Top Ten Assessment Tips

The following list outlines key tips to keep front of mind when translating assessments and evaluations into a digital format.

1. **Keep it Simple.**

   Everything we do in pivoting to digital forms of instruction requires us to keep it simple as best as we can. Simple will be good for you, for students, for families, friends, and everyone. Figure out those key components in your course students MUST learn and keep your assessment and evaluation focused on those items. Feel free to edit the ACD yet keep assessment focused on learning outcomes.

2. **Trust Students.**

   We live in an age of cheating, academic dishonesty, and distrust. As we move into using digital formats for assessment, we are going to have to trust students more. We need to trust students will do their best, they will follow your directions and they will act in ways that best supports their learning. Trusting students also means creating assessments that are not easy to copy, find answers to on the Internet or through phoning their friends.

3. **Do Minimal Changes to Existing Assessment.**

   Look at how you have assessed this course in the past. Can you keep most of the assessment and evaluation pieces but just move to the digital environment? Can you consider minimal changes or small modifications?

4. **Leverage Blackboard for Quizzes and Assignments**

   Use Blackboard for short quizzes to test low order thinking such as comprehension and understanding. Consider giving a short quiz every week to help students stay on track and get immediate feedback on their answers. Use the Assignments tool for students to hand in assignments, receive feedback and align with Grades. Consider giving audio feedback.

5. **Try a Professionalism Rubric to Capture Student Preparedness and Activity.**

   A professionalism rubric outlines a collection of behaviours, activities, and demonstrations of being an academically honest and attentive student – all for 10-15% of the course mark. Discuss the list of items required for students to demonstrate. 1/3 through course have students self-reflect on the rubric. 2/3 through course have them self-reflect again. Near end of course have them review previous two reflections and assign themselves a grade for the course. You then read over their responses and give a final grade. Good accountability!

6. **Give Frequent Low Stakes Assessments with Rapid Feedback.**

Assessment is best when there are many opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning and receive immediate feedback. This could be a short quiz, a paragraph they write, a post in a discussion forum, an outline for a project, a 2-minute video summary – with both self-reflective feedback along with peer or teacher feedback.

7. **Consider an Open Book Evaluation.**

Often open book evaluations (tests) are rich demonstrations of students' learning and often harder for students who have not done these before. Consider reframing your exams to open book where you ask students to explain answers more fully, show their work, develop rationales, defend answers etc. Also consider open book evaluations that possibly allow students to not always write their response but maybe video record or audio record their answers.

8. **Try Giving Students a Self-Assessment Task: Wrappers.**

Consider asking students to assess themselves first before handing in their assignments answering a specific set of questions about how they undertook the assignment, what went well, what did they learn (called an <u>assignment wrapper</u>). Give them some marks for completing this self-assessment. Read over before you do your assessment – you might be enlightened about how students undertook and completed the assignment.

9. **Look into Single Point Rubrics.**

Keep your marking tools, especially rubrics, simple and easy to use. Single point rubrics are one example of uncomplicating assessment. One collection of statements about what is expected in the middle column. A blank column to the right for comments or checkmarks if students have exceeded learning expectations. A blank column to the left for comments or checkmarks if students have not yet met the expected level of learning. (See <u>Meet the Single Point Rubric</u> by Cult of Pedagogy)

10. **Have Students Print off and Scan Tests and Exams.**

For some tests and exams, consider just sending students the digital version and ask them to print off and complete as they would in your class. Keeping to a time limit, students can use pens and pencils to complete the test and then just need to take a picture of their exam pages and convert to PDF (smart phones often have a picture to PDF converter – e.g., <u>Camscanner</u>)