Taking Tests Online

Taking tests online requires a slightly different preparation mindset. Unlike paper tests, online tests require that you know and use technology effectively and efficiently in addition to know the material being covered. The following are keys to success for students who are taking tests online through the College’s Blackboard Learning Management System (LMS).

Keys to Success

In order to help you take tests online, follow these keys to success:

**Take the test when you are prepared to give it your full attention.** Online tests are designed with specific limitations such as restricted access, due dates, and time constraints in order to ensure that the test captures your knowledge, skills, and abilities just as we would in a face-to-face setting. These restrictions also help us to uphold our academic integrity standards in the online classroom.

**Review your course materials before opening the test.** Even if you are allowed to use course materials on the test, you will want to have a good working knowledge of them, so you do not spend precious time trying to find the information. You may consider an organization system such as color coding, bookmarking, or flashcards to help you organize and study.

**Evaluate your tech.** Take a few moments to

- close down other open windows and/or browsers
- download all updates for your browser and/or computer
- clear your browser’s cache
- plug in your laptop or mobile device
- disable “sleep” or “stand-by” modes
- disable pop-ups and screensavers

You will also want to make sure that you (and those that share your internet) are not downloading large amounts of data that could interfere with your exam.

**Read the instructions carefully.** The instructions will give you a sense of the types of questions, their point values, time limitations, and other essential information that will help you prepare for the test. The instructions will also tell you what you may or may not use to take the test, such as course materials, textbooks, or web searching.
Manage your time constraints. The test restrictions provide you with the parameters that your professor feels are adequate to succeed on the exam. If you have limited time on an essay exam, for example, take a few moments to sketch out an outline. If taking a multiple choice test, make a note of difficult questions you want to come back to at the end.

Be patient with your tech. Getting impatient with the technology can cause the exam to freeze or the browser to crash. Avoid multiple clicks on “save” and “submit” buttons, avoid refreshing your browser, and be careful using “back” and “forward” arrows. This might result in you being locked out of the system or leave you unable to finish your test.

If all else fails, record your error messages! If the unforeseen happens and you find yourself locked out of an exam, don’t panic. Instead, record your error message as a .jpeg:

- Windows users: snipping tool in the Start Menu
- Mac users: Command-Shift-3 or Command-Shift-4

Send the message along to your professor along with an explanation of the issue. It will be up to the professor to determine whether or not to re-grant you access to the exam, but at least you can show a good faith effort.