

Multiple Choice Exams Online

(I make terrible slide decks, sorry)

Jonathan Sterne, Faculty of Arts Presentation, 8 July 2020

Everything from my presentation can be found here:

<https://superbon.net/2020/06/11/multiple-choice-exam-theory-remote-teaching-edition/>

Credo:

Multiple choice exams are an imperfect solution in an imperfect world.

But they can still have pedagogical value.

Step 1:

Make it “open everything” — book, friends, internet, etc.

Encourage them to work together. Instead of “cheating” call it “helping.”

Anecdotal evidence: when I started doing this in 2013, test averages went up by less than 5% versus tests taken individually with a study sheet. But test anxiety dropped precipitously.

Step 2:

Set rules for the test. Time limits are good, but you need to be flexible

Step 3:

Every student gets a (sort of unique) exam.

What's possible in MyCourses.

Question stem:

This is the “question” part of the question in multiple-choice lingo. The ideal question stem has more words than any of the possible answers and is clearly worded, though I do throw in a negation (“not”) from time to time.

A. Right answer

B. True statement from the same reading or a related reading, but that does not correctly answer the question

C. Argument or position author rehearsed and dismissed; or that appears in another reading that contradicts the right answer.

D. Converse of one of B or C.

E. (Works for an intro media studies course) Incorrect but common sense answer.

Step 4:

Show the students (almost) everything about how the system works.

You can even have them write questions for you.

BONUS ROUND:

(if time)

Make yourself easier to hear for recorded lectures.

Hang a moving blanket (\$20 from Canadian Tire)

or a quilt behind you when you lecture.

Gratuitous Retro High Tech Cat Picture



Thank you!

Some other online teaching resources:

<https://superbon.net/2020/06/17/recording-your-lectures-1-the-one-thing-you-can-do-to-improve-your-students-listening-experience/>

<https://superbon.net/2020/06/18/recording-your-lectures-2-the-one-thing-you-can-do-to-improve-your-recording-experience/>

<https://superbon.net/2020/07/06/resources-for-teaching-online/>