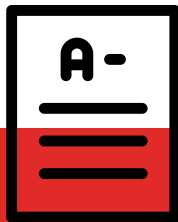# Designing Assessments That Don't Lend Themselves to Cheating

Approaches to Designing Assessments

In general, there are some important tips, tricks, and best practices to help mitigate cheating from the ground up as you design your course assessments.

Exams

Considering Your Approach

- If you can, make your test open book, open note, and open Internet.
- Communicate clear expectations for appropriate use of materials, devices, collaboration among peers, suggesting a distraction-free environment, etc.
- If you must give a high-stakes traditional exam, make arrangements for students to schedule sessions at a test-proctoring site.
- Write test questions that require higher-order thinking; fact-based recall questions are vulnerable to cheating and to cramming and quickly forgetting.
- To the extent that it's feasible with your grading and feedback workload, avoid closed-ended questions (especially multiple choice, true-false, and basic identification). Alternatively, require short-answer justifications for autograded questions; you can simply can these instead of grading them all.

Setting up your test in Canvas

- Use a test bank with more questions than will be used on a particular test. You can even set up your test with random sections that each draw from a different pool of questions.
- Randomize the order of answer options.
- Present only one question per page in Canvas.
- Set strict test parameters (one or two days, 2-hour maximum, forced completion).
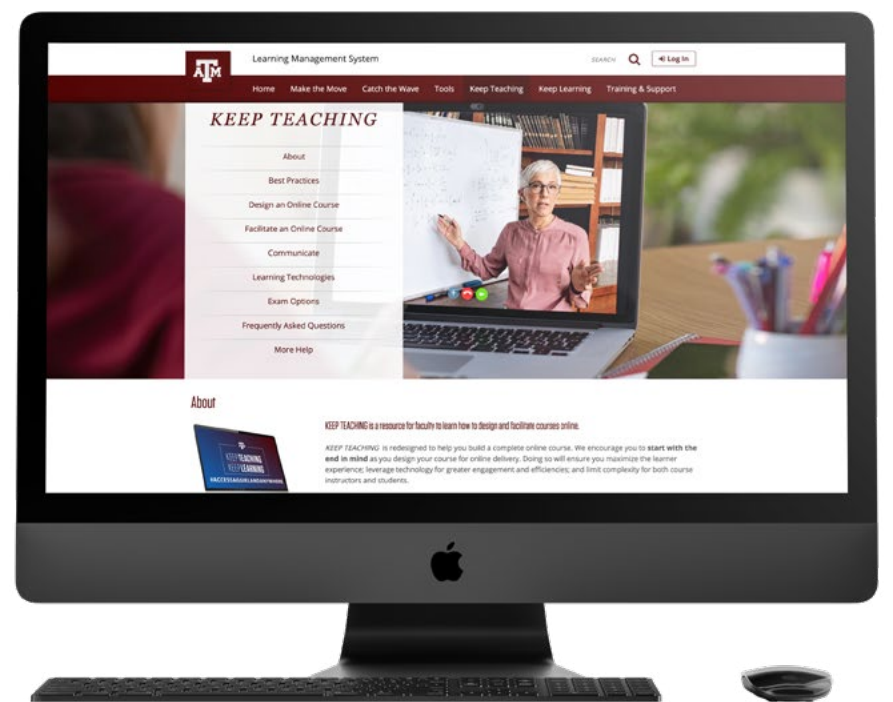
Written Assignments

- Give assignment directions that require students to do novel, hard-to-plagiarize work (e.g., related to personal experience, fictitious scenarios, or very recent events).
- Set a few periodic milestones (topic selection, annotated bibliography, drafts of sections) before a large paper is due.
- Require an annotated bibliography.
- Ask students to record an audio or video commentary about their paper topics or research process.
- Allow students options for selecting topics, methods of research, and presentation styles that are most meaningful to them and allow them to highlight strengths.
- Communicate a clear purpose for the assessment, how it will help them develop skills for the future, how it is relevant to course topics, etc.
- Use formative assignments as a way to build skill and knowledge through meaningful feedback.
- Utilize Turnitin to mitigate plagiarism.

Generally, having different types of assessments in the course (quiz, exam, written assignment, project, presentation, video, etc.) will help to authenticate and confirm students' work and progress in the course is their own. For instance, if quiz/exam success far exceeds success in other forms of class engagement and assessment that could be a red flag for further inquiry and examination of the student's behavior.