Administering Timed Tests in Blackboard

There are two ways to administer timed tests through Blackboard. One way is native to the product and uses the Assessment feature to create a Blackboard test. It is good for tests of a duration of fewer than three hours. The draw-back is that while the answers to questions in Blackboard tests can be input directly into the test interface or uploaded as MS Word files, to access the responses, the instructor has to open each individual test, as oppose to downloading them all to a zip file.

The other way to administer timed tests through Blackboard is this work-around we have devised, which allows the students responses to be downloaded all at once to a zip file, while still keeping track of time. It also allows for using the built-in tool for marking up, grading, and returning files, should you prefer.

If you do not wish to create the test in Blackboard through the native Assessment feature, follow the instructions below. We recommend you print out the instructions to have at your side while executing them, as it is important to not miss a step along the way.

Part I: Setting Up the Exam

☐ 1. Put your exam questions and instructions in a word processing file, such as MS Word, and save.
☐ 2. Open a Content Area.
☐ 3. Edit Mode is ON.
☐ 4. Click **Build Content**.
☐ 5. Select *Content Folder*.
☐ 6. Give the folder a **Name**, such as *Final Exam*.
☐ 7. In the text box, type the instructions. Here is a sample instruction text (which you can copy and paste, but then make sure to edit the information in the [brackets]):

> When you open this folder, you will see the first of two Blackboard "Assignments" you will need to complete. The first assignment, called *Record Access Time* is designed simply to record the time you are given access to the exam. Click on the name of the assignment, *Record Access Time,* click on the **Write Submission** button, type your name in the text box and click the **Submit** button. The [*insert time here*] time limit has begun.
>
> You will now see the Review Submission History page. Click the **OK** button located at the bottom of the Review Submission History page.
>
> Now you will be able to see the file with the exam questions. Download it to your computer and begin the exam. If you wish, you can close Blackboard until you have finished the exam.
>
> When you have completed answering your questions, save your document as [*insert here what you want the students to name their exam files, e.g., FinalExamENG101_LastnameFirstinitial*], then return to the page in Blackboard from which you downloaded your exam questions. Click on the name of the assignment, then click the **Browse My Computer** button, browse to your saved file, then click the **Submit** button.

☐ 8. Set the **Date and Time Restrictions** so that the students cannot see the folder until the prescribed moment, and cannot access it after your exam period ends, then click **Submit**.
☐ 9. Now click on the name of the folder you just created, e.g., *Final Exam*.
☐10. Go to the **Assessments** menu and select **Assignment** from the list.
☐11. Name the assignment *Record Access Time*.
☐12. In the Instructions field, put something like: *When you access this assignment, simply enter your name in the text box and submit.*
☐13. Set Possible Points to 0 – it is a required field.
☐14. Leave the defaults for the rest of the form and click **Submit**.
☐15. Go to the **Assessments** menu and select **Assignment** from the list again.
☐16. This time, name the assignment *Final Exam*.
☐17. Click on the **Browse My Computer** button and attach the Word document or PDF file containing your exam questions.
☐18. Set the Possible Points to the total number of point the exam is worth, leave the defaults for the rest of the form, and click **Submit**.
☐19. Click on the chevron next to the *Final Exam* assignment and choose **Adaptive Release**.
☐20. In section 3, **Grade**, for *Select a Grade Center column*, choose the assignment titled *Record Access Time* (the assignment you created above).
☐21. Make sure the default, **User has at least one attempt for this item,** is selected and click **Submit**.

Part II: Retrieve Time Stamps Information and Exam Submissions

☐ 1. Open the Grade Center.
☐ 2. Click double down chevron in the column heading for *Record Access Time* and select *Assignment File Download*. The page that opens will show you the submission times for the exams – these are the start times.
☐ 3. If there are more than 25 students in the course, scroll down and click the **Show All** button.
☐ 4. To make it easier to compare times, copy and paste the information into a program like Notepad or MS Word.
☐ 5. Go back out to the Grade Center.
☐ 6. Click double down chevron in the column heading for *Final Exam* (or whatever you named the assignment) and select *Assignment File Download*. The page that opens will show you the submission times for the exams – these are the submission times.
☐ 7. If there are more than 25 students in the course, scroll down and click the **Show All** button.
☐ 8. To download the exams, click the topmost check box, top left to check all of the boxes.
☐ 9. Click **Submit**.
☐ 10. The page that comes up will read *The assignments have been packaged. Download assignments now. (xxx KB)*. Click this link and the exams will all be saved to your hard drive in a zip file. Unzip them to a regular desktop folder.