

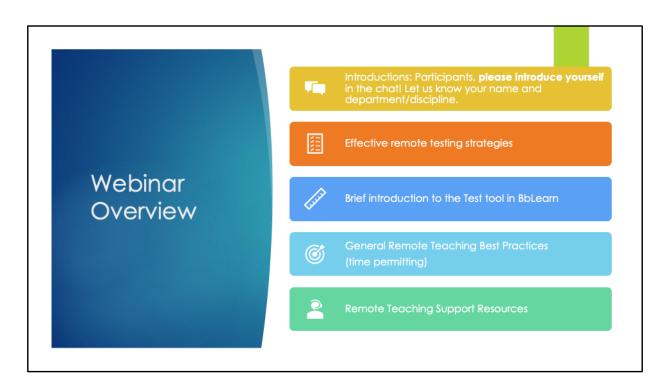
Teaching and Learning Center

# Re-Designing Your Exams

NAU'S REMOTE TEACHING WEBINAR SERIES

Hello! If you are viewing this document, you'll notice that detailed notes and clickable links are available in the Notes area below the slides. The slides themselves won't be clickable, but the Notes text below will contain clickable versions of all links visible in the slides.

UPDATED 3/26/2020



Here is the list of topics covered in this session.



- Consider creating an "Exam Logistics Quiz"
  - This can help students practice using the Test tool in BbLearn and for you to identify any issues with the settings – highly recommended if this is your first time.
  - Or a Practice Test with different questions than the actual exam
- Instructions and/or Description for exam should include information about who students can/should contact for support during the exam
- Explain exactly what students should do when they encounter a problem
  - e.g., call STC and forward the ServiceNow ticket email to the instructor to document the issue
- Make-up exam policy, technical difficulties policy, etc.
  - This is much more important than in an in-person exam setting, because the student can't just raise their hand, and we need to keep exams secure.
  - We recommend a flexible policy that allows for technical problems, internet access issues, and make-ups when needed.

# If students report an access issue during the exam, you should have a plan in place for how to deal with technical glitches. Here is an example: TELL STUDENTS: 1. Try to resolve the issue yourself by re-starting your browser or computer 2. Don't spend more than five minutes trying to figure things out by yourself – stop and call for help 3. Call the Student Technology Center AND email the instructor to report that you are contacting Tech Support 4. If the issue is not resolved during your call, request that the ticket be escalated to the instructor 5. After the call, forward the automated ServiceNow ticket email to the instructor for documentation

Creating a plan for students who experience technical difficulties during a test can be the best way to prevent both problems that are difficult to resolve AND abuse of the online format.

If you need support creating a technology policy or contingency plan for your test, come to our online drop-in hours and we can help you customize a solution that works with your exam and content.



# For BbLearn-Based Exams Student Technology Center

www.nau.edu/STC (928)523-9294

This information should be plastered all over your courses and exam instructions. For BbLearn-Based Exams:

**Student Technology Center** 

www.nau.edu/STC

(928)523-9294

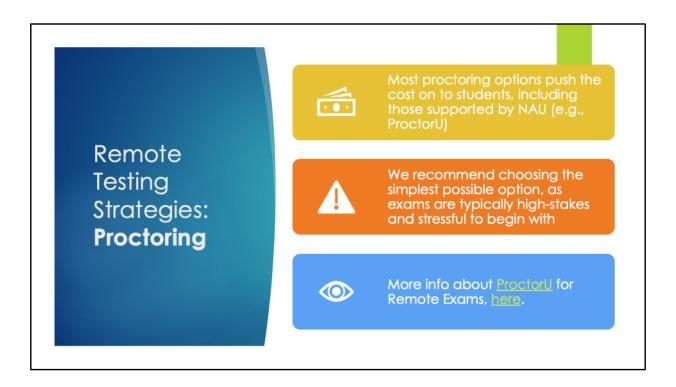
# For Exams Hosted Outside BbLearn Locate tech support contact Info for your chosen platform Publisher Textbook/Content Site Quizzing/Testing App site Share support contact info with students Note that STC does NOT provide support for software/apps not licensed by NAU This includes Textbook & Publisher Content

We strongly recommend hosting exams in BbLearn, but a few courses may have good reasons for NOT doing that. If your course falls into this category, here are some basic recommendations.

- Make sure you locate contact information for support using this non-supported platform and provide that to students.
- Contact the support number and find out what it's like to get help from that source. Some places will let you know that support tickets will receive a response within 48 hours, but if the test timer is ticking and there are only a few minutes left, how would you want a student to proceed?

# Note that STC does NOT provide support for software/apps not licensed by NAU

This includes Textbook & Publisher Content



# More info about <u>ProctorU</u> for Remote Exams, <u>here</u>.

Unless you have a strong use-case need for proctoring (e.g., accreditation requirements), we'd recommend skipping it for remote instruction. If planning online classes, the proctoring costs can be listed with the required course materials at the beginning of the course, but surprise course fees at this time is going to be rough on students and you'll need to find alternatives for students who can't afford the costs.

# Remote Testing Strategies: Exam Security & Academic Integrity

- Use BbLearn's embedded features for exam security – more on this on the next two slides
- Be transparent with students about exam structure and security features
- Make-up exams can be a different format in order to protect exam security (e.g. all essay questions for make-ups)

For more detailed information on the topic, "DESIGNING CHEAT-PROOF TESTS," please log in to the Faculty Professional Development BbLearn Shell and find the recorded and supplemental materials from this webinar by Sara Abercrombie. You can self-enroll and then access the shell, here: <a href="https://www.nau.edu/bb-self-enroll/292047">https://www.nau.edu/bb-self-enroll/292047</a>

# **General Recommendations**

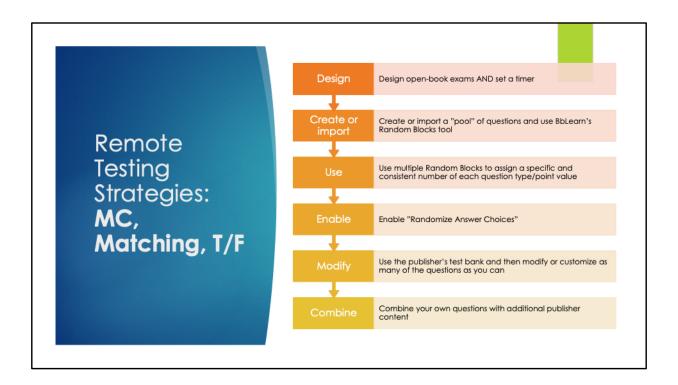
- Use BbLearn's embedded features
  - Question Pools
  - Random Blocks
  - Randomize Answer Choices
- Be transparent with students
  - e.g., "This exam is timed. If you haven't adequately prepared for the exam, and you need to look up most of the answers on the text, you won't have enough time to complete all the questions."

This is a time when we're all going to need to be flexible with students. Read this NAU web page for more information about student access to tech and. considerations: <a href="https://in.nau.edu/faculty-professional-development/considerations-">https://in.nau.edu/faculty-professional-development/considerations-</a>

# for-instructional-continuity-of-in-person-classes/making-strategic-decisions/

Because of this difference in access to technologies, you might need to work to prepare students well in advance of an online exam AND be flexible with students who just can't access the technology they need to complete it during the scheduled time.

Here's an example of a flexible policy — All students can request a make-up exam anytime BEFORE the scheduled exam start time. However, the make-up exam will be a different format. In my own classes, I usually give online exams that contain a combination of question types including multiple choice, matching, True/False, short answer, and essay questions. Make-up exams in my classes are ALL ESSAY. That is usually enough of a deterrant and students who would normally abuse a make-up exam policy won't. The students who ask for it really need it, and the essay questions aren't punitive, they're just going to require more in-depth responses.



### **DESIGN**

• Then, you can tell students that they must prepare for it adequately as they won't finish in time if they have to look up each answer online or in the text. In other words, they won't have TIME to cheat!

## CREATE OR IMPORT, USE, AND ENABLE

• We'll talk more about this on the next slide, but BbLearn has some great features that will allow for more secure exams by randomizing the appearance of questions (and answer choices) on each student's unique version of the exam.

# **MODIFY & COMBINE**

- Use all the tools at your disposal. Got publisher-created test banks? Yeah, we know they're not perfect, but this is crunch time. We recommend taking advantage of their existence and making them your own.
- Modify guestions so that they won't be easily searchable with Google
- Strategically combine your own custom questions with test banks to expand the pool and make it harder for students to google the answers
- For example, take MC, Matching, and TF questions and convert them to essay questions, and vice versa.

Remote Testing Strategies: Essay and Short- Answer Questions	Design	Design questions based on a customized combination of readings and course materials
	Create	Create a "pool" of questions and use Random Blocks so that students each get a unique combination of questions
	Use	Use multiple Random Blocks to assign a specific and consistent number of each question type/point value
	Open	Allow students to work on the exam over a period of several days and use settings that allow for students to work, log out, and log back in again for another session.

### **DESIGN**

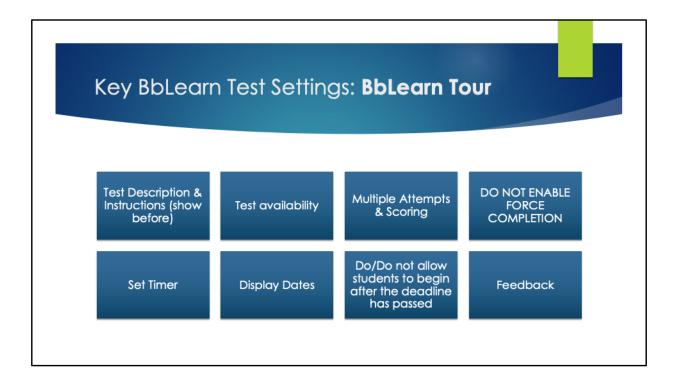
- Create custom questions asking students to pull together information from unique combinations of sources. For example, using one or more textbook chapters and a journal/magazine article on the topic.
- Ask questions that have students connecting course materials to current events
- These types of essay questions are more difficult to find appropriate existing content online that can be copy/pasted into the exam.

### **CREATE & USE**

- When each student gets a unique combination of questions on their exam, it makes it much harder to cheat/compare answers with classmates
- For example, you could create 10 essay questions, and require each student to answer 1-2 of those questions. Each student will get a test with a unique combination of responses.
- Build questions with CHOICES. For example, in a given question, you could provide two essay prompts, and allow students to select the prompt they feel most confident in responding to.

# **OPEN**

- Asking tough, higher-order/critical thinking essay questions can be a fantastic approach.
- Require students to complete research as part of their essay response and to cite their research materials/sources in their response
- Require students to cite course content and materials in their response



# Now, we'll take a look at a few key settings when you're creating a Test in BbLearn.

- Test Description & Instructions (show before)
  - This allows students to take their time reading the instructions without wasting valuable test time (if using the timer)
  - also, students will better understand the time they need to set aside for the exam and the materials they'll need before they start the timer.
  - Also include support info in these locations!
- Test availability
  - Test Availability and Timer are two different settings. For example, you
    could give students a full week or 24 hours in which to start the exam. But,
    once started, there's a timer in place and students cannot take extra time
    to complete it once the timer starts
- Multiple Attempts & Scoring
  - Consider allowing students multiple attempts and then scoring using the highest score – this is great for low-stakes testing or logistics quizzes
- DO NOT ENABLE FORCE COMPLETION
  - There is a known bug that WILL interrupt exam access for some students. We strongly recommend NOT enabling this feature for any reason
- Set Timer

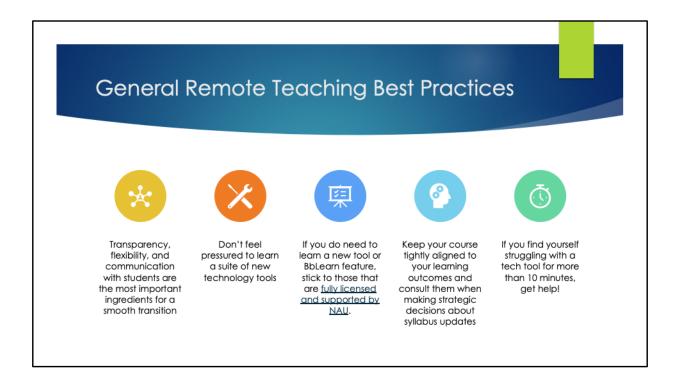
• Can improve exam security, but exceptions will need to be made for those with accommodations with Disability Resources

# Display Dates

- The test can be scheduled to appear/disappear from the student view at specific times
- BUT, you'll have to manage this for make-ups or other hiccups.
- Do/Do not allow students to begin after the deadline has passed
  - I usually use this option and anyone who hasn't taken the test on time either takes the make-up or gets a zero.

# Feedback

 You can add feedback to each question to help students learn from their mistakes. This is usually best with low-stakes quizzing.



### CLICKABLE LINKS FROM THIS SLIDE

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# Transparency, Flexibility, and Communication with students are the most important ingredients for a smooth transition

- This is true, even when things are NOT changing. For example, if you are leaving your course schedule and assignments intact, clarify that for students.
- As far as flexibility goes, do your best to design learning experiences for students that are inclusive of all levels of access to technology. We can't assume that students will have the same access and internet speeds they have on campus or in traditional online course environment. Many NAU students live in areas with limited or access to technology other than a cell phone and may not stay on campus.

# Don't feel pressured to learn a suite of new technology tools

So many of the helpful online guides detail use of specific technology and tools
you can use to do some really great stuff! If you were going to be designing and
teaching an online course, that might be a great time to learn new tools. This is not
that time. Go with the tech you know, if you need to learn a few new tools and
strategies (e.g. BbLearn Tools like Gradebook, Assignments, and Tests), OK! But we

recommend avoiding adoption and large-scale implementation of entirely new software and apps.

# If you do need to learn a new tool or BbLearn feature, stick to those that are fully licensed and supported by NAU.

- Make sure that if/when you do need help, you have the support you and your students will need to use these learning tools effectively.
- If ITS doesn't support it, and you use/require it in your class, you are in the tech support hotseat.

# Keep your course tightly aligned to your learning outcomes and consult them when making strategic decisions

 When making decisions about combining, re-formatting, and updating your course, be sure to consult your learning outcomes to ensure that students will complete your course with the essential learning experiences needed to be successful in the next course and/or in their careers.

### CLICKABLE LINKS FROM THIS SLIDE

• <u>fully licensed and supported by NAU</u>.

# Remote Teaching Support: Online Resources

- Considerations for Instructional Continuity of In-Person Classes
  - ▶ This site is a great launchpad for accessing the advice and support you'll need for a successful transition to remote instruction
- Library Support for Online Classes
  - This website has some great resources that are useful for Remote Instruction, and explains how to use them
- NAU's Searchable Knowledge Base (CAS login required)
  - This is a wonderful self-help resource if you prefer to self-manage your support experience, after hours, or for a quick technical question about BbLearn and any of NAU's supported tools and services

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# Remote Teaching Support: Live and In-Person Resources

- Collaborate Ultra Drop-in Sessions
  - ▶ These scheduled online sessions are available on an ongoing basis, and a current schedule can be found at the link above.
- LMS Faculty Support Help Desk (BbLearn Support)
  - ► Email LMS-Faculty-Help@nau.edu
  - ► Call (928)523-5554
- ITS Support
  - For all non-BbLearn or non-teaching technologies (e.g., Zoom, phones, general computer/laptop support)
  - Email <u>ask-ITS@nau.edu</u>
  - Call (928)523-3335

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Follow up on any questions you might have by calling LMS Faculty Support or by contacting <a href="mailto:Teaching.Learning@nau.edu">Teaching.Learning@nau.edu</a> to reach the facilitator of this session.