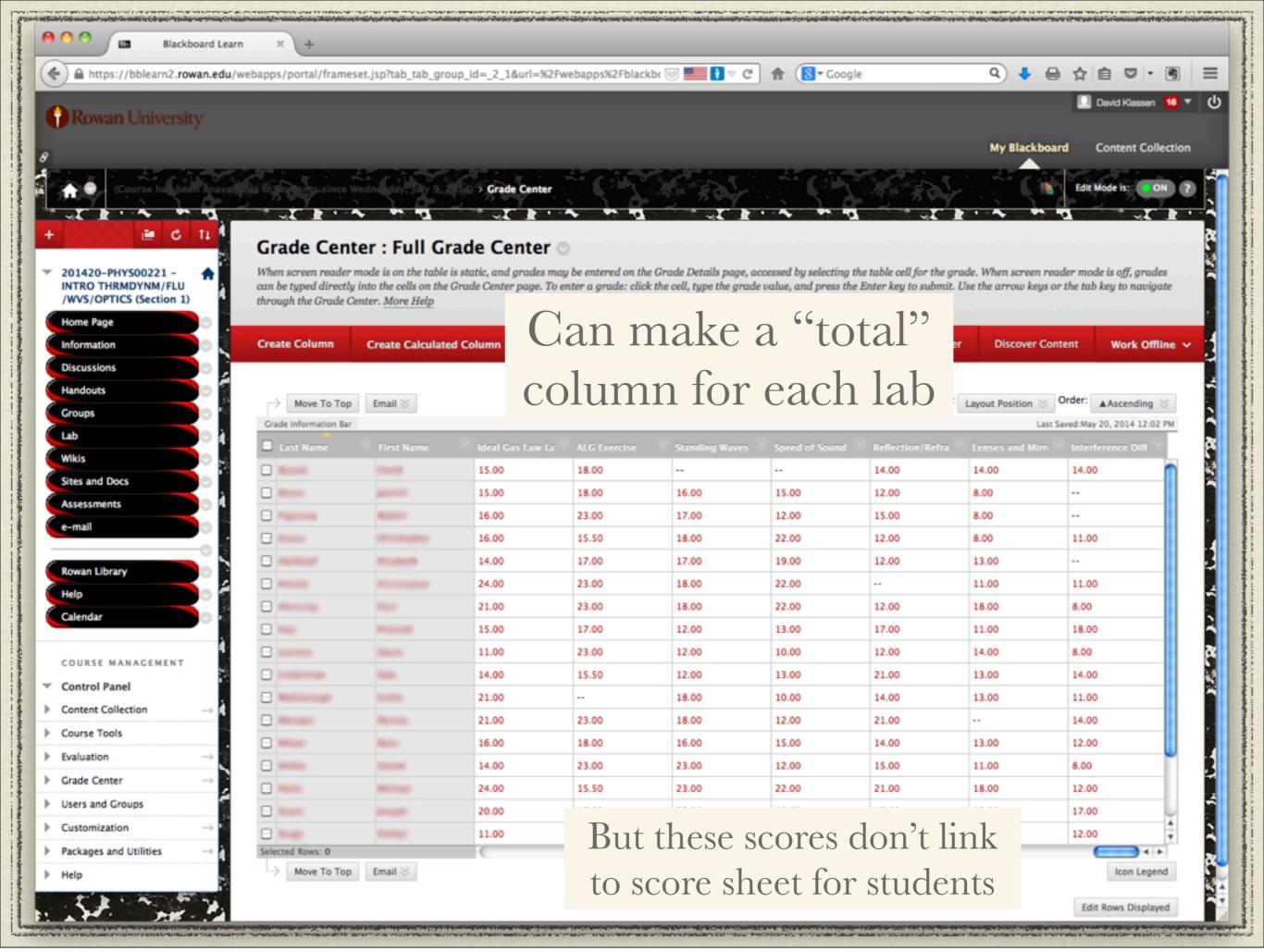
Rubric also prevents me from my bad habit of using .5 marks; must score in integers or make a wider ranged rubric.





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With 10 labs/semester, 7 groups per lab, grade book will have 70, very sparsely populated, grade columns, but...



And once you have the totals, can hide the 70 other columns. But really, you can't...

And if you use these for automatic grade creation, the max score is 7\*24! Still trying to figure that one out; they really need a "max" or "boolean or" or a total that doesn't total the max...



- \* Pulls one student out of experiment to be recorder
  - \* Encourage rotating that during lab?
- \* While students can click scores for comments
  - \* The don't... Keep seeing same issues
  - Or they don't know they can that?
- \* Are in "report" mode, not "notebook" mode
  - \* Because they are typing it up?
- Tendency to skip taking procedural notes and focus only on getting all the data
  - \* "Will fill that in later"

- Only have one notebook per group
  - Less to grade!
- \* Student stress: grade depends on recorder doing good job so not graded on just "their work"
  - \* Have approval "check points" by me/group?
  - Individual objective/results submissions?
- Slower for students
  - \* Want to "take notes" on paper, then "write it up nicely on the Wiki"—i.e. not getting the concept
  - \* Text entry, with formatting, slower than pen/paper

- Technology not always reliable
  - Had campus-wide network outage
  - Had BlackBoard server go down
- \* Need to remind students of "Gamer's Mantra": Save early, save often!
- Some student's don't like the interface
  - Let them use word processor for notes
  - But must cut/paste into Wiki before leaving!
- \* If data/calculations done in spreadsheet, I have to download and reference; can't comment and they usually don't header/annotate well

## Overall Assessment

- \* The Good outweighs The Bad
- \* The Ugly can mostly be mitigated with a bit of work and monitoring
- \* Keep using, keep trying to improve
  - Will provide feedback to BlackBoard