Discouraging Cheating in Online Tests

Blackboard Learn

As of December 2020, SmarterProctoring is available for MATC faculty to deliver online Blackboard exams through automated proctoring tools that include browser lockdown, screen/webcam recording, and photo-ID validation. This technology is meant to discourage cheating in midterm or final exams.

As an additional strategy, we strongly advise faculty to use test design countermeasures to discourage cheating:

- Develop tests using large question pools containing at least 100 questions and random blocks. This ensures that no two students have the same questions or in the same order.

- Update your tests or question pools each time you teach the course so that tests are different each time. This is an important countermeasure to students sharing test information *recalled from memory* with new students.

- To reduce pressure to cheat, consider making tests worth a lower value in the course or allow multiple attempts.

- Set a test's availability for an entire week but use *Timer* and *Auto-Submit* to enforce a tight time-frame for completing a test once it is opened. Depending on question complexity, a good rule of thumb for estimating time for completion is 1 minute per question. Once the test session reaches its end, the student's test attempt will automatically submit itself. Advise students of the time restraints so that they may plan accordingly!

- Schedule when answer feedback becomes available to students through *Test Options*. The feedback options that you choose to display for a test will be available to students for the duration of the course through the *My Grades* tool. If you do not want students to see test questions or answers in their feedback, only select *Score per Question*.

To review how to build a test in Blackboard, please watch the videos in this training playlist on YouTube.

References

Chiesl, N. (2009). Pragmatic methods to reduce dishonesty in web-based courses. In A. Orellana, T. Hudgins, and M. Simonson (Eds.),*The perfect online course* (pp. 327-339). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

Smith Budhai, S. (2020). Fourteen simple strategies to reduce cheating on online examinations. Retrieved from: https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/educational-assessment/fourteen-simple-strategies-to-reduce-cheating-on-online-examinations