

Remote Teaching at BU: Options for Assessment Tasks

Getting started

Creating and administering assessment during this remote-teaching period is a challenge, but also an opportunity to evaluate how to meet the learning objectives in your class. The options outlined below will help you think about your decisions for assessment tasks over the remainder of the semester.

Guiding principles

- As a preamble to any assessment task, focus on the ethical framework of learning rather than on cheating or plagiarism, but provide students with information about consequences for [infringements of academic integrity](#) as well.
- Maintain clear communication with students about the assessment requirements, including any changes to style or weighting of assessment. Student input will also be helpful as you make these decisions.
- Make sure students have opportunities to practice accessing all the technological components related to an assessment task (especially a timed exam) before the due date of the task.
- Be aware of the increased cognitive load for faculty and students in these unusual circumstances. This applies to both traditional exams that may be in a different format and with alternative assignments.
- This guide from [Disability Services](#) will help you understand how to accommodate diverse needs in the online environment.
- Consider equity for all students in your decisions about assessment tasks, including whether all students will have adequate access to the laptops, software, and Wifi or data plans that they will need to undertake the exam or assignment. Be willing to be flexible if students will find it difficult to take an online, timed test or exam at a specific time – consider if there are other ways you can ask them to demonstrate their knowledge of the material.

Important situational questions to ask as an instructor

- How much time is involved in creating a specific assessment task, including learning about the technology to support it?
- What costs are involved with additional technology, including an additional proctoring service?
- What kind of support will I need and how do I access it?
- How will course, program, school, or institutional decisions about Pass/Fail affect my choice?

Option: Exam with Examity Proctoring (supported by EdTech and CTL)

If your tests and exams are related to pre-professional or professional accreditation or licensure, you may choose to provide an exam with additional proctoring services.

Pros	Cons	DL&I Resources and Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exam will be a familiar genre so students will generally know what to expect Faculty may already have the exam prepared Exam is timed Exam design can draw on secure design principles (e.g. randomizing of questions) Visual proctoring helps provide a secure environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty time and learning curve to put exam into Blackboard Cost of proctoring service Exam is not synchronous for all students: each student signs up for a slot on the day of the scheduled exam There may be approval process (approval not guaranteed) within your school 	<p>Guidelines on Online Exam Proctoring</p> <p>Proctor Service Request Form</p> <p>Training in Blackboard, including secure features</p> <p>CTL support for exam design</p>

Process:

- Contact the Remote Teaching Coordinator (RTC) or Dean’s designee in your school to request approval for online proctoring service (approval is at the discretion of the school)
- Prepare your exam in Blackboard; if unfamiliar with creating exams/assignments in Blackboard, sign up for training
- Become familiar with online proctoring framework
- Ensure that students are aware of technology requirements for exam; they will also need to create profiles and be aware of any other requirements for the proctoring site ahead of the exam

Example Costs of Examity

Class Size	1 hr exam \$15.50/student	1.5-2 hr exam \$22/student
20	\$310	\$440
50	\$775	\$1100
75	\$1162.50	\$1650
100	\$1550	\$2200

Option: Exam through Blackboard (supported by EdTech and CTL)

A traditional final exam or shorter quizzes may be offered through Blackboard.

Pros	Cons	DL&I Resources and Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are generally familiar with Blackboard • Exams can be timed and synchronous • Exam design may draw on secure design principles (e.g. randomizing of questions) • No additional cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty time and learning curve to put exam into Blackboard • Not a completely secure environment 	<p>Training in Blackboard, including secure features</p> <p>CTL support for exam design</p>

Process:

- Prepare your exam in Blackboard; if unfamiliar with creating exams/assignments in Blackboard, sign up for training
- If taking an exam through Blackboard is new for your students, plan a practice session (e.g. a low-stakes quiz) so they know what to expect on the day of the timed-exam.

Option: Test the content in a different way (supported by EdTech and CTL)

The remote-teaching period offers faculty the opportunity to consider alternative assessment tasks, including take-home exams, other written or digital assignments, and student presentations.

Pros	Cons	DL&I Resources and Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smaller spread-out assignments can reduce stress of one large assignment • Assessment design can strengthen integrity framework • May utilize secure tools such as Turnitin, depending on task • Students may appreciate a different form of assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty time to design a different form of assessment • Academic integrity relies on assessment design and individual student • A different task and/or new technology/tools may increase cognitive load 	<p>Training in Blackboard will be helpful, but may not be essential</p> <p>CTL support for assignment design</p>

Process:

- Consult with your students on possible options for weighting, timing, and format of alternative assessment task/s
- Consult with EdTech and CTL as needed for training and support

Option: Exams or assignments with additional platforms, with possibility of proctoring (supported within individual schools; not supported by EdTech; general support from CTL)

Some schools (e.g. Law, Questrom) create their exams using ExamSoft and are now exploring an additional proctoring service, Examplify, to use with ExamSoft. Other schools (e.g. CAS) are exploring additional platforms such as GradeScope, Goreact, and TopHat.

Pros	Cons	DL&I Resources and Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam will be a familiar genre so students will generally know what to expect • Faculty may already have the exam prepared • Exam is timed and may be synchronous • Exam design may draw on secure design principles (e.g. randomizing of questions) • Visual proctoring helps provide a secure environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of services, especially for proctoring • There may be approval process (approval not guaranteed) within your school • Faculty time and learning curve with new platform 	<p>These programs are not supported by EdTech; check with your program/school for approval, resources and support</p> <p>CTL support for assignment design</p>

Process:

- Check with your Remote Teaching Coordinator for approved access to ExamSoft and the added proctoring service, Examplify; and for access to other platforms as needed
- If you are approved to use one of these platforms, create at least one opportunity for students to understand how the technology and/or additional proctoring service will work

Resources

For RTCs

[Proctor Service Request Form](#)

For Faculty

[Guidelines on Online Exam Proctoring](#)

[Training in Blackboard](#), including secure features

[Assessment and Remote Teaching](#)

[Giving Exams Online: Strategies and Tools](#) (Vanderbilt University)

CTL for advice on assignment design ctl@bu.edu

For Students

[Guidelines on Online Exam Proctoring](#)