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Suggestions for How to Prevent Cheating on Objective Exams  
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Below, I describe the things I do to prevent cheating in my accounting courses. My exams are almost always “objective” with multiple choice questions and hand-written solutions to problems. Additional prevention techniques would be required for subjective exams.

A suggestion for Saint Mary’s College: Show each student’s picture on Moodle. Students can hire other students to take classes for them, and I think it’s important for faculty members to be able to verify the identities of the students taking their classes. SMC takes the students’ pictures anyway, and I think faculty should be able to see those pictures too.

Things I do when administering “objective” (e.g. Multiple Choice or Problem) exams:

- I change the exams every semester. I assume that students in my classes have access to my old exams and write exams accordingly.
- I check attendance while students are taking the exam, and at the end, I count the exams I’ve received to make sure I have one exam for each student. This procedure prevents students from claiming they took an exam when they did not.
- I watch the students the entire time. I do not do anything else (e.g. grading), and I do not leave the room.
- I watch for pens that can scan. Students can use scanning pens to send questions to their friends who will be taking the exam in a later section.
- Calculators: I do not allow students to use calculators with alphabetical keys because they can store notes in there. I purchased my own dollar store calculators for students to use as needed. These calculators cannot store text and cannot be used to access the internet. Alternatively, departments may be willing to purchase calculators for all faculty to share. I do not allow cell phones to be used as calculators. I do not allow students to share calculators because they could pass answers back and forth. I watch for students who put notes in or on calculator cases or pencil cases.
- Drinks: Students can write notes on the inside of water bottle labels and re-glue the labels. They can write notes under the “sleeves” of coffee cups. I ask students to put drinks on the floor during a test to make it difficult for them to read any information that may be there. If they ask me why I do this, I tell them I don’t want them to spill on the exams, which is also true.
- Homework: I use an online homework package that gives each student unique homework problems (i.e. with uniquely generated numbers for each problem).
- Before every exam I warn students in class and in an email that they will not be allowed to leave the room during an exam until they submit their exam “for good.” Without this rule, they could check notes they’ve left for themselves in the bathroom, check the internet, or meet with a friend.
- When students are at tables, their exam materials can drift into their neighbor’s space. Ask them to protect their exam materials.
- Baseball caps: It’s hard to see their eyes when they wear these, and they can put notes under the visor or inside the cap. Ask students to turn the caps around or take them off.

- Women wearing skirts can write notes on their legs and move their skirts up to see during the test. Students can write notes under watches. These are good reasons to walk around the room and watch during an exam.
- I protect against imposters who can pay someone else to take a class for them. I recommend checking student IDs once per term, or taking students' pictures for an Attendance app at the beginning of the term to verify who was in the class.
- I provide scan-trons rather than having students provide their own. (If students bring their own, they can write notes on them before the exam.)
- After I grade scan-trons, for each question answered incorrectly, I put a pen mark through the correct answer. This checks for machine misgradings due to erasures, and it keeps students from changing their answers and requesting more points later.
- I give multiple versions of exams (different order of questions, different order of answers in multiple choice, changing numbers used in problem calculations).
- Colored exams: Each one of my exams is copied on a different color of paper. For example, Exam 1 may be copied on purple paper, Exam 2 on yellow, etc. If I have two versions for an exam, they are both on the same color paper so students don't know who has the same or different version. Because I use different colors for every exam, my students never know what color an exam is going to be so they can't bring in notes. If there is a white piece of paper on the desk, I will notice it. I do not allow students to provide their own scratch paper because they could bring in notes.
- I make sure all materials are in zipped bags on the floor, making them inaccessible during an exam. As I walk around the room, I check for stray paper on chairs or on the floor.