Assessment Best Practices

Here are a few helpful suggestions for faculty to use while creating tests and quizzes and a set of suggestions to give to students for successful completion of quizzes, tests and surveys given using Blackboard. Blackboard requires an interaction every 60 minutes during an assessment, meaning a "Save" or "Submit" action to help avoid having students "kicked out" of an exam.

Test Setup:

1> Give the exam using "One Question at a time." This will ensure the student's continuous connection by interacting with the exam (clicking the arrow to move to the next question is considered an interaction by Blackboard). If the exam is given all at once, encourage saving every 10 – 15 minutes.

2> Turn off "Force Completion" option. Doing this allows the student to re-enter an exam from the last point he or she saved, allowing for successful submission with minimal data loss.

3> Make tests, quizzes, and surveys short. A good number is between 20 and 30 questions per instance. If you must have more questions, break them up into smaller assessments. Having 50 to 100 questions is long for an assessment. This is especially true for assessments using a random selection from pools or test banks.

4> Avoid randomized display of assessments using "one question at a time" presentation.

5> Reconsider requiring long essay questions be completed in Blackboard. Typing is not considered an interaction by Blackboard.   Allow students to copy and paste into the text window as discussed in the student information section. Encourage saving often if requiring students to type in essay questions.

6> Consider using the Respondus Lockdown Browser option instead of allowing students to use a full function browser such as Internet Explorer or Firefox.

Student Info:

1> Save the exam every 10 to 15 minutes, like any other important paper or work you would do. If an exam is presented question by question, moving to the next question saves the answers.

2> If using Internet Explorer, Firefox (Blackboard Supported Browsers), Do not use any buttons on the browser window, only use buttons within the exam window.

3> A wired connection is better for taking exams. Wireless connections, especially in public areas might have weaker connections and be prone to dropout.

4> Turn off all pop-up blockers (such as those included with Yahoo, Google and MSN Toolbars for Browsers as wells the one included in Microsoft Windows) while taking exams.

5> If the instructor allows you to do so prepare your answers in a plain text document (such as notepad) and save them, then copy and paste into the test window.

6> Never "double-click" on anything in the test window. Especially the Submit button. A single click will always work in Blackboard.

7> Do not use the "Enter" key. That will cause the exam to submit in most instances.