

ENGAGING STUDENTS IN SCENARIO-BASED ASSESSMENT FOR FINAL EXAMS

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We present our approaches to enhancing the authenticity of final exams across large first-year first semester biology units of cohort sizes between 300-1200 students. Historically exams were primarily used as an instrument that mainly assessed knowledge retention with limited provision of feedback to students. The necessity to shift to online learning during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic provided us with a challenging, yet opportune moment to transform our final examinations into an authentic learning experience for undergraduate biology students. We placed a large focus on integrating scenario-based questions in the final exam thereby assessing students' ability to apply knowledge to real-world contexts. To enhance engagement with the assessment, we also provided personalised feedback for each student. With additional challenges around access to artificial intelligence and academic integrity, we share our experiences returning to in-person final examinations and evaluate the relevancy and benefits of scenario-based questions for student assessment and learning. We also share our approaches to feedforwarding initiatives to prepare students for examinations that is different to what most students would have experienced in their secondary schooling.

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