roadmap

Midterm Assessment

In a flexible teaching format, midterm assessments can **help students learn and stay motivated** as well **evaluate student learning.**

Non-supervised tests, like graded exercises, mini-project reports, presentations, and 'open-book' take home exams (in which students have access to external information) are all suitable as midterms in flexible courses.

Supervised tests, like oral exams and written exams (in which students do not have access to external information) should <u>only</u> take place in the end of semester exam session.

Midterm assessments can boost student engagement when they are following distance or blended courses

Midterms

EPFL

■ **CEDE** centre for digital education

■ **CAPE** teaching support centre

LEARN Center for Learning Sciences

Midterm Assessments

Motivating and assessing learning

What should you consider?

Encourage engagement

Give feedback on learning

Assessing learning

Keeping the rhythm of the course

In flexible and blended courses, it is easy for students to become disengaged. Assessment milestones (such as regular submission of exercises, or mid-term take home tests) can be important in ensuring students stay engaged and keep learning.

Knowing what they have learned

Since students have fewer opportunities to talk to each other and to teachers in blended and flexible courses, midterms and graded exercises provide crucial opportunities for them to get feedback.

Giving each student the grade they deserve

In addition to promoting and encouaging learning, assessments are also intended to assess whether student have attained the courses' learning outcomes.

In unsupervised assessments – especially those for large proportions of a course's grade – teachers should have a mechanisim for checking if the student has completed the work that they claim is their own.

Key Issues for Unsupervised Tests

There are a wide variety of types of unsupervised tests, including graded exercises, mini-project reports, poster or oral presentations, open book take home exams.

Unsupervised assessments can test a wide range of skills including in-depth analysing and complex problem solving, choosing information and structuring argumentation. This is often more like 'real-world' problem solving than supervised assessments which tend to evaluate students' ability to recall information (often under time pressure).

Opportunities for cheating on unsupervised assessments can be minimised by using more complex questions requiring students to develop an individual response.

Midterms

Midterm Assessments

Take home exams
From supervised to unsupervised tests

Other unsupervised tests
Issues to consider

Take home exams are one type of unsupervised assessment which are often used to replace supervised midterms.

In a take home exam:

▪ Students are normally assigned a longer time period to submit than in supervised exams. This reduces the risk of a student being unable to complete the test due to connection difficulties.

▪ Time pressure is not normally expected to be an issue, so students will generally have extra technical time to submit a test.

▪ Questions should have enough complexity so answers are not already available online or easily copied from someone else. This might include questions which have multiple correct answers, which require some written explanation, or which use previously unavailable datasets. (These are generally more like 'real world' problems).

▪ Students should be able to ask questions if they are confused about the structure or format of the test, and see responses to other students' queries. Ed Discussion can be used for this.

▪ Requiring handwritten answers or submitting all answers through the turnitin function in moodle can also help to ensure the work is the student's own

The key feature of all unsupervised tests is that students have access to external information such as books, the internet, or each other. Unsupervised tests should:

▪ Build this into the test (e.g. asking for student to search for and use external information in the test)

▪ Make it irrelevant (e.g. giving questions which are complex enough that they still have to demonstrate knowledge and skill even after they have drawn on external information.)

A key feature of flexible and blended assessment is that the student who is working at distance should not be disadvantaged as compared to a student on site. Test conditions must taken into account potential connection difficulties or technological problems students at distance may experience

Additional resources:

• Moodle can be used to submit assessments and to submit work to turnitin.
• Zoom can be used for oral or poster presentations.
• Student presentations can be scheduled using Office hours.

Midterms

EPFL

CEDE centre for digital education   **CAPE** teaching support centre   LEARN Center for Learning Sciences