



Center for Teaching,
Learning, and Technology
UNIVERSITY of WEST FLORIDA

Ways to Ensure Academic Integrity Online

1 What is it?

Maintaining academic integrity in online courses can be difficult. However, several tools and techniques are available to prevent cheating and to secure online instructional materials and assessments.

2 Why is it important?

Academic integrity is obviously important for guaranteeing high-quality learning and program accreditation. Further, with the existence of online question banks and study tools, such as Quizlet, online assessments are increasingly difficult to secure. The tools and techniques discussed in this article provide instructors with methods to detect, deter, and report cheating and plagiarism.

3 How to do it?

The most basic way to prevent academic dishonesty is to design assessments that make cheating more difficult. This can include projects that are highly specific to the course's unique content, specifically authored and tailored exam questions, or writing assignments expecting novel and well-sourced research. Changing key elements of written assignments and projects each time the course is offered will prevent previous students from influencing the performance of current students.

Beyond assessment design, Canvas has built-in tools to further inhibit cheating. Students can be given unique exams using large question banks and randomized blocks of questions. Canvas can also run plagiarism detection software on submitted documents. For higher-stakes assessments, third-party tools can provide additional security through electronic proctoring. These tools often come with a cost to the students but offer a more robust solution for ensuring student identity and preventing online cheating.

4 Test design strategies

Relying solely on a "proctoring service" to ensure academic integrity in assessments is discouraged. Using Canvas Quiz settings and prudent assessment design can help make online cheating harder without the additional hardware or software requirements that may be a barrier for students in disaster situations.

- Provide a shorter time window to complete the exam. If you are giving a multiple-choice exam, it has been shown that approximately 45 seconds per question is more than enough time for students who know the material to be able to answer the question.
- Use fill in the blank questions that Canvas will grade automatically. These types of questions don't provide students with the terms to look

References:

Boettcher, J. & Conrad, R. (2016) *The Online Teaching Survival Guide: Simple and Practical Pedagogical Tips*. San Francisco, Calif.: Jossey-Bass.
What is plagiarism? - Plagiarism.org. (n.d.). Retrieved March 11, 2020, from: <https://www.plagiarism.org/article/what-is-plagiarism>
Online Exam Control Procedures (OECs). Material adapted from Cluske, G.R. and Ehlan, C.R. "Thwarting Online Test Cheating. *Acad. Bus. Ethics*, pp.1–7.

up and it is harder to guess the correct answer.

- Adding a few long answer or essay questions to the assessment can help you determine whether students have a firm grasp on the material or not.
- Present questions one at a time, making it more difficult for students to take screenshots for their friends.
- Open the exams for a very brief time, 24-48 hour period.
- Do not allow backtracking so students can't quickly go through the exam and then go back and look up the answers to the questions.
- [Create a question bank](#) when designing an online exam or quiz. The best practice is to have over twice the number of questions in the bank than needed for the quiz. Questions can be deployed in [randomized blocks](#), creating different exams for each student.
- Design the questions so that they are not all recall questions, which are very easy to research on a browser or do a find in their notes while taking the exam. They will need to understand the material to answer the question and most typical cheating methods will not help (unless they have a friend with them that knows the material).

This isn't the time to reinvent the wheel or create an assessment that is harder than it needs to be, but we still have an obligation to assess students authentically despite the current situation. Projects or other [alternatives to traditional exams](#) could also be an option.

5 Other Tools to Use

Plagiarism

- Turnitin, UWF's plagiarism checker, can be enabled in the Canvas [assignment creation options](#). Turnitin also provides optional peer-review features, allows an additional place for instructor feedback and comments,

and checks for grammar and spelling mistakes to improve writing as a whole.

- While Turnitin cannot be activated for essay questions in Canvas Quizzes, you can export student responses to a .csv file and upload that to the standalone Turnitin site for analysis.
- Be sure to include a [statement about Academic Conduct](#) in your syllabus.
- Include a detailed description of [plagiarism](#) and the plagiarism policy on your Canvas course site.
- Links to the [UWF Online Writing Lab](#) and Library resources about using [sources ethically](#) may help.

Online Assessment Integrity Tools

Online assessment integrity options at UWF range from tools that restrict students from leaving the page where an assessment is hosted, recording the student via webcam during an assessment, and paid proctoring services.

[Respondus Lockdown Browser](#) is a custom browser that is built into Canvas that locks down the testing environment and prevents students from going to external sites during exams. Lockdown Browser also prevents messaging, printing, and copying/pasting during the exam. Respondus Lockdown Browser is free for students and can be utilized for any exam in Canvas without additional equipment.

[Respondus Monitor](#)® is a companion product for LockDown Browser that enables faculty to protect the integrity of non-proctored, online exams. Respondus Monitor builds upon the power of LockDown Browser, using a student's webcam and video analytics to prevent cheating during non-proctored exams. Respondus Monitor is free for students, but students will require a web camera in order to take a Respondus Monitor enabled exam.

[Honorlock](#) is a paid proctoring service. Honorlock should be utilized for high stakes testing or if Respondus Lockdown Browser and Respondus

Monitor cannot meet the integrity requirements of the assessment.

For assistance, please contact
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