ASYNCHRONOUS OR SYNCHRONOUS

academic integrity considerations

There are many advantages and disadvantages to offering exams in either asynchronous or synchronous format. This guide should assist instructors when identifying the best option for their courses.

ASYNCHRONOUS EXAM SESSIONS

advantages

- Exam provides more flexibility for students and eases challenges for students in different time zones.
- Exam may include extra time for students with accommodations through the Department of Accessibility Services (formerly OAS).
- Exam usually includes free response or open ended questions.

disadvantages

- Staggered exam times create more opportunity for students to communicate the exam content to one another.
- Not ideal for multiple choice or true/false exams.
- Exams may take longer to grade.

Is asynchronous a good fit for your course?

Be sure to set clear expectations for your students about the conduct of your exam. This includes a clear collaboration policy that addresses communication about exam content and citation guidelines for outside sources.

SYNCHRONOUS EXAM SESSIONS

advantages

- Exams are completed within a shorter period of time, usually during regularly scheduled sessions.
- Faculty may answer questions in real time for the whole class while proctoring.
- Exams set up in Canvas may use automated grading features.

disadvantages

- Exam will often require some level of proctoring.
- Faculty need to give careful consideration to their test taking policies and include procedures for bathroom breaks and asking questions.
- Exams can be challenging for students in different time zones or in places with limited internet connection.

Is synchronous a good fit for your course?

Be sure to set clear expectations for your students about the conduct of your exam, this includes webcam requirements, test taking policies, instructions about how to ask questions, and bathroom break considerations.

For questions or consultation, contact EC.Honor@emory.edu

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