

Department of Statistics Worksheet for Virtual Exam Planning (Fall 2020)

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Useful resources

- [Department guidelines on virtual exams](#) (should NOT be viewed as policies)
- [Email templates](#)
- [A memo on the Office of Disability Service](#)
- [GSAS statement on academic integrity in a virtual/hybrid environment](#)
- CTL's guide on "[Promoting Academic Integrity](#)"

Decisions

Here are decisions instructors should make, with consideration for what would work best for your class. It is, in general, a good idea to seek feedback from your TA and your students, in terms of their schedule, location, and access to technology. While ensuring rigor and academic integrity, we also advocate inclusion and equity, especially when it comes to the use of technology in exams.

Below is a list of decisions that instructors should consider.

- Platform for the exam (Canvas online, paper-based)
 - Distribution of exam materials
 - Submission of finished exam
- Exam-format
 - Close/open-book/notes
 - Use of computer (coding)
 - Use of calculator
- Allowed technology during the exam
 - E.g., Computer vs. iPad
- Time-format
 - Formats

- Fixed time (most conventional setup)
 - Flexible, fixed time (assisted by Canvas, students can start the exam any time during a 24- or 48- hour window but will only be given a fixed amount of time to finish the exam).
 - Flexible/take home.
 - Time-zone considerations
 - For a fixed time, it is recommended to offer one alternative exam window with a modified version of the exam to provide flexibility.
 - Submission for fixed-time exam
 - Add 15-20 mins submission time to the exam time budget
 - There needs to be an announced beginning time for submission. (TA can help monitor the virtual exam room and remind students that they should stop working.)
 - Accommodations for ODS students
 - If the exam window is longer than 24 hours, there might not be any additional accommodations needed for those that need a time multiplier or timed breaks.
 - Deadline extension rules might be different. ODS can advise.
 - Find out students' needs as much in advance as possible. Have a **plan!** Please see a memo prepared by Ms. Zammy Diaz Lebron (zdl2103@columbia.edu) based on her conversation with ODS. Please reach out to Zammy if you need assistance and guidance.
- Support during exam
 - Set up a plan to have a mechanism for students to ask questions during the exam, especially if you have a flexible time zone. For example, you will only reply to emails during two time intervals during the exam period via email or public/private discussion board posts.
- Proctoring needs during the exam
 - If additional proctoring is needed, please fill out [this form](#) at least two weeks before your exam.
 - For large classes, it might be helpful to create student groups of <40 students and put them in separate zoom meetings, which can be proctored by different proctors or at least using different devices.

Best practices

- Before the exam
 - Discuss with your TA in exam planning. Seek feedback from students, especially those with difficulties.
 - Share and discuss honor code - a good exercise as a pre-exam submission practice
 - Clearly define expectation and clearly communicate violations “what is cheating”
 - Include honor code as part of the exam paper and ask students to sign

- Clear and explicit instructions on the use of technology during the exam
 - Include both a) what is the recommended use and b) what is prohibited (e.g. virtual backgrounds).
- Communicate plans clearly with students and TAs well in advance of the exam, including what to do if they have questions or difficulties during the exam.
- Make contingency plans with TAs in terms of technological issues
- Communicate grading expectations, such as, how much numerical detail is required. Make sure the exam has clear instructions on how detailed the answers should be.
- During the exam
 - For fixed-time exams proctored by zoom,
 - remind students to **leave audio on** and diligently mute students. Make all important announcements verbally.
 - students should be encouraged to check periodically the zoom window (in case of disconnection issues) and the clock.
 - When noticing suspicious violation of exam policies, proctors should stop the behaviors as non-disruptively as possible, allow the student to finish the rest of the exam, note down the details of the incident, and report the incident to the course's instructor. The course instructor shall reach out to Ms. Zammy Diaz Lebron (zdl2103@columbia.edu) for assistance and guidance, and loop in the appropriate directors of our academic programs (e.g., Professors Gabriel Young and Ron Neath for our undergraduates, and Professors Demissie Alemayehu and Banu Baydil for our MA program). While working with a student in question, please be mindful of the "power differential" in such a situation and ensure a due process.
 - For flexible-format exams (no proctoring)
 - Remind students to submit questions and concerns according to the class' plan (where to submit them, during what time windows will they be addressed).