

# Alternatives to High-Stakes Objective Testing at the University at Buffalo

To address the need for physical distancing and to decrease density on campus, many instructors have opted for some form of course delivery that includes a remote component. This approach to course delivery may impact the ways in which students are being assessed.

## Testing Alternatives

Alternatives to traditional formal exams which promote academic integrity, allow holistic assessment and overcome technology barriers:

- **Authentic Assessment:** Includes a task for students to perform (e.g., assessment of a case study, troubleshoot code, engage in role play).
- **Comprehensive Paper:** Includes examples from research, coursework, textbooks, readings and lectures.
- **Final Project:** Can be multifaceted and demonstrates learning outcomes in a variety of ways, graded on a rubric.
- **Gamification Participation:** Incentivizes students to perform by appealing to their competitive nature.
- **Group or Individual Presentation:** Demonstrates learning outcomes through a formal research presentation that includes a comprehensive illustration of content publicly to the class.
- **Literature Review or Annotated Bibliography:** A listing of literature relevant to the learning outcomes with a brief synopsis of each article or research piece.
- **Poster Session with Peer Critique:** A formal research poster that is presented by the student(s) with critique provided by peers regarding information and areas of strengths and weaknesses.
- **Series of Lower Stakes Formative Quizzes:** Smaller assessments provided throughout the semester that measure progress on learning outcomes and carry less weight per assessment in grading.

## Promising Practices From UB Colleagues

*“Moved away from exam-based assessment or overly complicated testing restrictions. I now give a final project and self-reflection paper in lieu of a final exam.”*

*“Portfolio assessment is authentic, nearly impossible to cheat on, and highly revealing of what students actually know. Figuring out the logistics is the challenge, especially in the current online environment, but discussions of this topic with like-minded professors and others would be validating and valuable.”*

*“I gave my students in one class an open-book quiz. At least it encouraged them more to try to understand what they had read.”*

Find more promising practices and submit your own at:  
[buffalo.edu/oe/outreach-and-education/SLAPromisingPractices](https://buffalo.edu/oe/outreach-and-education/SLAPromisingPractices)

Here to help.



- [Accessibility Resources.](#)
- [Alternative Test Scoring Options.](#)
- [Center for Educational Innovation.](#)
- [Grading and Assessing Students in Virtual Environments.](#)
- [Information Technology.](#)
- [Office of Academic Integrity.](#)
- [Teach Anywhere.](#)
- [UBLearns.](#)

### Need to deliver objective testing?

UB offers tools and resources including:  
FOR DELIVERY

- UB Learns
- Top Hat Testing

FOR PROTECTING EXAM INTEGRITY

- LockDown Browser
- Respondus Monitor

