Test Design Tips for Instructors

When creating tests delivered through Blackboard, follow these best practice guidelines.

**Question Creation Methods**

- When working in a test canvas, create questions using Blackboard’s question type forms. If you want to create self-scoring tests, use objective question formats: multiple choice, multiple answer, matching, true-false, fill in the blank, ordering, or hot spot.
- Or, create a pool file from a Word document, then build a test from the pool.
- If a textbook publisher offers downloadable test banks, look for test or pool export files that are meant to be imported in Blackboard 7 or higher. After importing questions, always review their answer and scoring options.
- Never copy and paste questions directly from a Word document or web page into Blackboard. This often results in copying hidden HTML code that could break the test.

**Test Length**

If a test is longer than 50 questions or a test is designed to take more than one hour to complete, divide the large test into a few smaller tests. This can help mitigate the risks associated with long test sessions, such as session time-outs due to inactivity or dropped Wi-Fi signals.

**Test Options Settings**

- If you have a long test, it is a best practice to set Test Presentation to All at Once so that the student will see all test questions on the same page. This improves the student’s navigation through the test.
- If you select Force Complete, the student can only open the test one time. If the student experiences a technical problem or exits the test without submitting it, the student will not be able to resume the test. You may be contacted by the student to clear the test attempt so that they can try again.
- 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. You may make changes to Test Options feedback settings at any time.

**Discourage Cheating through Test Design**

Faculty concerned about cheating in online testing are encouraged to use these design-based strategies:

- Develop tests using large question pools (containing at least 100 questions) and random blocks. With a large bank of possible questions, no two students will have the same test or order of questions.
- Update your tests or question pools each time you teach the course so that tests are different each time.
- When making a test available, use the Timer and Auto-Submit Test Options to limit the time students have to complete the test.
- Customize when test feedback becomes available through Test Options. Under the Show Test Results and Feedback to Students section, use the When drop-down menu to create a rule that shows only test scores After Submission. You may create a second When rule to show additional feedback After Attempts are Graded.