

Minimizing Online Test Gridlock: Quick-Tips for Faculty

- Technical difficulties are always a possibility anytime exams are scheduled online. There are as many configurations of computers as there are users—and each is very different. Here are a few tips to help you along the "online testing superhighway," so that your students can minimize "assessment gridlock."
- Consider all assessments in eCampus to be "open-book," unless proctoring is required.
- Limit assessments to what can be accomplished in 55 minutes. If an assessment must be longer than 55 minutes, consider making two exams.
- If you teach on-campus courses, consider a backup testing method.
- Avoid setting an assessment to open in a new window, as this tends to introduce user navigation errors and browser issues. *If a student's pop-up-blocker is on, the student may not see the test.*
- Do not use Force Completion.
- Use only the 'All at Once' presentation method rather than the 'One at a Time' method, unless your exam contains many images. Using the 'All at Once' method reduces the chances of students being locked out of assessments.
- Choose Randomize Questions in the Test Options (for all same questions test) or in the Test Manager (if using Random Block). Do not use both, as this will often lock a student out of an assessment.
- Keep your *optimized for web* test images small, e.g., 400 x400 pixels. (All images should be fully visible without requiring any scrolling.)
- When adding test images, put a description of the image in the text box. When adding images or any other course content, please follow the Accessibility Checklist found at: <http://fastteam.pbworks.com/f/QMS8+Checklist.doc>
- DO NOT use external or internal scripts to prohibit copying or printing. Students who have difficulties need to contact Technical Support directly to determine if the issue is with the students' settings, (e.g. browser settings, Java, etc.). If you wish to prohibit copying or printing, use the Respondus LockDown Browser option.
- To avoid loss of grades, do not make ANY configuration changes (e.g., point values, names of exams, names of exams in Grade Center, adding or subtracting questions, etc.) after the assessment has been released to students.

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- Give careful consideration to using proctors or testing centers for high stakes assessments.
- Be consistent in your design and deployment.
- At the beginning of the semester, create a simple practice assessment containing question formats you will be using throughout the course. Allow your students to take it multiple times so they become acclimated to your deployment style. This should help them understand and overcome any technical problems and questions before taking a graded assessment.
- Give very clear instructions before each assessment.
- Avoid releasing an assessment to students until you have attempted it yourself.
- Avoid requiring students to use other software or browse other websites to find assessment answers. Accessing other applications/websites often interferes with the correct functioning of the assessment area.
- If you are using eCampus for testing in a lab setting or in testing centers for large groups, organize the class into small groups (5 or less) and stagger the start time of each group by 15 or 30 seconds per group.