Blackboard 9 Test Options – 4 Settings to save you frustration and lost time.

Following these configuration suggestions will help reduce student difficulty when taking your online exams.

Force Completion: Recommendation – No

There is little reason to force the completion of a test whereby a student must not close their browser, lose their internet connection, or experience any other computer related difficulty that would interrupt the test. In a controlled lab environment on campus this would be something of little concern, but for students at home, work, or those using free wifi hotspots, guaranteeing a stable internet connection and a stable computer is never a sure thing. If this setting is enabled, if there is any drop in internet, closing of the browser window, or computer lockup, the student will not be able to complete or resume the test. If you're concerned about limiting the time a student has to take a test, use the timer feature instead (see Set Timer below).

Set Timer: Recommendation – Yes

Blackboard 9 has a new test timer feature which can be used to force the completion of a test after a set time period, but will also allow a student to resume a test if they do experience a drop in internet service or if they accidentally closed the browser or needed to reboot their computer. This is not a browser based timer, it's a system level timer that will continue to count down even if a student shuts down or re-boots their computer.

Test Feedback: Recommendation – Uncheck all unless the score until exam time has ended

Depending on the type of test you are giving to your students, you may not want to give the students their score or answer key to the exam the minute they complete a test. This could allow the exchange of answers (cheating) between other students of the class that have not yet completed the exam. Once the test has ended, you can enable these additional feedback items as you see fit without worrying if students were collaborating on taking the test with the feedback provided to other students.

Test Presentation: Recommendation – All at Once

If you set the timer for a test, it will take longer to move between questions when the test presentation option is set to "One at a time". Depending on the internet speed of your students, the action of moving back and forth between questions could impact the overall time a student has to take an exam resulting in complaints. Allowing the students to see all questions at once is entirely at your discretion, but from our experience, doing so this will result in less reported problems.