
MODIFYING EXAMS, ASSIGNMENTS, AND FINAL PROJECTS

As classes transition to an online format, faculty will need to consider how they will modify exams, assignments, and final projects. In particular, courses that rely on tests and final exams where take home exams are not an option may need to consider alternative approaches for evaluating student learning and student work.

In addition to changing the nature of the evaluation, faculty may also need to consider how their grading schemes may need to be modified. Below are some ideas to consider as you decide how to redesign your course.

- Reallocate the weighting of assignments already completed to minimize the weight of remaining work. If doing this, consider offering students a way to make up for lower grades earlier in the semester.
- Resist adding in assignments just to “make sure” students are doing the online work. This busywork creates additional burdens on you and the students.
- Rather than one high stakes assignment (i.e. exam), offer smaller assignments or otherwise modify (i.e. make open notes) so that you do not have to figure out to manage an exam at a distance.
- Canvas has the capability to support exams, but there can be quite a long learning curve. Unless you are an experienced Canvas user, modifying your assignment may be a better use of your time and energy.

What is the purpose of your assignment?

Assignments typically serve one of three purposes:

- Pre-test: Evaluate what students know before starting a topic
- Formative: Check on the progress of how well students are learning (often low stakes such as paper drafts or quizzes)
- Summative: Evaluate what students learned. (high stakes such as exams or research papers)

As you think about assignment modifications, keep in mind the purpose and what type of learning or understanding you are evaluating. We have included a table with the common forms of assignments that faculty use and how you might modify for an online environment. Each course will be slightly different, but these ideas can help get you started.

Traditional Practice	Online Recommendations	Essential Technology Tools Need
Class Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freeze participation grade • Discussion Boards/Online Chats • Submit notes or reflections for credit • Credit for synchronous video participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoom • Email • Canvas discussion boards (advanced)
Homework Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online submission • Truncated online submission (i.e. submit only select problems that demonstrate understanding not the full assignment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email submissions • Canvas submissions (advanced)
Student Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students present during video class session • Students record and upload their presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoom • Box for submission
Group Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students collaborate virtually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoom
Tests/Exams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take home exams • Modify to be open book/notes • Create new assignment(s) to take the place of test/exam • Managed online through Canvas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email submissions • Box submissions • Canvas Quizzes (advanced)
Quizzes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take home quizzes • Managed online through Canvas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email submissions • Box submissions • Canvas Quizzes (advanced)
Research Papers/Essays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online submissions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email submissions • Box Submissions • Canvas uploads