

## In-Person, Proctored Exam Guide

**NOTE:** Before implementing in-class, proctored exams, please consider alternatives to high-stakes assignments. When classes utilize just a few exams or assignments worth large portions of student grades, students have more incentive to cheat. Consider breaking large exams or assignments into smaller pieces or lower their point value and add additional assignments to assess your learning goals.

*The Faculty Handbook states: "Most examinations are of the take-home variety, although a room for the examination may be reserved at the instructor's discretion. Even if a room is reserved, the **instructor should not be present during the examination, and students should be free to come and go as they please.** Instructors should specify clearly the ground rules for all examinations. It is the responsibility of the students to follow the announced ground rules."*

If you feel an in-person, proctored examination is necessary, please consider discussing your choice with your Division Chair, the Board of Control and / or Graduate Review Board, and others in your Division.

In the event you have decided to move forward with an in-person, proctored exam, we recommend you read the following material.

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These types of exams can be relatively simple to conduct in small classes, but larger classes (30+) may require some special considerations. These tips will help guide preparation for in-person proctored exams but are specifically gauged to guide their use in large classes.

### Before the exam

If you are considering giving in-person, proctored exams, here are a few questions you will want to answer before you begin.

#### Who are your proctors? How many will you need?

- Often, your TAs will act as exam proctors, but not all TAs will be available at the exam time, especially if they have classes of their own.
- You might not have enough TAs assigned to your course to cover all the locations you may need (see "Will you need additional exam space?" below).

#### Where and when will the exam be held?

- You will need to find a time when all students can attend the exam at once. This will likely be during the normally-scheduled class time – though you will need to make a plan for student with course conflicts, especially if they also have an exam at that time.

- If you need a larger than normal room (i.e., if you are seating students in every other seat), you may not be able to offer the exam during normal class hours. Start early to find a time when rooms and students are available.
- If you will hold the exam during class time, be sure to allow about 5-10 minutes on each end of the exam to get students seated, pass out exams, give instructions, collect exams, etc. In a typical one-hour class time, a 45-minute exam is likely the longest that can be given without impacting classes using the same room.

#### Will you need additional exam space?

- If you would like to seat student in every other seat, you may need to book an additional room. Be sure to make a plan for how the two rooms will communicate with each other during the exam if there are questions or exam corrections – this could be by exchanging cell phone numbers between proctors, Slack messages, etc. **Note:** Cell phones should only be used to communicate by text. Cell phone calls and discussions are distracting and disruptive. Computer chat is preferable because there is a record of what was discussed that is easily accessible afterward.

#### How will exam accommodations be handled?

- Students requiring additional time will need a room of their own to take the exam so they are not required to move in the middle of the test. Be sure the proctor has a way to communicate with the other testing room(s) to share questions and corrections.
- Decide if students requiring extra time will *start early* or *finish later*. In either case, be aware of potential course conflicts and work with students to find a mutually agreeable time.
- Some accommodations require a “reduced distraction environment” for test taking. This will need to be a in separate, quiet room where the student can take the exam away from the distractions of a larger lecture hall full of students. Note that you may need one of these types of rooms for each student – some students may require total silence while others may require “white noise”.

#### Will you have assigned seats?

- Many instructors choose to assign seats so they know which students are sitting next each other. If you choose to assign seats you will need to create a seating chart. Here are some steps to creating an effective seating chart:
  - Map the room in a program like Excel, indicating where the front of the room is. Each cell should be labeled with the individual seat number. As you create the map, be sure to check for any broken desks or seats and block those out on your map. Indicate on your map which seats are left-handed. Check lighting as well as some seats may be in areas that are darker than necessary for student testing.
  - On a second sheet in your spreadsheet program, list all the seat numbers in order, separating out the left-handed desks (if applicable).

- You will need to survey the class ahead of the exam to determine who requires a left-handed desk or if anyone requires special seating (close to a door if they are using crutches, etc.).
- Place your left-handed students in the left-handed desks. If you do not have enough desks for them, place remaining lefties in aisle seats so they can turn their bodies to use the desks properly.
- Fill in the remaining students in the seating chart. You may want to seat them together by section, or spread them out randomly.
- Share the seat assignments and map ahead of time so students can know where they are sitting before they show up for the exam. Be sure to have several printed versions available on the day of the exam so students can find their seat.
- Caveat: If you think students may hide notes or other items before the exam (since they know their seats in advance), consider either checking the seats ahead of time or assigning students to sections of the room with a map ahead of time, but only assigning specific seats upon arrival (allow extra time for this option).
- It's helpful to leave an entire row empty every few rows to facilitate TAs getting to students with questions – especially those in the middle of the room.

#### What will you allow students to use/have near them on the exam?

- Will you need to check calculators before the exam? Will students be allowed to use notes? Will you provide an information sheet (periodic table, helpful equations, list of constants, etc.)?
- Will student be allowed to have their backpacks near them during the exam or do you want them stored at the back of the room? Make sure there is enough space in the room(s).
- Will students be allowed to have water or snacks during the exam (especially for longer exams)?
- Will students be allowed to wear smart watches during the exam? Who will check each student?
- What will your policy be for students who need something from their bag? Announce ahead of time if they will be allowed to access their bag for extra pencils / erasers, snacks, water, etc.

#### Will you have more than one exam version?

- Many instructors choose to have at least two versions of the exam. These are often distributed in an A/B/A/B pattern in the rows. If you choose to have two versions:
  - Be sure both versions are of equal difficulty and length. Do not substantially alter the problems, inadvertently making one version harder than the other. The simplest (and less risky) changes involve changing the order of questions, altering some numbers slightly, asking the same question but with opposing

specifics (i.e., circle the largest vs. circle the smallest, etc.), changing the order of multiple-choice answers, if applicable.

- Double-check both versions to ensure there are no major differences or errors. Have TAs take both versions ahead of time to ensure there are no copy-paste errors or impossible-to-solve questions.
- You can print the versions on different colored paper for easy sorting after the exam. Alternatively, you can print all the exams on the same color, making it more difficult for students to determine who has the same version they do.

#### Will you check IDs?

- To ensure the identity of the test-taker, you may want to ask students to bring their IDs with them to the exam. You can check IDs as students enter and find their seats or once they are seated (allow significant extra time for this process and do not plan to check IDs DURING the exam). Alternatively, you can print a photo roster from REGIS and have TAs check students visually while the exam takes place. Note that some students may have significantly changed appearance since their official photo AND that many students may look very similar.
- What is your policy if a student forgets to bring their ID?

#### Will students be allowed to leave early? Arrive late?

- If a student finishes the exam early, will you allow them to leave? If a student arrives late (they overslept, had an emergency, etc.), will they be allowed to take the test?
  - Our recommendation is that no students should be allowed to leave in the last ten minutes of the exam – the commotion of many students leaving near the end of the exam can be very distracting to students hurrying to complete their last remaining questions.
  - It can be very disruptive to have students try to find their assigned seat if they arrive late. Consider having designated seats in the back for late arrivers, or send them to your extra time room with a note to the proctor.

#### How will students be allowed to use the restroom during the exam?

- If a student needs to use the restroom during the exam, will you provide an escort? Will the restroom be inspected before they enter (for hidden or posted notes)? Will you ensure they do not have their phone with them?
- You may want to hold the student's exam while they are gone. Do they need to sign out? Will you only allow one person to leave at a time?

#### How will missed exams and course conflicts be handled?

- If a student misses the exam, how will you handle make-ups or missed exams scores? If you allow the exam to be made up, will you give the same exam or create a new one? If you create a new exam, how will you ensure it is of the same difficulty?

- Will you require proof of some kind in order to excuse a student from an exam for illness or emergency? Be sure to communicate this policy well in advance – ideally in the syllabus. Also communicate to students who they should contact in the event they need to miss the exam and in what time frame.

#### How will you handle emergencies?

- Have a plan for dealing with potential emergencies during the exam. Examples include: earthquakes, fire alarms, student illness, student panic attacks, etc.
- What will you do with the exams during the emergency? Will students carry them out with them? Will they leave them behind? How will you prevent students from talking to each other during the event? How will you make up the exam if it cannot be completed? Any policy you make should be consistently and fairly applied to all students – if some students need to evacuate their room, but others don't, what will you do?

#### How will you handle cases where students have more than two exams in a single day?

- No student should be required to take more than two exams in a single day. If you are one of three or more exams scheduled for a student, work with the student and the other instructors to reduce the number of exams that day. This may mean offering a make-up exam to the student on another date.

### Preparing for Exam Day

At the beginning of the term:

- Notify all proctors of the exam date(s) so they can plan on being present. Many TAs may have conflicts, so communicating early can help you identify substitutes.

At least 1-2 days before the exam:

- Print several copies of the seating chart and seat assignments.
- Print the exams. If you are using two versions, collate them A/B/A/B for easy distribution on the day of the exam.
- Using the seating map, create stacks of exams with the correct number of exams for each row in the lecture hall. It can be helpful to place a piece of paper with the section and row between each stack.
- Consider preparing a "exam emergency box" to bring to the exam containing extra pencils and erasers, tissues, band-aids, spare calculators, candy for diabetic emergencies, pain relievers, etc. – anything a student might need during the exam. This will prevent having to send them out of the room or into their backpacks.
- Meet with all the exam proctors to discuss the plan for efficient seating of students and passing out of exams. Assign some proctors to stand near entrance doors with seat assignments and maps to assist students in finding their seats. If checking IDs, assign

several proctors to this task OR print several copies of your photo roster and assign proctors to check students during the exam.

- Discuss with all proctors what types of questions they may answer themselves and what types must be brought up to the head TA or instructor.
- Communicate all the rules, policies, etc. to students about what they should and should not bring to the exam.

Day of the exam:

- Have proctors meet with you 15 minutes before the exam to go over last-minute details and to help carry exams, etc. to the room(s). Make sure everyone knows how to communicate with each other, how any exam corrections will be communicated to students, how questions will be relayed to the instructor or head TA, etc.
  - Note: Exam corrections should be announced verbally AND immediately written in a place all students can view during the exam. Make sure this is then communicated to any other exam rooms / students in the same manner.
- At the exam:
  - Proctors should assist students in finding their seats, checking IDs, instructing students where to put their things, etc.
  - Have all student silence / turn off their cell phones and remove any prohibited items from their testing area.
  - Once everyone is seated and have their allowed materials, have proctors pass out the exams efficiently and quickly. Do not allow anyone to start until everyone has the exam.
  - Instruct the class to put their name and UID number on their exams and to read the front-page instructions, but not to start.
  - Once everyone has a copy you can announce the start of the exam and begin your timer.
    - It is helpful to display the time remaining on the board or screen in the room. Consider writing the time remaining, updating every five minutes or so. Call a 20-minute, 5-minute, and 2-minute warning out loud.
  - During the exam, have proctors move through the aisles, checking for wandering eyes and any items out that are not allowed. They should also answer questions to whatever extent you have pre-determined.
  - If you are having proctors check identities using the photo roster, have them do this quietly while students work. On a seating chart map, note any absences.
  - If a student is behaving in a way that is suspicious, consider the following actions: 1) position a proctor near the student, 2) give a verbal warning (e.g., "Please keep your eyes on your own paper.") – either to the student or to the whole class, 3) quietly and quickly move the student to an empty seat near the front of the room (be sure to leave a seat or two open on the seating chart for this scenario).
  - When time is called, have the students put their pens or pencils down, close their exams, and promptly pass their exams to the aisles. Have proctors sternly

stop any student still writing in their exams. Proctors should collect the exams – do not allow any students to stand up or leave until all the exams have been collected.

- After the exam:
  - Have proctors gather and sort the exams for grading. If you are using multiple versions, have them separate the exams by version. If you will be using Gradescope, determine who will scan the exams and upload them.
    - Gradescope scanning tips:
      - It's helpful to have students write their name on every page of the exam in case the pages are separated / mixed up during scanning.
      - Cut the corner staples off the exams with scissors or a paper cutter for easier feeding into the scanner.