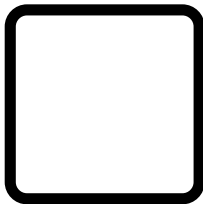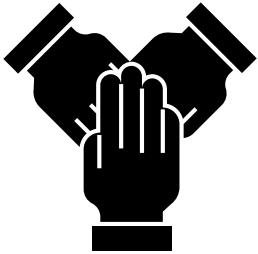# It's Midterm Week!

We know some of you have already delivered your midterms but for those whose midterms are still coming up, we have some helpful tips we wanted to share and re-mind you when getting ready to deploy your exams. Best of luck, it's midterm week!

SET EXPECTATIONS FIRST (FOR YOURSELF AND YOUR STUDENTS!)

For many of your students this is the first semester of their post secondary ca-reer AND their first time learning online. They're stressed out! And (most of) you are too! Clearly set your expectations prior to the exam so that everyone in the class knows what is expected from them and what kind of support they have if things go south. Be flexible and have a contingency plan in place just in case you or your students encounter technical difficulties. Technology almost never works perfectly! So plan for hiccups and everyone will have a much happier experience.

MEET WITH YOUR STUDENTS BEFORE IN YOUR VIRTUAL CLASSROOM TO HELP PREPARE THEM FOR THE EXAM.

We've heard of a few instructors who already do this but we think it's way too good not to share with all of you. Ensure that you schedule your midterm during your normal weekly synchronous meet up, as you would if you were still running your class in-person. Before having the students start the exam, meet them in your virtual classroom to go over your expectations, including what technology they should use (and be prepared for connection/technical issues), how to get a hold of you during the exam if they have problems, and other questions they may have prior to writing the exam.

UNCHECK THE FORCE COMPLETION OPTION!

You have a number of options to set for any test in Blackboard, like a release date, a timer, the number of attempts, etc. The Force Completion option (located in your Test Options page) determines how the test will be submitted if the user ends their exam abruptly.

When checked, if the user experiences any technical/connection issues, or if they start their exam and decide they need to go away from the computer (and therefore their session expires), even though they may have time left on their exam timer their test will auto-submit. Keeping this flag unchecked allows the student to come back in as many times as needed during the duration their exam is available to them (i.e. whatever defined in your timer field).
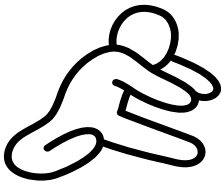
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BE AVAILABLE TO YOUR STUDENTS FOR THE DURATION OF YOUR EXAM.

Just as you would in your in-person class, be available to your students while they are writing their midterms in case they have any questions or problems. During the first part of your class, include how they can contact you along with the rest of your expectations prior to opening the exam. Students can contact you via one of the communication channels in Blackboard (a discussion forum, the internal course email or via Collaborate if you leave it open after you meet with them) or email you directly.

BE FLEXIBLE IN THE FACE OF TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES.

From the Grade Centre in Blackboard, you are able to clear an attempt to allow a student to retake the test. This means no one is penalized for having technical problems. You can arrange a new time with individual students or set a new time for the full class if you need to.

CTLI IS HERE TO SUPPORT YOU!

- Drop in to our weekly support sessions happening Thursdays between 12pm to 1pm. You can register here.

- Watch for our future workshop promotions (currently being developed based on your survey feedback. Thank you!).

- Email ctli@jibc.ca if you want an extra pair of eyes to review your test options or if you have other questions about building your midterms.

Happy Midterms!