Blackboard Tips & Tricks

Tests and Quizzes

Tests and Quizzes are assessment components of Blackboard. To assure a successful testing experience, please read through and follow the recommendations outlined below.

Before Starting the Test

- **Do not wait** until the last minute to take an exam in order to allow time to resolve any technical issues.
- Verify that you have a reliable computer and a dependable, wired Internet connection. Tests should *never* be taken over a wireless connection.
- Have a contingency plan in mind in the event that your computer crashes, your internet service goes down, or you find yourself without power.
- Make sure that you are using a Blackboard certified browser.
- Make sure that pop up blockers have been turned *off* in the browser as well as in any third party toolbars and security applications. Otherwise, make certain that you have added **https://bb.siue.edu** to your trusted sites. (Visit the University of California, Riverside, Trusted Browser Sites page for step-by-step instructions, substituting the SIUE Blackboard URL for the Lynda.com URL shown there).
- Verify that your computer is running the latest version of Java.
- Close all other applications that may be open on your computer to maximize the bandwidth being devoted to taking the test. Leave all other applications closed until you have completed your test.
- If you have been in Blackboard, log out, close the browser, and log back in. That will reset your session within Blackboard, maximizing your time within the new session.
- Close all other tabs that are open in your browser. Do not open any new tabs in the browser unless otherwise instructed to do so by your instructor.
- Check the Blackboard maintenance schedule, particularly if you are planning to take your test in the very early morning hours or on a Friday evening. Make certain that Blackboard will actually be up and running for the *entire* time you plan to be taking the test.
- Maximize the browser screen before you begin the test. Do not resize or refresh your browser window while taking an exam.
- If your instructor has set up a practice test, be certain to take it at least 24 hours in advance of the actual test, both to familiarize yourself with the online testing environment as well as to troubleshoot and have time to resolve any potential computer issues before a real test.

While Taking the Test

- Click **Begin** *only once* when you are ready to start the test.
- Click *only once* on any of the buttons within the test canvas (e.g. directional arrows, Save Answer, Save All Answers, Save and Submit), allowing the browser time to respond to your click and to load the content.

Information Technology Services
Lovejoy Library 0005
Email: ftc_help@siue.edu

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- Read all the exam instructions carefully.
    - **Timed Test:** Most of the time you must complete the test within a specific window of time. For timed tests, the time begins the minute you open the test, and will monitor your progress throughout the allotted time. Make certain that you submit your test before the time expires. In some cases, your instructor may set the test up to automatically submit at the end of the allotted time.
    - **Multiple Attempts:** Most of the time you will be allowed to take the exam only once. Once you have submitted it, you cannot go back and change answers. Some faculty may allow you to take the exam more than once. You should complete each attempt you open.
    - **Force Completion:** Most of the time, you must complete the exam the first time you open it. Some faculty may allow you to save answers and return to the exam later (provided you have not clicked on the Save and Submit button).
- Wait until the test questions are fully loaded *before* attempting to answer them. In some cases your instructor will set the test to load questions one at a time. In other cases they will set the test to load all questions at once.
- **Do not** click anywhere outside of the test canvas (e.g. course navigational button)**.** Clicking anywhere outside the test canvas can result in the loss of data.
- If backtracking is allowed, **do not** use the browser's back or forward buttons.
- **Do not** use the "Backspace" key on your keyboard unless you are typing a response in a text entry field.
- **Do not** use the scroll wheel on your mouse while you are over an actual test question since you may inadvertently change an answer as you scroll. Always click on a blank area of the test canvas before you engage the scroll wheel.
- **Do not** attempt to use the "Enter" key to move around the test canvas or to submit an answer. Use the arrow keys or the Question Completion Status to move through questions. Use the Save Answer button to save answers to individual questions
- Save your answers as you go. Do not wait until the end of a long test to save your answers. Saving an answer is your way of communicating with the Blackboard server that you are still taking the exam. If the Blackboard server does not receive a save response from you, it may time out due to inactivity and lock you out of the exam.
- Expand and use the **Question Completion Status** area at the top of the test canvas to monitor your progress throughout the test. When backtracking is allowed by your instructor, you may go back to unanswered questions by clicking on the question number link within Question Completion Status.
- Always **Save All Answers** prior to submitting the exam to ensure that all of your answers have been saved.
- At the end of the exam, click the **Save and Submit** button. You have not submitted the test for grading until you have clicked the Save and Submit button. Wait for the confirmation page to appear to assure that your exam has been properly submitted.

If you experience problems while taking a test or quiz that prevents you from completing or re-opening it, contact your instructor immediately. If you receive an error message, write it down exactly, taking note of the date and time, the browser you were using, and details of what you were doing at the time the error occurred. *Please note that ITS staff cannot reset an attempt for a test or quiz.* Only your instructor can reset attempts.

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