

Proctored Exam Alternatives

Given the challenges currently facing campuses and university testing centers, and the fact that many students may be trying to take proctored online exams at home--where they may not have access to the necessary technology, high-speed internet, and interruption-free space-- faculty may want to consider alternatives to proctored exams.

Additionally and per SACSCOC, faculty cannot expect students to pay any additional costs associated with identity verification that were clearly not communicated at the initial time of registration for the class. While each institution will need to decide how they wish to handle additional requests and funding for online proctoring, faculty may want to minimize reliance on proctored examinations for assessment and instead rely on multiple lower-stakes assessments throughout the term. In that spirit, here are some alternatives to proctored exams that faculty may find useful to assess their students' knowledge of the course objectives. Faculty can also reach out to their local campus *Center for Teaching Learning* for additional suggestions and help.

Consider using the effective **inoculation** approach to reduce incidences of academic dishonesty. Require students to include a statement in their essay or paper (or answer the first question on an exam), such as, "By initialing in the box/line below, I acknowledge and accept all policies set forth by my institution regarding academic honesty and confirm that I have followed all such policies."

Essays and papers

Devise essay questions that assess student's knowledge of the course objectives. These questions can be shared as timed essay exams or as an assignment that is emailed or submitted via the learning management system. Below are a few ideas and some alternatives to get you started.

- **Executive Summary:** require students to provide a synthesis and summary of the chapters or to provide essential information to a possible client regarding course materials.
- **Create an infographic or Poster Session:** have students apply what they've learned. This could be an option for a paper or other report.
- **Real-life application questions:** Ask students to write an OpEd essay on an issue. For upper-level courses, they could write a conference proposal or mini-grant request.

- **Road Trip:** have students select and defend five locations that someone should visit so that they could form an understanding of the course material. Excellent for history, literature, and social science courses.

Alternatives to the Paper

If you want to see your students share the information, ask them to present it in a live webinar, record and share it, or tell you about what they've learned via a telephone conversation.

- **Live (webinar) oral reports:** use Collaborate Ultra or another video-conference tool to allow students to present what they know about an essay question in 5-10 minutes. Make sure that students know that they may need to answer questions about the topic. If students do not have the tools needed to participate in a video conference with you, consider arranging phone calls.
- **Recorded Oral Reports:** have students present their information in a 5 to 10-minute presentation. Share information with students on acceptable formats (mp4). If students do not have the tools needed to record and upload, consider arranging phone calls.

Portfolios: have students write various essays or solve various problems to show their understanding of the course material as appropriate for a portfolio of their work. Allow students to use a wiki, any free blog software, such as Wordpress, or even a Word or PowerPoint document to create their final document.

Open book exams: use the learning management system's **Quizzes** tool to create exams that assess students' understanding of the material. To reduce academic dishonesty, randomize questions *and* answers and create enough questions that students will not all receive the same questions.

The create-our own product exams: Students use their own knowledge and skills learned in the course to create a workable and useful product. This employs the highest level of Bloom taxonomy "to create" and makes a great component for job-seeking portfolio after graduation. Ideas can be varied

- Computer courses can have final exam assignment a such as creating an app or a software
- Writing courses can have final exam assignments such as write a story, write an essay using certain themes (For example, American literature 1 can ask students to write a paper using certain style)
- Math and science courses can have a final exam such as creating a video explaining certain concepts in the course including examples of problem-solving

Some resources:

<https://www.ineffableisland.com/2012/04/10-most-creative-final-exams-ever.html>

<https://www.weareteachers.com/alternative-assessment-ideas/>