We’re piloting an automated attendance management system in a few classrooms this semester, which lets students check in to class using a mobile app or their student ID. When students check in, their attendance is recorded in a new Blackboard tool called ODU Attendance, allowing you to integrate attendance data with your course and gradebook. The data remains in Blackboard for as long as the course is there.

**Accessing the tool in Blackboard**
To access the attendance tool, go to **Tools > ODU Attendance - Pilot group only**. (Students can view their own attendance data from the same tool.)

**Settings**
The Attendance Tool is activated by default, but you may want to update the settings for your classes. You can choose what percentage of the class must be attended before a student is considered tardy or absent, how grades are calculated or how the grades are added to the grade center.

These settings apply to all students, throughout the duration of the semester. If you make changes after the course starts, all student attendance data will be recalculated based on the new settings. You should adjust settings early (before classes start), and don’t make changes unless absolutely necessary.

- To access the tool’s grade settings click on the **Course Settings** button at the top:
Time to Attendance
This section is used to calculate the amount of time the student must be present in the class to be considered present or tardy/late. These settings apply to all the students in the class for the duration of the course.

- Enter the percentage of class that must be attended for a student to be marked present or tardy/late. The percentage is calculated based on the scheduled duration of the class.

For example, let’s look at a 50-minute class that meets from 8:00 to 8:50. Students who check in by 8:05 will have attended 90% of the class (or at least 45 minutes) and be considered present. Students who check in between 8:05 and 8:30 will have attended at least 60% of the class and be considered tardy. Students who check in after 8:30 and attend less than 60% of the class would be considered absent.
Grade Equivalents of Attendance

You can also adjust the grade threshold and the grade mapping. This determines the grade a student will get for being present, tardy or absent. These settings apply to all the students in the class for the duration of the course.

- Enter the percentage of the grade that will be given if a student is marked present or tardy/late. You also have options for if a student is excused, class is cancelled or if the University is closed.
Syncing to the Gradebook

The attendance tool will create grade center columns based on your selections. Once in the gradbook, the attendance columns can be used the same way as any other grade column (weight totals, averages, etc.).

- In Course Settings, scroll down to the gradebook syncing options and select the option you would like.

![Course Settings](image)

- After saving the settings, it will take a few moments to transfer information from the attendance tool to the grade center. Once the column is in the grade center, you can edit it as you would any other column. You can also assign a point value to the attendance column if you would like.

![Grade Information Bar](image)
Marking students
You can update student attendance manually, if necessary.

- Click in the session column of the student you wish to update. If a field shows – **mark**, no data has been entered. Once the class session is over, if the student has not checked in, they will be marked absent.

You can manually mark a student as:
- Present
- Late
- Absent
- Excused
- Clear, to remove the mark

You can also update all students’ attendance by updating the session column.

- Click the date of the meeting (meeting header) at the top row of the student attendance list.

Mark Students:
- Mark All Present
- Mark All Absent
- Mark All Late
- Mark All Excused
- Mark All School Closed
- Mark Cancelled

Mark Meeting:
- Clear All Manual Attendance
- Delete Meeting
- Hide Meeting from Students
Create meetings

You can create additional meetings if there are sessions that fall outside your normal class times.

- To create meetings, click the button **Add Meeting**.

![Add Meeting Button](image)

- Enter the meeting's start and end date/time.

![Select Start and End Time](image)

- The new meeting will show up in the list of available sessions.

![Meeting in List](image)