Online Assessments & Exams

When considering assessment options, start by thinking about the learning goals. There are many effective assessment methods that can be used in an online environment to demonstrate that learning goals have been met. Don't limit yourself to relying on what you've used in your traditional classes. Be creative and have fun! (Fun helps increase long-term retention!)

REIMAGINE ASSESSMENTS

Use ongoing assessments, projects, discussions, analysis to determine the final grade (many form options: text, video, audio)

View more

UNPROCTORED EXAMS

There are a spectrum of options for unproctored exams--timed, untimed, open book, closed book-- review the diagram for tips.

View more

REMOTE PROCTORED EXAM

While the options are limited, there are a few ways in which this can be done.

View more

Content Mastery:

Weekly Quizzes
A RATIONALE FOR REPLACING HIGH STAKES EXAMS WITH MULTIPLE-ATTEMPT LOW-STAKES QUIZZES
credit: Natalie Parker, Director of CETL and Distance Education, Texas Wesleyan University

Why It Works: The "testing effect"
Eric Christensen, an award-winning physics and astronomy professor who spoke to Texas Wesleyan University faculty in Spring 2016, discussed a number of strategies he uses in online classes to help students learn more deeply. One of his strategies is to provide a randomized quiz that covers information in the current chapter. The quiz is available for the duration of the week, and students may take the quiz as many times as they wish.

Recommended quiz settings include:
- Pulling quiz questions from a pool to discourage students from memorizing the answer pattern
- Randomizing question order and answer order
- Applying a time limit to the quiz that precludes students from looking up most of the answers before the time runs out (the quizzes are open book, but the time limit forces students to be familiar with the material)
- Leaving the quiz open to students for a finite period of time (48 hours, one week, the duration of the unit)
- An unlimited number of attempts on the quiz
- You can choose to record grades or to provide the quizzes as ungraded supplemental materials.

Results of Taking Repeatable Online Quizzes

Using quizzes as formative assessment can have positive effects on student achievement. For example, in Jonathan Kibble's research, published in 2011, 88% of students took the quizzes; those students scored an average of 13% higher on summative exams than students who did not take the quizzes. Likewise, students who opted not to take the quizzes tended to perform poorly.

A Second Study

After conducting initial research to investigate the association between taking the quizzes and scores on summative exams, Kibble (2011) arranged a second study to determine if students could be persuaded to take online quizzes without a grade incentive. The strategy that produced the best results includes the following steps:

- Orientation lecture: Explain the "nature and purpose of formative assessment" Not sure what these results are: 1) more students took the quizzes, or that the exam scores were better for those student who took the quizzes and share "historical data correlating quiz scores with examination scores and also emphasizing that non-participation in quizzes may be linked to poor outcomes" (p. 95)
- Regular in-class reminders (or online announcements) to take the quizzes (p. 95)
- Online or in-class discussion about quiz questions "to improve feedback and to keep the quizzes visible" (p. 95)

References

Khanna, M. (2015). Ungraded Pop Quizzes: Test-Enhance Learning Without All the Anxiety. Teaching of Psychology. 42(2): pp. 174-178.

Kibble, J. (2011). Voluntary Participation in Online Formative Quizzes is a Sensitive Predictor of Student Success. Advances in Physiology Education. 35(1): pp. 95-96.

Online Discussions

Graded Weekly Online Discussions

What to ask:

- Questions that require original thought, synthesizing of ideas, demonstrate comprehension of a concept
- Something that doesn't have a direct answer in their text book or video lectures
- Mix it up—ask for text or video answers (video could be a webcam answer, or it could be recording something outside, a task they need to compete a demo etc.)
- Have them do a web search and post sites, images or videos to support their answer
- The more fun and engaging it is, the more students will be excited to participate, and therefore learn!

Canvas Settings:

- Users must post before seeing replies
- Graded
  - Points
  - Due Date
  - You could create an Assignment Group for discussions and assign x% toward the final grade. If this is a major part of their final grade, 20%-30% would be appropriate.

How to Grade:

- Establish clear guidelines about quality and quantity.
- A grading rubric is a great tool that helps you quickly and fairly evaluate the post each week, and it communicates to the students what you are looking for
- See Purdue's Sample Discussion Board Rubric for tips and ideas

Multiple short answer/essay assignments

This will allow you to monitor their progress and give frequent feedback. Long-term retention is strengthened when students make mistakes and then correct them. This type of assignment gives students plenty of room to try out new approaches and demonstrate growth.

Ideas:

- Ask for **weekly summaries of big ideas**
  - Give them options on how they can respond - text, audio, video, on-going blog or website
- Assign **a few well-designed problems to work out and ask students to include their thought process** (quality over quantity – this is good for you AND good for them!)
  - If it needs to be worked out on paper, they can take a picture and submit that to an Assignment, Quiz or Discussion
- Mix it up: have them **collaborate with partners or in small groups**
- Assignments in Canvas can connect to the Turnitin anti-plagiarism tool to check student work

Skill Development

Application Project

- Think about the skill students are developing: Writing, Calculating, Speaking, Communicating, Persuasion etc.
- How is this applied in a real-life situation?
- Create a project where students submit original work that demonstrates mastery of this skill(s).
- For soft skills like communication and leadership, consider using a case study or scenario-based questions.

Peer Review Project

Assignments where one or more fellow students do the initial evaluation of students' work or collaborate on getting from first to final draft

Group Project

- Skills like teamwork, collaboration, leadership, delegation, communication are often developed in a group setting.
- Students can use Google Apps (Docs, Sheets, Slides, Forms etc.) to collaborate on projects, and you can see their individual contributions.
- Encourage students to chat in real-time using their own Zoom Rooms, Skype, Google Hangout etc.

Portfolio

- Create short assignments that are tightly linked to specific course goals and skill development.
- At the end of the semester, ask students to choose assignments that they have completed to demonstrate competency in each learning goal.
- Encourage them to choose assignments that demonstrate growth (improvement).
- Each item or collection of items should include an explanation as to why they chose it.

Analysis

Create several assignment with different data for students to analyze

- In addition to the answers themselves, ask student to include a rationale. This should be in their own words when it is an independent assignment, supporting independent analysis skills and thought.
- Students can take a picture of written work and submit it with an explanation in the Assignment tool in Canvas.

Have them do it as a group and independently.

- Students can use Google Apps (Docs, Sheets, Slides, Forms etc.) to collaborate on projects, and you can see their individual contributions.
- Encourage students to chat in real-time using their own Zoom Rooms, Skype, Google Hangout etc.

Theory

Online Discussions: synchronous to practice oral skills & responding on the spot, asynchronous to give time for thought & reflection

Synchronous - real-time discussions using Zoom, Skype etc. This could be as a whole group, or students could meet in smaller groups (2-4) and share recordings.

Asynchronous – Ongoing discussion within a specified time period, e.g. a week.

- Discussion in Canvas can be graded: see Purdue's Sample Discussion Board Rubric for tips and ideas
- You can ask students to post before seeing other posts, OR you can ask students to respond to all previous posts in their answer.
- More Discussion Tips

Create a blog for ongoing commentary

- Use ScholarBlogs or other tools like Wix, Weebly, or Blogger.
- Post a theoretical question weekly that students need to consider and defend with reference.
- Encourage students to read their classmate's blogs and post comments and questions.
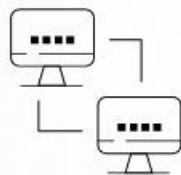
Research paper/project (e.g. video, podcast etc.)

UNPROCTURED EXAM OPTIONS

TIMED

CLOSED BOOK (timed)
- Set up as a Quiz in Canvas
- Set a time limit
  - You can adjust time restrictions for individual students
- Open for a limited amount of time:
  - 12-24 hour window or Scheduled class time
- Use a pool of questions and randomize the answers to reduce ability to work together

OPEN BOOK (timed)
- Set up as a Quiz in Canvas
- Set a time limit
  - You can adjust time restrictions for individual students
- Available for a limited amount of time:
  - 12-24 hour window or scheduled class time
- Be clear about what is allowed or not
  - Working with other students
  - Google searches

CLOSED BOOK

OPEN BOOK

CLOSED BOOK (not timed)
- Set up as a Quiz or Assignment in Canvas
- Set a Due Date in Canvas
- Remind students notes/books/phones etc. are not allowed

OPEN BOOK (not timed)
- Set up as a Quiz or Assignment in Canvas
- Set a Due Date
- Be clear about what is allowed or not
  - Working with other students
  - Google searches
- This will likely take the form of a project more than a standard exam
- Consider having them create a portfolio of their work with a reflection piece for each item the demonstrates a learning goal

NOT TIMED

OPTION A
ZOOM PROCTORING

Hold a Zoom session and give students their final exam during their regular exam or class time.

- Students will sign into a Zoom session and take the exam during that time.
- You can ask them to scan the room before releasing the exam to ensure that they only have what is approved (calculator, notes, scrap paper, etc.)
- They will complete the exam within that time period and you will monitor them remotely via Zoom.
- **Note:** You CANNOT use the Respondus Lockdown Browser tool during a Zoom session

OPTION B
RESPONDUS MONITOR

This is an AI monitoring tool that records students while they are taking their exam and flags potentially concerning behavior for faculty review

- This tool is still being reviewed by Teaching and Learning Technologies for requirements and limitations.
- More information will be released in the coming days.
- This is not an air-tight solution we so advise faculty to strongly consider other assessment options if possible.