

Keeping Students Honest in Online Activities

Skill Drill

Quiz

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2009

Invitation

- Are you worried about too much "collaboration" on assignments and tests which you are placing online?
- Are you struggling to find new and innovative ideas for assessing your students in the online environment?
- Are you worried about plagiarism or "works for hire" which may result from too much procrastination?

See and hear some ideas which might have you looking at online in a whole new light.

Overview

- Assignment Design and Distribution of Points
- Completion Exercises vs. Graded Activities
- Ability to Repeat
- Inviting Collaboration
- Homework sheets instead of "quizzes"

Assumptions

- Students are pragmatic
typically only complete "graded" work
- Students procrastinate – leading to cheating
trying to get things done at last minute
- Students easily discouraged
want to do well but may "give up" at minor hurdles
- Learning is difficult and requires effort
if students could "guess" the correct answers –
it is a waste of their tuition investment

What are the Goals?

- It is NOT about "cheating;" it is about students ...
 - Learning!
 - Practice!
 - Acquiring and integrating new skills and knowledge
 - Engaging in content and learning activities
 - Overcoming fear and hopelessness

Strategies

- Lots of assignments – each with small points
 - Keep students engaged and working on a regular schedule
- Collaboration activities for peer-to-peer learning
- Journaling so that students track their own learning, study patterns, and successes

Assignment Design and Distribution of Points

- Break large assignments into a series of small steps / deadlines
- Example: Research Paper (total 100 points)
 - Topic Selection – 5 points, due wk 1
 - 10 Research Sources picked – 5 points, due wk 2
 - Introductory paragraph / thesis – 10 points, due wk 3
 - Outline with bibliography – 10 points, due wk 4
 - First Draft – 10 points, due wk 7
 - Final Paper – 60 points, due wk 9
 - Students missing all the other deadlines would fail assignment even if the paper submitted earned full points

Assignment Design

- More assignments allow...
 - Monitoring of student “tone of voice” and writing style
 - Less “panic” over a single assignment
 - No “high-stakes” assignments
 - No single assignment is a course grade “killer”
 - Greater chance for intervention (corrective feedback when students are off-track or off-task)

Completion Exercises

- “Checkmarks” – all or nothing grading
- More about “practice” than performance
- Full points awarded if sufficiently engaged
- Allows small sets of points to accumulate
 - Discourages procrastination
 - Helps encourage planning and time-management
 - Avoids “cramming” and “buying work”
- Provides trackable and ongoing practice of skills / knowledge

Criteria for Completion Exercises

- Completion grade is 100%
 - Must be done on time (by deadline)
 - Must be of sufficient engagement (length, accuracy, detail, etc.) – grade by “visually skimming”
- If work is not up to standards
 - Students can repeat
 - Reduced credit given when redone past deadline
 - Middle ‘C’ given if redone past the deadline (75%)
 - Deduction for missing the deadline – not the quality of work

Completion Activities – Rubrics

- Rubrics allow a quick “yes / no” guide for students and simplify grading “checkoff”

Requirement	Satisfactory
Engage actively in the discussion	At least five posts which each post being at least 200 words in length
Correctly cite class concepts	Refer to textbook page number, article name, or handout title in posting
Mechanics	Posts should use proper English grammar and spelling. It is recommended that you compose your posts in Word and then paste your message into the discussion
Respect	Posts should be respectful of all other students. Challenges of ideas must be done constructively.

Ability to Repeat

- Reduces fear / temptation to cheat
- Encourages practice and engagement
- Allows “learning from mistakes”
- Ensures that skills which are not mastered receive additional attention by student
 - Important when course is progressive and new skills build upon past knowledge
 - Partial credit is incentive for students to “learn again”

What are the Learning Objectives?

- What are the goals for the course?
 - Students acquire new knowledge and skills.
 - Students demonstrate proficiency in specific skills.
 - Students can apply knowledge and skills to new situations and problems.
- Encouraging Practice...
 - Skills and knowledge acquired by practice
 - It is not "cheating" if students are "learning"

Inviting Collaboration

- Discussions
- Projects and Papers
- Case Studies and Homework Problems with Problem Solving
- Peer Evaluation / Review (critiquing helps learner and those providing critique)
- Buddy System – for "lab time" practice online
- "Take Home" exams

Homework Sheets instead of "Quizzes" / Exams

- Lockdown browsers are not effective
 - More than one computer
 - Use of cell phone / texting / surfing
 - "Study buddies" working tests together
 - Technical problems often "lock out" honest students – generating failing grades
- Homework handouts using the Quiz tool allows much longer and more complex questions to be answered

Homework Handout Strategies

- Machine graded multiple choice, multiple select, matching, and fill-in-the-blank questions.
 - Essay questions which follow have students "justify" their answers
 - Students reference textbook pages / handouts for case studies and problems
- Longer questions requiring more complex thought
- Large test banks of (publisher) questions – randomly drawn on each attempt

Homework Handout Strategies

- Students see questions answered incorrectly set Submission View to allow students to see correct answer
- No time limit on time to complete
- Repeatable to improve score
 - Set to allow multiple attempts and score based on either "average of all attempts" or "last attempt"

When Exams Must be Given

- Break long test up into several different tests
 - PART 1 - Multiple Choice
 - PART 2 - True – False
 - PART 3 – Matching
 - PART 4 – Essay
- Limit to 1 minute or less per question when answers are provided already (MC, MS, T/F, Matching)
 - If well studied, answers should be a "reflex" reaction, not a "scratch the skull" activity
 - No "trick" questions – students should know that answers should be obvious if well studied

Some Ideas...

ASSIGNMENTS

Research Papers

- Class researches and finds research sources on a specific topic
- Instructor reviews sources and “pares down” list to create resource guide
- Students can ONLY use sources on the pared down list (hard to buy papers with only those sources)
- Grading is easier for instructor; plagiarism easier to detect (since everyone has same sources)

Group Projects

- Groups assigned based on “times available” to work as a group
- Online collaborative writing tools, like Google Docs, allow the site owner (instructor) to review history of changes and edits
 - Allows grading of “individual work” and group participation
- Peer grading of group members several times throughout semester / instructor moderates disputes
- Clear and specific instructions important

Group Presentations

- Virtual presentations using web-conferencing software (record the meeting / presentation)
 - Everything on student’s screen is “shared” – voice also shared
- Online websites (blogs) or “self-running” narrated PowerPoints / Movies
- Items become a viewable class resource
 - review and critique by other groups

Class Blogs / Peer to Peer Learning

- Using the Discussion tool (or better yet an external blogging tool) students...
 - Write weekly articles about a related journal or magazine article they found (with references)
 - Comment on other articles to ask questions or add other ideas
 - Some exam questions can be drawn from blog postings which instructor highlights as “great resource” or “everyone review”

Learning Log / Journal

- Students provide a daily account of what they have done in the course
 - Textbook pages read
 - Skills practiced
 - Research completed
 - Homework problems solved
- Students ask themselves questions and track the answers they have found
- Instructor grades as a “completion” exercise
 - Allows feedback on the questions raised in the course

Study Buddies

- Pair up students based on times they commit to being available for working on homework
- Create interactions
 - Role play activities (phone, chat, or discussions)
 - Peer review (papers, projects, speeches, presentations, learning journals)
 - Online labs – both working lab at same time; compare notes and findings
 - Web conferencing / Instant messaging

Case Studies / Problem-Based Scenarios

- Students work collaboratively in discussions defining parameters of problem, possible solutions, and other information needed
- Spokesperson for the group rotates with each problem; spokesperson summarizes above
- Instructor gives feedback and provides additional information / details for “round 2”
- Students continue discussions and submit one group summary – collaboratively authored

Web Mining

- Instructor gives students a particular website and a list of information to find
- Can be collected in a “homework quiz” for auto-grading
- Different students might be given different items to locate

Web Scavenger Hunt

- Instructor gives students a list of specific items to find
- Students explore any web resources trying to find credible and current information about those items
- Each set of results will be different
- Students complete a compare and contrast exercise for the sites they have explored (ease of use, quality and currency of information, clarity of information, etc.)

Interviews

- Students develop a set of interview questions about the topic
- Students locate an expert to interview (or are guided in their selection by instructor’s pre-approved list)
- Student provides a report on the answers and an “executive summary” of what they learned through the experience

eFolio

- All residents of the State of Minnesota can get a free online portfolio through eFolioMinnesota.com
- Students develop a section for the course to track their learning and provide work-samples from the course
- Review of the site is scheduled by instructor and student (on phone at time of review)

Oral Exams

- Student and instructor schedule time for an oral examination to take place over the phone
- Students are given general descriptions of the areas to be covered

Other Thoughts???