



Quality Distance Education: Assessments

As with any course, a distance education course needs reliable, valid methods of assessing student learning, whether it be the acquisition of knowledge, or the development of a skill. Many of the same assessments used in the traditional classroom can be adapted to the distance environment, including papers, projects, portfolios, and even exams.

Since it is difficult, if not impossible, to accurately assess student learning from a single exam or paper, instructors should create a variety of different assessments that can, in combination, illustrate students' understanding and ability. All assessments should be directly related to stated course goals and learning outcomes. Here are some more ideas:

- ✓ **Portfolios showcase student achievements and progress** through an organized collection of self-contained "artifacts", i.e. coursework.
- ✓ **Papers and projects can be evaluated based on rubrics.** Rubrics make grading easier, and also work as learning tools when they direct students to meet clearly stated, high expectations.
- ✓ **Exams should include a variety of question types** tied directly to course content to most accurately measure comprehension.
- ✓ **Heavily weighted assessments should be verifiable.** Exams can be proctored. Papers can be submitted with research notes or drafts.

If you're interested in having DE help you **create valid assessments**, talk to your DE Instructional Designer, or call Janel at 863-8990.

WebCT Tip of the Day: Online Assignments

Online assignments are convenient because they allow you to distribute the same assignment instructions with rubrics and examples to all students at once without paper! Students upload assignments through a simple interface, and you can download student assignments one at a time or all at once. Here's how you set up a new assignment in WebCT:

1. Inside the **Assignments** tool, click **Add** and enter a title.
2. Now click the **title of the assignment** you just added.
3. Click **Edit assignment settings** from the **Actions** menu on the right.
4. **Type** or paste in assignment instructions.
5. Set the assignment's point value under **Maximum grade**.
6. Set a **Due date** after which assignments will be either not accepted or marked as late (**Figure 1**).
7. Click **Update** to finish!

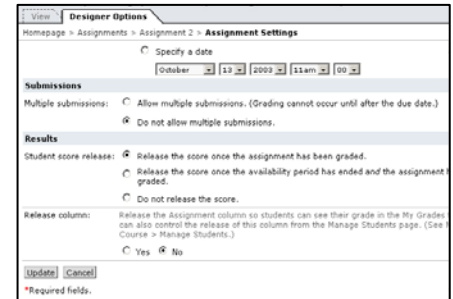


Figure 1 The Assignment Settings screen.

For more info on this WebCT tool, call the TETC at 863-6127.



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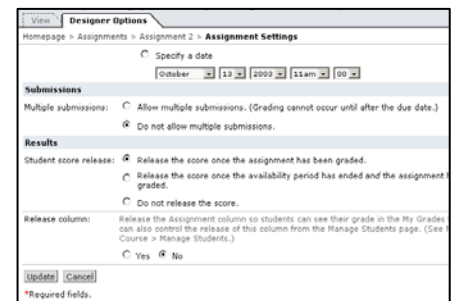


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This Month's Workshops and Trainings

Title	Date	Time	Place
TTIX Conference Day 1	8/10	9am-4pm	SC 206
TTIX Conference Day 2	8/11	9am-4pm	SC 206
WebCT Communication Tools	8/17	3-4pm	LC 227
WebCT Grades	8/17	4-5pm	LC 227
WebCT Grades	8/23	2-3pm	LC 227
WebCT Assignments	8/23	3-4pm	LC 227

To sign up for these workshops and more, visit our website:
www.uvsc.edu/disted/tetc/workshops

2005 Teaching w/ Technology Idea Exchange!

This year the Distance Education Summer Seminar is encompassed in the 1st annual Teaching with Technology Idea Exchange, and you're invited to attend! This conference is free to anyone interested in distance education or teaching with technology, and runs August 10-11 on the UVSC campus. Check out the conference website for more information:
www.uvsc.edu/disted/conference

Did You Know?

DE Development's job is to design and create media-rich components for your DE courses. You provide the content and we'll take care of the technology!

On Topic...

Butler, Darrell. (2003). The impact of computer-based testing on student attitudes and behavior. *Technology Source*, January/February 2003:
Available: <http://ts.mivu.org/default.asp?show=article&id=1013>.

Rowe, Neil C. (2004). Cheating in online student assessment: Beyond plagiarism. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*. VII:2.
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This newsletter was published for Distance Education by the Technology Enhanced Teaching Center at Utah Valley State College.

For more information on this newsletter or how you can contribute:

Technology Enhanced Teaching Center, c/o Jared Stein,
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800 West University Parkway
Orem, Utah 84058-5999

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