



## Variation in Assessment Methods in the Virtual Classroom

There are several ways to get around the cheating argument in virtual classrooms; one effective way is to vary the types of assessment and not keeping all of the eggs in one basket. Keeping in mind the nature of your students (Freshmen or Seniors, young or OTA, etc.), the following ideas should help you come up with some interesting variation in your online assessments. These variations can also spice up your course and engage your students in different ways.

- Require a 350-500 word self introduction that is graded. Tell students what you want to see in the introduction, but watch FERPA issues. Beside an introduction to their peers, the introduction can be used to assess overall communication skills.
- Use no score self-tests to see if students understand material.
- Vary questions types in your traditional assessments (T/F, matching, multiple choice, etc.). Remember essay consume a lot of time grading.
- Build assignments that require students to prepare written responses, based on the course textbook, course web content, and research.
- Use graded discussion projects with traditional questions tied directly to course learning objectives.
- Use graded discussion to develop debate spaces. Submissions can be audio or written.
- Use graded discussion to develop role playing opportunities. Submissions can be audio or written.
- Use graded discussion to develop research projects where each group member fulfills a specific function which contributes to the whole. Submissions can be audio or written.
- Use graded discussion to examine case studies or topic specific scenarios
- Have students present field trip reports
- Have students conduct and document specialist interviews
- Conduct written or audio video/film reviews
- Conduct readings with feedback reports
- Have students conduct oral history interviews
- Have students conduct oral reports on specific, researched topics
- Have students maintain a weekly journal
- Have students maintain a topic specific blog that addresses a course related current event or public issue
- Use a web conferencing tool to engage students in a live format and evaluate understanding
- Use a web conferencing tool to conduct a study hall and evaluate understanding
- Don't accept failing grades. Have students resubmit corrected work.



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Key to effective assessment is student support. Consider the following services when you build your assessments.

- Tutor programs
- Smarthinking
- Access to writing centers
- Format examples (MLA, APA, etc.)
- Peer review tools
- Return assignment tools
- Detailed instructions
- Rubrics
- Links to plugins
- Links to support centers
- Telephone numbers to support centers
- Mark up tools
- Audio support
- Video support