

Rethinking Traditional Assessments

Creative assessment design and alternative assessment strategies can help mitigate technology limitations while ensuring integrity and allowing for greater flexibility. When designing your assessments, it's important to consider the following possibilities:

- Reduced vendor capacity
- Internet outages
- Learning new systems and settings
- Conflicting schedules and work/school obligations
- Additional fees



How can I maintain rigor and academic integrity without using a vendor, such as ProctorU?

- Create exams based on:
 - Large question banks
 - Randomized and pooled questions
 - Timed attempts
- Consider assessments that require responses unique to the student

What are some examples of alternative assessments?

Based on learning outcomes, consider the following options if the goal is to assess:



Comprehension

- Student-developed quiz questions. Write quiz questions to demonstrate understanding of the material.
- Explanation of a multiple-choice answer. Explain why the answer to a multiple-choice question is correct, or why the alternative answers are incorrect.
- Meaningful paragraph. Given a list of specific terms, use the terms in a paragraph that demonstrate understanding and interconnections of terms.
- Open-book assessments. Typically involving more conceptual or applied questions that students cannot quickly look up in a textbook.

Analysis/Evaluation

- Analysis and response to a case study
- Analysis of data or a graph
- Analysis of an event, performance, or work of art
- Chart, graph, or diagram with explanation
- Review of a book, play, performance, etc.
- Literature review
- Policy memo or executive summary
- Diagram, table, chart, or visual aid

Creativity

- Advertisement
- Diary entry for a real or fictional character
- Letter explaining a problem or concept
- Web page or video
- Newspaper article or editorial



How can I assess multiple outcomes or integrate many types of skills and knowledge into one assessment?

- Annotated bibliography
- Introduction to a research paper or essay
- Mini literature review of 5-10 most relevant sources
- Research proposal addressed to a granting agency
- Scientific abstract
- Policy memo or executive summary
- Thesis statement and detailed outline for term paper
- Presentation
- Reflection on what was learned from an experience
- A one-page fact sheet on a topic

Adapted from:

- <https://teaching.berkeley.edu/resources/improve/alternatives-traditional-testing>
- <https://citl.indiana.edu/teaching-resources/assessing-student-learning/alternatives-traditional-exams-papers/index.html>
- <https://blogs.iu.edu/citl/2020/03/13/exams-online/#.XnJEPZKjRY>