



# Introduction to the Digital Learning Center Exam Commons

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UNIVERSITY OF  
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OFFICE OF INFORMATION  
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## Introduction to the Digital Learning Center Exam Commons

The Digital Learning Center Exam Commons provides a large-scale, web-based assessment service for instructors in two locations: the Adele Coryell Hall Learning Commons and the Dinsdale Family Learning Commons. There is an on-site manager, as well as student workers who provide front-desk services for the student users. Between these two sites, there are 210 computers available for testing. More information about the Exam Commons locations is available at <http://dlc.unl.edu>.

The Exam Commons strives to be as user-friendly, technologically intuitive, and distraction-free as possible for students. All testing times are pre-scheduled by students in advance. All students are responsible for self sign-up and early sign-up is recommended.

### Faculty Usage Checklist

Instructors wishing to make use of the Exam Commons service should completely familiarize themselves with the policies in this document. In particular, instructors should take note of the following items:

1. Instructors are responsible for setting up their online tests in the platform of their choice. Currently, we support Canvas quizzes and Möbius assessments for academic course testing. We also support WeBWork and the ETS Major Field Test on a smaller scale. You may contact the administrative staff if you have questions about utilizing these platforms.
2. When setting up your test for the Exam Commons, ensure that the "UNL Testing Centers" IP restriction is selected to ensure security. The Exam Commons uses IP-based location restriction instead of passwords for test security, so this is a very important step which must be taken to safeguard the confidentiality of your exam. Instructors may access detailed documentation about how to restrict access with these settings at <https://its.unl.edu/dlc/instructors>.
3. The "UNL Testing Centers" filter includes the IPs of the computers in the DLC Exam Commons and the SSD (Services for Students with Disabilities) Testing Center. If an instructor has students who need to test in a different location than these two pre-set options (e.g. distance students testing in other states, etc.), he or she must create a separate copy of the exam. Rather than using the "UNL Testing Centers" filter for this copy, it is recommended that the instructor utilize an alternate exam restriction method such as password protection.
4. Starting 45 days prior to the start of a new term, exam requests may be submitted for that term. It is recommended that instructors submit exam requests as early as possible so that their desired testing dates are still available in the reservation portal (<http://dlc-reserve.unl.edu>).
5. Provided that space is available, instructors can submit exam requests up to two weeks before the desired start date of testing.
6. When a reservation is made for a day of testing, it is made for that "full day" only. The Exam Commons cannot accommodate partial days of testing by having student sign-up end at specific times for specific courses.
7. Here are the most important rules for UNL student testers:
  - a. Sign-up for a testing timeslot (no walk-ins accepted)
  - b. Bring their N-Card for their test (no other forms of ID accepted)
  - c. Students may start the check-in process up to 15 minutes before their scheduled start time. Students will only be allowed to check-in up to 15 minutes after their scheduled start time.
8. The Exam Commons uses Respondus LockDown Browser as its default browser, which prevents students from performing many common browser functions while testing. Two other types of security software that are used in the Digital Learning Center are a screen-monitoring program and video surveillance software, which are constantly monitored by staff members to ensure the academic honesty of student testers.
9. Exam Commons staff reserves the right to edit exam settings like links, visibility, etc. to reduce interruptions to student testing.
10. The Exam Commons will allow exam requests which include student-created notes as an "Approved Material." For example: A single sheet of student-created notes can include one or both sides of a piece of paper 8 ½" by 11" or any standard note card size. The size and specifications must be included in the approved material section (e.g., 3x5 note card one side or 8x11 note sheet both sides). The student must bring this item in and present it at check-in for visual inspection. The Exam Commons will collect all note sheets at check-out to be recycled. **The Exam Commons cannot facilitate requests that include open book/open note testing.**
11. Requests to have an entire class test at one sitting are not allowed.
12. Only one attempt per student per day is allowed during the regular academic semesters. In the summer, the DLC can accommodate two attempts per day.
13. No Multiple attempt exams are allowed during Finals Week to help mitigate DLC rising capacity issues.

**Requesting Usage** – All instructors planning to make use of the Digital Learning Center Exam Commons are required to submit an Exam Request for approval at least two weeks prior to the start of testing. Instructors will be able to start submitting exam requests for the upcoming term 45 days prior to the start of term date. Exam requests will be for "full days" of testing only; we cannot accommodate partial-day testing reservations. The form will request the desired test dates and indicate all contact information and testing needs. This documentation will allow us to plan for needed increases in resources and student staffing.

The calendar portion of this form uses a percentage threshold of available testing space to indicate how busy the DLC will be on a given day. Days which appear as green are predicted to be less than 50% full, days which appear yellow are predicted to be between 50% and 75% full, and days which appear red are predicted to be more than 75% full. If the Exam Commons is predicted to be full to capacity on a certain day, that day will appear as "grayed out" on the calendar. Although it may be necessary for minor changes to be made to a request, ultimately the request will likely be approved if space is available.

**Requesting Usage Changes** – If an instructor needs to change a test date, they must request a change at least 48 hours in advance of the change by contacting a Digital Learning Center administrative staff member. Instructors cannot make changes to previously approved requests directly on the reservation site. Since the Exam Commons' testing calendar begins filling up from the start of the semester, we cannot guarantee that all desired changes can be made. While it is somewhat likely that there may not be adequate space for larger classes to make date changes during the semester, changes will be approved if space is available.

**Other notes about usage requests:**

- Usage Request Forms are presently approved on a first-come first-served basis.
- Tests are limited to two hours.
- Requests to have an entire class at one sitting are not allowed.
- Only one attempt per test per student per day is allowed (except in the summer, when two attempts per day are possible).

**Requesting Make-Up Exams** – Instructors also have the option to schedule make-up exams for students by following the "Schedule a Make-Up" link on the DLC's Exam Scheduling page. Instructors will also be expected to have made make-up exams functional and available by the time the student arrives for testing.

**Regarding Final Exams** – Exam windows are required to encompass the date scheduled for the final exam in the Schedule of Classes and should start no earlier than the Saturday after the Fifteenth Week, immediately before the start of Final Exam Week. It is the responsibility of instructors to comply with all University Fifteenth Week and Finals Exam Week policies, which are available for review at [http://stuafs.unl.edu/sa\\_policies\\_deadweek.shtml](http://stuafs.unl.edu/sa_policies_deadweek.shtml).

**Examination Format** – The Digital Learning Center administers computer-generated exams by way of the following testing platforms:

- Möbius assessments in the assignment mode called "Homework/Quiz" with the IP address group "UNL Testing Centers" selected. If you need technical support while creating your Möbius assessments, please email [support@nebraska.edu](mailto:support@nebraska.edu) to open a ticket.
- Canvas assessments in the assignment mode called "Quizzes," with filter IP addresses and then "UNL Testing Centers" selected. In the "Quiz Restrictions," the selection box for "Require an access code" should be deselected. If you are creating a Canvas Quiz and need technical support, please email [support@nebraska.edu](mailto:support@nebraska.edu) to open a ticket.

We also support WeBWorK and the ETS Major Field Test on a smaller scale, for specific and pre-approved courses, departments, and colleges. The "UNL Testing Centers" IP address group includes IP addresses for both the Exam Commons locations as well as the Services for Students with Disabilities Testing Center. We will update the "UNL Testing Centers" IP filter automatically whenever a change is made to our network.

### **Expectations of Instructors**

- Instructors will be members of the Digital Learning Center listserv to promote efficient communication should any new information regarding policies develop.
- Instructors will submit an Exam Request for each exam at least two weeks prior to testing. Requests will be approved on a first-come, first-served basis. Requests will not be approved if space is not available.
- Instructors will be sufficiently familiar with their testing platform of choice to be able to create their own tests in accordance with the policies stated above.
- Test aids, tables, and all external content must be made available through links or embedded within the testing platform. Instructors must be sure that this external content will work with Respondus LockDown Browser prior to testing. Instructors are welcome to contact the DLC Exam Commons manager at 472-2178 for assistance with beta-testing.
- Academic course testing is our main priority (e.g. quizzes, unit tests, midterms, and finals), but we can also accommodate most other alternately-focused testing needs (such as research-based testing or program preparation testing) as long as the testing is tied to an academic course and utilizes one of our pre-approved testing platforms. Instructors who have this type of testing need and would like to administer their testing through the Exam Commons may be asked to select testing dates which avoid peak usage times for academic course testing (e.g. avoiding dates near Fall Break and Spring Break, and finals week of each semester).
- Both beginner and advanced training materials are available at <https://its.unl.edu/dlc/>
- In the event that an exam's link, settings or accessibility has been set up incorrectly and an instructor cannot be reached, DLC administrative staff may make edits to make the exam available. Edits will not be made to exam content. The Digital Learning Center is granted permission to edit testing platform links and availability settings when an instructor agrees to these DLC policies (a required part of the exam request process). Since instructors are often busy teaching classes when issues like this happen, this pre-authorization allows student testers to remain uninterrupted.

### **Security Measures in the Exam Commons**

To ensure test security, the Exam Commons maintains several security standards. The student staff at the front-desk constantly monitors screen-viewing software and video surveillance footage during all hours of operation. In the event that an academic dishonesty situation is retrospectively suspected by an instructor, student scratch paper is retained for two weeks after testing; this scratch paper can be pulled upon instructor request. The Exam Commons can also pull specific surveillance footage from the past 30 days from the UNL Police Department, also upon instructor request. Test-takers will also have their picture taken via webcam before they start their exam. These pictures can be pulled upon instructor request if there is an identity concern, and will be kept as long as necessary for administrative purposes.

## **Exam Verification at the Digital Learning Center**

Upon instructor request, Digital Learning Center staff will conduct a thorough beta-testing of exams (looking for software compatibility problems and missing plugins) in the case that the instructor is employing technology that is not commonly used in the facility (e.g., a music exam that contains audio samples).

Such requests must assume that all of the following conditions are met:

- the exam to be beta-tested has already been created
- the instructor (or instructional designer) has already done their own beta-testing of the exam
- the request is received more than 48 hours in advance of the exam going live

Digital Learning Center staff will communicate any detected deficiencies to the instructor as soon as they are identified and contribute to the solution of these deficiencies.

## **Student Policies**

- All students are required to have their current N-Card to test. Other forms of government ID will not be accepted as a substitute for N-Cards because only N-Cards are designed to fully integrate with our check-in and check-out systems. DLC staff reserve the right to ask for a second ID if needed for identity verification. High school students who are taking UNL courses through programs such as Nebraska Now may present their current high school ID along with their NU ID number to be checked-in for their exam.
- Staff members will only answer technical questions relating to the functionality of the student's exam. Students are advised to do the best they can and discuss concerns relating to test content with their instructor.
- By default, nothing is allowed at each student's computer station other than DLC barcoded scratch paper and writing utensil. Calculators, electronic translators, dictionaries, and other items may be used by students at the discretion of their instructor. Calculator lids must be stored in lockers.
- For courses which allow the use of electronic translators, the DLC has a locked down iPad available for students to use for language translation. This device is available on a first-come, first-served basis, and its languages functionality can be viewed on the DLC Student information page (<http://its.unl.edu/dlc/students>).
- All testing stations will utilize Respondus LockDown Browser by default, which will prevent students from having access to unauthorized materials.
- Students with disabilities who require an accommodation for testing will automatically see accommodations on their DLC profile. Extra time will automatically be built into exam reservations. Seat type related accommodations will be available as options during testing time sign up and must be selected by the student. Please contact DLC staff for questions about additional accommodations.
- Students are not allowed to study, do homework, or work on practice tests in DLC.
- All student personal items must be kept in an on-site locker. Only permitted items are allowed during testing, examples of these items include your N-Card, authorized materials, DLC provided barcoded scratch paper, covered beverages, and writing utensils. Prohibited items include any materials or tech items (including but not limited to phones, digital watches, timers, pagers, radios, tablets, computers, headphones, etc.) not previously

authorized by the DLC administrative staff or your instructor. DLC administrative staff reserves the right to refuse any items that have the potential to decrease test security or result in an academic dishonesty situation.

- If you are enrolled in two-factor authentication service, you will not need your established UNL two-factor device when you log-on for your test. Presenting your N-Card at check-in will constitute the second factor of verifying your identity, and therefore the DLC Exam Commons computers will automatically bypass the requirement to verify with your two-factor device.
- No student may leave the room and return to a test in progress. The only exception to this rule is in the case of technical problems. In this instance, students may exit the main testing area and approach the front desk for technical assistance. There is a restroom available in the Digital Learning Center for students in process of testing. If the restroom is occupied and a student needs to use the restroom, they will notify the DLC staff and be escorted by a staff member to another facility.
- Students needing to utilize the Lactation Room will contact DLC staff about their needs. This room is located in 415 LLS.
- Barcoded scratch paper is scanned in and collected as part of the check-out process when exams are finished. Students who are allowed to take scratch paper out of the DLC must have it visually inspected by staff before doing so.
- Students are to schedule their testing times on a first-come, first-served basis with no exceptions. Beginning two weeks prior to the start of testing, a student may schedule their time slot. Early sign-up is recommended.
- If a conflict arises with a scheduled testing time, students may edit or cancel their testing time up until 15 minutes before the start of their reservation. If a student fails to do this and they miss their scheduled exam time, they will be able to sign up for one more testing timeslot within the original window if their instructor has permitted this reschedule option. If a student misses this next appointment or their instructor has not permitted the reschedule option, they will need to contact their instructor about scheduling a make-up exam.
- For multiple attempt exams, each student is allowed only one attempt per test per day. Students with multiple attempt exams will be able to sign up for their next attempt starting immediately after they have been checked-out of the prior attempt. This means that if a student takes their first attempt of a multiple attempt exam on the last day of that exam's window of availability, they will not be able to complete other attempts.
- Students may check-in for testing 15 minutes before or after their scheduled time slot. No new tests may be started 15 minutes past their scheduled time slot. All tests will be ended at close.
- Final testing slots of the day will be available for the maximum length of the exam plus fifteen minutes before closing time. This will allow students who check-in up to 15 minutes after their scheduled time slot to have their full testing time. For example, a student with a one hour exam would have a final possible slot of the day available as one hour and fifteen minutes before close.
- To accommodate students needing to take make-up exams as well as any technological errors, a very small percentage of DLC computers may be "held back" from general use.
- All students are required to be in compliance with the UNL Student Code of Conduct found at <https://studentconduct.unl.edu/student-code-conduct>
- We reserve the right to deny access to students for problematic behavior.
- The Digital Learning Center is not responsible for any personal items left unattended and/or unsecured in any facility. Personal items can be secured in assigned lockers. Hats can be worn into the Digital Learning Center if they are presented to a staff member at the front desk for visual inspection prior to testing.

## Exceptional Scenario Protocols

### Suspected Cheating

- Suspected cheating occurs when a student is observed by a Digital Learning Center staff member (and/or video monitoring equipment) as exhibiting behavior defined as such. The definition of cheating is detailed in the UNL [Student Code of Conduct](#) in Section II.
- When staff members suspect students of cheating, staff will approach students and inform them that they have been observed exhibiting dishonest behavior. Students will then be asked to discontinue the behavior. Physical material relating to the suspected dishonest behavior will be confiscated (sticky notes, notecards, etc).
- After the dishonest behavior is stopped, students are allowed to continue testing. At this point, students who choose to discontinue the test may leave and a staff member will "Quit & Save" out of the student's test.
- Staff member uses student's N-Card and/or testing information to fill out an incident report. Observable facts are included -- opinions or speculations are omitted. The Digital Learning Center administrative staff will send this report and any evidence to the Student Conduct office as well as the involved faculty member.

### Disruptive Behavior

- Disruptive behavior occurs when a student is observed by a Digital Learning Center staff member (and/or video monitoring equipment) as exhibiting behavior defined as such. The definition of disruptive behavior is detailed in the UNL [Student Code of Conduct](#) in the Standards of Responsible Conduct section of Section II.
- The staff member approaches the student and reminds them that disruptive behavior is against University and Digital Learning Center policy and asks the student to stop the behavior.
- If the student continues with behavior, the staff member will ask them to leave the center. If the student was taking a test, the staff member will exit the student's test. If the student refuses to leave, the staff member will no longer engage with the disruptive person.
- If at any point the staff member feels threatened, or if the student's behavior is threatening in any way to other students or staff, UNL Police will be called.
- The staff member fills out an incident report. Observable facts are included - opinions or speculations are omitted. Digital Learning Center administrative staff will send the report to the faculty member and the Student Conduct Office.

## **Emergency Situation Protocols**

### **Winter Weather Closing Option #1 - All Classes are Canceled**

The Digital Learning Center locations will be closed. The manager for the Digital Learning Center will close the center for that day on the reservation website, which will automatically cancel student registrations and notify them of the cancellation. The manager will also notify instructors who had an exam request scheduled on that day and offer the option for instructors to tack on an additional day to their exam request to make up for the closure.

### **Winter Weather Option #2 - In-Person Classes are Canceled and Follow Instructional Continuity Plans**

The Digital Learning Center locations will be closed. The manager for the Digital Learning Center will close the center for that day on the reservation website, which will automatically cancel student registrations and notify them of the cancellation. The manager will also notify instructors who had an exam request scheduled on that day and offer the option for instructors to tack on an additional day to their exam request to make up for the closure. Since the Digital Learning Center is an in-person service, it cannot be a part of instructional continuity plans if classes are canceled.

### **Winter Weather Closing Option #3 - All Classes are Conducted as Usual**

The Digital Learning Center locations will be open as usual.

### **Power Outage**

- In the event the power goes out in the Digital Learning Center while students are taking tests, staff will follow guidelines outlined in UNL's [Electrical Power Outage Procedure](#). The safety and well being of students and staff is of primary importance. All computers will be turned off to prevent any damage that may occur when power is restored. Staff will keep an alternate source of light to facilitate safety during the outage.
- If power is restored before the center is closed, staff will monitor the situation and use discretion whether to allow students to continue testing.
- If students are not allowed to continue testing, make-up requests will be scheduled at the discretion of each student's instructor.
- Students and instructors impacted by an emergency situation will be contacted.

### **Active Shooter Situation**

- In the event that a UNL Alert is sent out about an active shooter on campus, DLC staff will follow the UNLPD's "Run, Hide, Fight" emergency plan. Staff will decide the best course of action at the time of the incident.
- Staff will follow emergency guidelines outlined in the UNL document Procedures in Case of Emergency. The safety and well being of students and staff is of primary importance.
- Make-up requests will be scheduled at the discretion of each student's instructor.
- Students and instructors impacted by an emergency situation will be contacted.

## **Other Emergency Situations**

- In the event of any natural disaster, accident, or other emergency incident that may occur during Digital Learning Center hours while students are taking tests, staff will follow emergency guidelines outlined in the UNL document [Procedures in Case of Emergency](#).
- The safety and well being of students and staff is of primary importance.
- Make-up requests will be scheduled at the discretion of each student's instructor.
- Students and instructors impacted by an emergency situation will be contacted.

## **Miscellaneous Issues**

### **Test Link or Content Missing**

- DLC staff reserves the right to add a test link and/or edit an exam's availability to allow for testing.
- If a student's test is missing content (i.e. the link to a picture is broken and it does not display), DLC Staff will try to contact the student's instructor while the student is still testing.
- If a staff member cannot reach the respective faculty member, a note will be recorded about the student's situation and the instructor will be contacted via email.
- The student's DLC reservation will be "deleted" by front desk staff and the student will be told to follow-up about the technical issue with their instructor.

### **Student Missing Valid N-Card for Testing**

- All students are required to have a valid N-Card for testing. If a student does not have this requirement due to any personal situation (theft, loss, etc.), no exceptions will be made. It is an integral component to our secure testing procedure and is technologically necessary to the process.
- If this occurs during N-Card Office hours, the student will be offered the option of visiting the N-Card office to purchase a replacement N-Card.
- If this is not an option, the student will be told to reschedule their exam if this is an option or email their instructor to determine if schedule a make-up exam request will be possible.

### **Student is Distracted by Another Student While Testing**

- Occasionally, a student may be distracted by another student in a way which doesn't rise to the level of disorderly behavior (e.g. pencil tapping, humming, or mumbling nearby while testing). In this scenario, the distracted student may approach the front desk to request a seat change.
- If seating allows, DLC staff will attempt to accommodate requests from students whose original seating assignments are affecting their level of concentration.