Online Testing

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I'm adopting two different approaches:
(1) One course does not have an exam, students are graded based on their work in the classes and a massive project they spend the whole semester building
(2) The other course does have a test in it. I'm coming from the assumption that all tests online are essentially open-book tests (open-google tests, actually). Last semester we had to organize our exams online in a last-minute fashion - students were doing them from home and had to sign and check the box that basically said: "I promise not to cheat". Let's just say it was not a 100% success when it comes to students' honesty.

Outside of the university, nobody will forbid our students from using books or the Internet - quite the opposite. I'd like to deploy a final exam that reflects this: let them use anything they can get their hands on within the limited time of the exam and let's see how well they will do.

What worries me here, is that the student who is bright yet slow with their keyboard will face a disadvantage: demonstrating the understanding of complex ideas and defending an argument will require a lot of typing.

Matej Lorko:

I just came across a new working paper describing a recent experiment on cheating in on-line exams. Some very interesting results there. Aside from statistical detection of cheating, I was kind of surprised that the reminder of the university's code of ethics did not affect cheating levels. This counters earlier findings (e.g. Mazar, N., Amir, O., & Ariely, D., 2008). I guess the social norms can be quite different in online environment.

Abstract:
We study academic integrity in a final exam of a compulsory course with almost 500 undergraduate students (mostly in Economics and Business Management and Administration) at a major Spanish university. Confinement and university closure due to Covid-19 took place by the end of the last lecture week. As a consequence, the usual classroom exam was turned into an unproctored on-line multiple-choice exam without backtracking. We exploit the different orders of exam problems and detailed data with timestamps to study students' academic integrity. Taking the average over questions that were part of both earlier and later "rounds," we find that the number of correct answers to questions in the later round was 7.7% higher than those to the same questions in the earlier round. Moreover, the average completion time of questions in the later round was 18.1% shorter than that of the same questions in the earlier round. We estimate that between 13.4% and 22.5% of the students cheated due to information flows from earlier to later rounds. Nonetheless, since exam grades are positively correlated with previous continuous assessment, they can be considered informative. Finally, a mere reminder of the university's code of ethics, which was sent to a subgroup halfway through the exam, did not affect cheating levels.

Link:

https://www.barcelonagse.eu/sites/default/files/working_paper_pdfs/1210.pdf

Good luck to all with the rest of the semester and the exam period!

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