Take home exams

Background and overview

Take-home exams might be a good option for our 4000-level courses that already incorporate short answer responses into their final exam. One of the biggest concerns with take-home exams is that integrity will be reduced. It is imperative that you design your take-home exam in a way that maintains integrity. Below are some tips to help you get started!

Format

- Decide how many questions you will have; I use 5 for my take-home exams
- Broader questions that require students to practice their evaluative judgment and decision-making skills are encouraged
- Avoid questions that are definition or descriptive
- Provide a template that students can fill in to make the marking easier; we use Gradescope after to score responses
- Provided a recommended word limit or suggested word count to ensure responses are standardized
- Require students to submit their exam on OWL and use Turnitin to reduce plagiarism

Expectations

- Communicate with students about when they will receive the questions and when they are due; I usually provide 8-10 days in a traditional exam period
- Discuss where you expect student to get information to support their responses (e.g. lectures only, lectures and supplemental)
- Discuss with students how they can collaborate appropriately but provide individual responses that maintain integrity
- Discuss how each question will be evaluated (e.g. ideas, flow, writing style, etc.); I like to use a 5-point scale for each response

E.g. 4000-level Interdisciplinary Medical Sciences

*Download the template, save it as your [lastname_firstname_exam], and answer the questions in the boxes provided. You must upload your document to OWL by the deadline. Your answers should be no more than 300 words single-spaced and each response should be on its own page in the document. When formulating your responses to different questions, do not use the same points twice and ensure that your answers are varied and cover multiple lectures. Your answers will be formulated from the lectures; therefore, no references are required. In general, use the CER (claim, evidence, rationale) framework to support a clear and concise answer in full sentences. Good luck and make sure your responses are your own!*

Below is a copy of a final exam used in previous iterations of this course.
Question 1: During the semester, the question was raised if diabetes is an epidemic. If you google this question, you will see article headings such as “Is Diabetes Becoming the Biggest Epidemic of the Twenty-first Century?”. Provide a response to this question that is based on your knowledge from the guest lecturers.
**Question 2:** Often medical science research has focused on finding a cure for a particular disease. In your opinion, what does it mean to ‘cure’ diabetes and what field of diabetes research is the most promising to achieve the best outcomes?
**Question 3:** Diabetes complications are the result of untreated hyperglycemia. Does this mean that only individuals with unmanaged diabetes will develop complications in their lifetime? Is it that simple?
**Question 4:** There is a new trend where pregnant women are refusing the glucose challenge test. If you were a healthcare provider that had a patient who was considering refusing the test, what would you say to them and why. Use your knowledge from multiple lectures to support your response.
**Question 5:** A recent article titled “*Type 2 diabetes research held back by animal models*” highlighted that animals might not be an appropriate model to research diabetes. Based on what we know about animal and human islet biology and type 1 versus type 2 diabetes, was/is there merit in using animal models to study both types of the disease?

Word count: