

Bentley Teaching and Learning Resources: Transitioning to Exams and Assessments for Online Learning

General Guidelines

- Please consider not giving a mid-term exam during the first week of online classes.
- Consider changing an assessment from an exam to an alternate assignment such as a take home assignment or a group project. This will also bias towards higher grades and alleviate some of the stress and anxiety students have in this uncertain situation.
- When you rework your syllabus and change assignments explain to students why you are doing what you are doing. They will understand and buy into the solution. If possible give students options and discuss in class what concerns or preferences they have and they will be even more vested in the community decisions.
- Keep in mind that no matter what format or technology you use students can take screen shots and/or pictures of your exams and you must assume any online exam will be “out” for future sections of the course.

The remainder of this document has information about (1) online assessments and (2) academic integrity (3) observations about online exams for you to consider. If you have any technical questions please see the tutorial links at the end of the document or contact the ATC if your question is still unanswered. For pedagogical questions please contact Tracy Noga or Suzanne Dove. For academic integrity questions please contact Chris Beneke.

Online Assessments

Types of assessments instructors can design include:

- **Unsupervised assessments:** These assessments are completed independently by all students, without outside monitoring, including “take home” online Blackboard assignments requiring Blackboard submission of files with answers/papers/projects/etc. (individual or group), online Blackboard tests (timed and/or password-protected and/or allow multiple attempts — or not), online activities available from third-party providers of instructional materials (simulations, quizzes, etc.), and other flexible unsupervised assessment types.

As much as possible, please try to incorporate unsupervised assessments into your courses to address the fact that you are not able to physically be in the room with your students.

- These assessments are assumed to be “open book” for all students, but careful assessment design can minimize problems with the open-book format.
 - To preserve academic integrity, instructors can require students to answer specific academic integrity questions as part of the assessment, use Turnitin Assignments, or enable the SafeAssign feature in the Submission Details of a Blackboard Assignment.
- **Supervised assessments:** These are assessments that require monitoring by the instructor or a qualified third party. These tests can be “closed book,” or can allow additional materials (with

supervision). Faculty can use Zoom or Respondus Monitor to assist in supervising the students, but please be aware that neither option is as fool-proof as physically proctoring a student.

- If you use Zoom while the students are working on the test, you can ask students to keep webcams and mics on. You will not be able to see their screens, but you will have a sense of if there are any conversations or other distractions in the student’s environment.
- Respondus Monitor is an automated video monitoring service that can be used on Blackboard Tests that have LockDown browser enabled. This service is not a live proctoring service but does utilize students’ webcams to detect and notify faculty of any abnormalities that may have occurred during the test. To use Respondus Monitor, your exam must be converted to a Blackboard Test and the students cannot make use of external files or applications outside the Blackboard test. If you enable LockDown browser with or without Monitor, you cannot use Zoom to monitor your students.
- The online assessments should be designed as Blackboard tests. Using non-Bb online exams may also be possible (through third-party providers) – contact ATC for guidance.
- Contact ATC for details (Blackboard tests – Joe Nezu; ProctorU – MJ Sanz).

Test Format

If you choose to distribute a Microsoft Word or Excel attachment and ask students to complete and send it back to you, keep in mind that the attachment will live in their email account and/or on their hard drive. That will make it very easy for students to distribute the attachment to other students, so you will not be able to re-use the exam contents in subsequent sections or in future courses.

Your other option is to create a Blackboard Test.

Pros and Cons of Blackboard Tests

Pros	Cons
Blackboard provides a centralized location for all components of the course including course documents and course tests, quizzes and surveys.	Blackboard tests must be set up prior to the deployment or activation of the test. Preparing the test from other sources such as Word, requires the instructor to copy the questions and answers.
Blackboard tests using closed-ended questions such as multiple choice, multiple response, true and false can be assigned a value and given a grade. These grades will display in Blackboard’s Grade Center.	If you enable LockDown browser with or without Monitor, you will not see the students through Zoom. Also, the students will need to install LockDown browser in advance and should take a short practice quiz beforehand to make sure everything is working.
Blackboard tests using open-ended questions such as fill-in the blank, essay questions can be administered within Blackboard and do not need to be administered using paper, email or other documents. The results of the tests will reside in Blackboard.	The test must be ‘turned on’ or made available prior to the class session. (This is also a pro because the test would not be visible prior to the set date).

If instructors teach more than one section of the same course, they can import the identical quiz or test into another section. Thereafter, they can rearrange the questions if desired.	
Instructors can be online with Zoom to answer questions if needed. One exam can allow for additional time for students.	
Blackboard will automatically grade certain question types such as multiple-choice and true-false questions.	
Students can view their grades in Blackboard.	

Links to tutorials:

[Create Blackboard Tests](#)

[Respondus LockDown Browser and Monitor](#)

[Use Turnitin to Detect Plagiarism](#)

Academic Integrity Online @ Bentley University

Online instruction and assessment pose a number of academic integrity challenges. Faculty cannot see what all students are doing on their computers and monitoring non-computer activity is difficult. To address these concerns, the Office of Academic Integrity recommends that faculty consider the following general guidelines:

1. Remind students of [Bentley's Honor Code](#), the value of trust and honest work, and the penalties (assignment failure, course failure, suspension, etc.) resulting from infractions. Emphasize the value of what they are learning.
2. Clearly communicate expectations regarding device use, collaboration, online sources, etc.
3. Have students sign Honor statements and submit them with their exam and paper assignments. Examples used by Bentley faculty can be found [here](#).
4. Use frequent, iterative, and distinctive assignments that require students to demonstrate higher order understanding and apply concepts rather than information that can be easily Googled. To that end:
 - a. Assign papers and projects and have students submit them via [Turnitin](#).
 - b. Consider increasing the credit given to students for class participation (virtually, of course, via Blackboard discussion boards or Zoom meetings) or Zoom presentations.
 - c. Whenever possible, give tests that are open book, open note, and open internet.

Some specifics about "closed book" quizzes and exams:

For "closed book" exams, which restrict access to outside sources and notes, you will have two options:

- You can use the [Respondus Monitor](#) service provided by Bentley's Academic Technology Center, which adds web cam capability to the Respondus Lockdown Browser. Have students complete a low-stakes or no-credit practice test first to make sure they know how use it.

- If *not* using Respondus Monitor, you might consider giving your exam in real time via Zoom while carefully monitoring student activity as you would in a normal classroom situation.
 - In addition, you can record the exam in Gallery view with the Zoom record tool. To do this, select “Record the meeting automatically on the local computer” when setting up the exam time.
 - You may also want to ask students to position their webcams so that their entire work area is visible and it’s clear that no technology or study materials are being accessed. You may need to ask students to turn the camera on the wall in front of them to ensure nothing has been posted there either.

Other suggestions for “closed book” quizzes and exams:

- Maintain a **stringent time limit** (with exceptions for students with accommodations) to minimize cheating opportunities. This is especially important for multiple choice exams given on Blackboard.
- When it comes to Blackboard quizzes and exams, please distribute **multiple versions of the same exam and randomize questions and answers**. Blackboard can do this for you.
- When giving a quiz or exam on Blackboard, **present questions one-at-a-time**. Do not permit students to re-take any portion of the exam or to backtrack to earlier questions. Students should bring any connection or hardware concerns to your attention *before* the exam begins.
- If you must administer a written exam, consider having students take a time-stamped photograph of themselves (any smartphone will have this capability) with a copy of their problem sheet showing their current progress during the exam period. You should be able to clearly see their handwriting on their answer sheet. Then, have students upload those photos to a OneDrive or Blackboard folder that you can access along with photos of the exam responses themselves.
- Remember that online testing isn’t foolproof. A student might still take screenshots or photos of exam questions.

Most importantly, treat your students as honest adults who value what they are learning. They may surprise you.

Good luck, and don’t hesitate to contact Karen Hovsepian and Chris Beneke in the Academic Integrity office (GA_AcademicIntegrity@Bentley.edu) if you have any questions or concerns.

Observation on Online Assessments

Frank Dooley, Senior Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning at Purdue University, shared the following guidance with members of the Reinvention Collaborative.

Exams pose a particular challenge in a situation where everyone is on their own. The online format does not allow instructors the same ability to proctor exams as they have in class. In order to minimize

incidents of academic integrity violations for online exams while still ensuring they accurately reflect student learning, consider the following principles in creating and modifying exams:

- Allowing exams to be open-book/source: Assume students will use resources while taking an exam, and even encourage them to do so. Try to ask questions that probe deeper levels of knowledge and understanding, enabling students to apply, assess, and evaluate concepts and facts in meaningful ways. Encourage students to share and cite where they get information from and what resources they use.
- Encourage students to collaborate/share questions and ideas: Students will likely work together when they are stuck or confused. You can encourage working in small teams and ask them to include who they work with and in what ways.
- Focus on solving problems while showing work and explanations: In many cases, students may get the same answer, but showing their work reveals meaningful differences in understanding. Sometimes there may only be a few ways to show work, so you may ask for brief prose explanations, or have students record a video of them talking through the process to solve a question.
- Use question pools: If you have short-answer or multiple-choice questions, create pools in your LMS so that students receive different sets of questions (this can also be done with essays and more complex questions).
- Use student-generated questions with explanations: Instead of trying to ensure everyone answers your limited number of questions on their own, ask every student to create their own question with an explanation of how it would assess a certain topic or skill in a meaningful way. You can also assign students to answer each other's questions and state whether those questions actually do assess these skills in appropriate ways.
- Ensure clarity in questions and prompts: Especially if your test is timed, your students may not have a chance to ask a question and get a response. It is vital that questions and prompts are clear to novices so your assessment measures what you want it to. Even if not timed, you do not want to be spending your limited time answering clarifying questions.
- Consider question formats leading to essays, videos, pictures, and other personal responses: If your class lends itself to it, having students express their learning through essays, videos, pictures, or other personalized forms of writing/speaking/communicating means that everyone needs to create their own. You can also have students post their responses for each other and assess each other's work through peer grading. Rubrics can help guide students as they develop such work, give each other feedback, and, of course, allow your teaching assistants and you a consistent method of assessment.
- Respect your own time: Most of these ideas take time to grade. Try to determine what is feasible in your situation, and use feedback-based or hand-grading intensive assessments sparingly. Also consider how much feedback students actually need/will use. Many times feedback can be created for the whole group based on common challenges or problems, as opposed to individual responses.