

Testing and Quiz Tools

- **Students who use adaptive technology** – Currently, some of the testing tools have compatibility problems with some screen reader technologies. This occasionally results in the screen reader program crashing during an exam. A good practice would be to have a mock exam available for students to try so that they will know ahead of time if their adaptive technology will work with your exam. If it does not, an alternate version of the exam will need to be provided.
- **Students receiving the accommodation of extended time** – Because students with disabilities are often allowed the accommodation of “extended time on exams,” it is important to be able to provide this accommodation in an online setting as well. In most course management systems, it is possible to adjust an individual student’s exam length, but it is not always simple to do this. In some cases it is necessary to set up a different exam for the student who needs extended time. Consult with your IT staff on how to set this up when you have a student who is eligible for this accommodation.

Suggested Practice

Make a practice exam available for students to try to make sure your testing format is compatible with their technology.

Real-Time Chat

- **Students who are blind** – The chat features associated with some course management systems are incompatible with screen reader technology.
- **Students with learning disabilities** – Because of the fast pace of chats, students with learning disabilities that affect reading are at a decided disadvantage when it comes to participating in real-time chats. These students may also be reluctant to provide input into the chat due to concerns about their reading and writing skills.
- **Students for whom English is a second language** – The barriers described above also apply to these students. This category includes some students who are deaf who use American Sign Language as their primary language.
- **All students** – Finally, chat also presents a problem for the many students who take online courses because of their complex schedules. One of the advantages of

online courses lies in their asynchronous nature. When students are required to be at their computer at specific times to participate in class discussions, the convenience of online learning is reduced.

Suggested Practice

Because of the many barriers that the chat tool presents, it is often recommended that it be used as an optional tool only. Acceptable uses might be using chat as a way for students to access a professor during office hours or as a method for students to work together on a project—as long as alternatives are available such as phone, discussion board, or email.