

# Teaching with a Bimodal Approach

## Considerations for assessing learning

The introduction of bimodal courses, starting in the fall 2021, requires certain consideration of the selection and implementation of learning assessment methods. Being mindful of the distinct feature of the two teaching environments (some students in class with the reminder and at a distance taking the same course through the use of web conferencing technology), it is important to choose evaluation methods that allow for a **coherent** and **equitable** evaluation of learning.

### Measure student learning through assignments

All evaluation methods that involve the production of artefacts (an essay, a research report, an analysis, a case study, a multimedia project, etc.) to assess student learning, and the achievement of course learning outcomes, can be easily implemented in a bimodal course. Whether it is individual or group work, the use of Virtual Campus (Brightspace) allows all students associated with a course (whether they participate from the classroom or remotely) to have access to the information necessary to guide their work (descriptions, instructions, evaluation criteria, etc.). In addition, the submission of assignments via the "**Assignment**" tool is simple and the same for all students. It should also be noted that correcting assignments and the posting of results can also be easily done through Virtual Campus.

### Measure student learning through an unsupervised exam (take-home exam)

Unsupervised exams, that is, those that students must complete without supervision within a set time frame, can also be easily implemented in a bimodal course. The use of Virtual Campus allows all students to have access to the exam. The take-home exam can be submitted using the same strategy as assignments, i.e. the "**Assignment**" tool. Depending on the format of the unsupervised exam, it is also possible to use the "**Quiz**" tool by selecting the option for essay questions and configuring the settings of the tool to give the necessary flexibility to complete the exam in the allotted time (for example, a quiz that is available for several days and offers the possibility of multiple attempts). Just like assignments, correcting the unsupervised exam and posting the results can be easily done through Virtual Campus.

### Measure student learning through exams

The use of exam-style evaluations (e.g. multiple-choice questions, timed short answer and essay questions) requires some considerations to ensure that the principle of equity is respected. Essentially, we should ensure that the process used to conduct an examination is fair to all students whether on campus or at a distance.

- **Online testing** (via the tools available in Virtual Campus) for the entire class (i.e. students taking the course in the classroom and those online) is the best option to respect the principle of equity. It is also the most reliable

### Coherent Evaluations

- An evaluation that measures what the students have learned in the course. In other words, an evaluation which **aligns** the targeted learning outcomes with the selected learning activities and evaluation methods.

### Equitable Evaluations

- An evaluation that respects the principle of equity. In the case of bimodal courses, this means ensuring that students participating in the classroom have an experience that is equivalent to their peers participating online.



given the nature of evolving health and safety guidelines. The different settings in the "Quiz" tool allow the exam to be adapted according to specific needs (different time zone, allocating more time for those with academic accommodations, etc.) and the live proctoring software (e.g. Respondus, Zoom, MS Teams) offers a way to monitor students while they are taking the test.

- Alternatively, if we select an evaluation method that involves **being on campus** in a specified location with a specific monitoring procedure (e.g. proctoring), then those procedures would need to apply to all students (equity principle). Depending on the make-up of the group (students who are in remote areas or even abroad), it may not be possible to use this evaluation method. If all students in a bimodal course are able to travel to campus for an exam, it is important to request a classroom that will accommodate the distancing measures in place at the time of their examination. The requirement to write the exam on campus would also need to be communicated to students in advance and included in the course syllabus.

### Measure student learning through their performance

In some cases, student learning requires that assessment be based on actions that must be observed by the evaluator (e.g. performing a piece of music, giving a presentation, demonstrating a technique in a lab). In the context of a bimodal course, it is important to identify how this kind of assessment will take place for all students whether they are on campus or at a distance.

- An **online testing process** (via web conferencing tools such as Zoom or MS Teams) may, in some cases, be an effective (and equitable) option. For example, a presentation can just as easily be done online (via Zoom, for example) or in a classroom on campus. In both cases, the evaluator is able to observe and determine the quality of the presentation using the same criteria.
- If the testing process **requires an on-campus presence** (i.e. physical space or equipment are only available on campus – lab, gym, production facility, etc.), it is important to explicitly notify students at the beginning of the course and include this requirement in the course syllabus. The same recommendations outlined above for on-campus exams apply to performances that must take place on campus.

Finally, if you need support in selecting the most appropriate methods for assessing your students' learning in a bimodal course, please contact the TLSS specialists ([saea-tlss@uOttawa.ca](mailto:saea-tlss@uOttawa.ca)). They will be able to help you identify options that meet your specific context and needs.