

## Resource Guide

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### Alternative Summative Assessments in Asynchronous Distance Learning Courses

Creating meaningful and engaging summative assessments is always a challenge. Some of the most common of these assessments include oral presentations, research projects/papers, and group projects. Converting these to an asynchronous format requires a bit of creative thinking and use of technology if you're looking for something to encourage student engagement. Below are some ideas for developing alternative summative assessments in an asynchronous format. Especially if you have students do oral presentations (individually or in a group) in an in-person class, these ideas will give you options for keeping that assessment while also incorporating Universal Design and inclusivity in your distance class.

These ideas will work in classes of all sizes, but if you have a large class, consider using the Canvas Groups option (part of the People tool) to manage the number of presentations each student must watch or interact with. In the spirit of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), you might consider offering one or more of these options to students, particularly for a semester-long or research-based project, that way each student could choose the option they are most comfortable with and that meets their individual accessibility needs. Including instructions and requirements related to accessibility (i.e., captions, transcripts, visual design, etc.) provides another layer of teaching as students will need to consider how best to communicate their ideas to others in an accessible way. This also gives non-native English-speaking students the option of recording a video in another language (their native language) while providing English captions and transcripts.

- **Recorded Presentations with Slides.** Students can record slide presentations and post them to a specific Discussion or Assignment in the Canvas course. There are multiple options for creating the slides by using Power Point, [Canva](#), [Prezi](#), or Google Slides, and students can record their presentation of the slides in Panopto, Zoom, Canva, or even in Power Point. Additionally, consider giving the students the option of recording with their camera on (so you see their face) or just with audio. Panopto includes a captioning option. This project would work best with individual projects. If it's a group presentation, students could collaborate on the slides, then schedule a synchronous Zoom meeting for the group in which they present their slides while recording the Zoom; students then submit the Zoom recording per the assignment instructions.
- **Virtual Poster Sessions.** Have students create an infographic using a free tool such as [Pickto Chart](#) or Canva. These tools are easy to use and there are many online tutorials. Students can post their infographics to a designated discussion board; other students

could view the posters and ask questions. You might also provide a rubric students could use to give feedback to their peers. In grading these projects or having other students offer feedback, make sure you're focusing on the content, rather than the design unless you're going to teach design.

- **Video or Audio Presentations.** A simple way to do a short video or audio is to use the Media tool within the Rich Content Editor (RCE) in Canvas. Students would have the option of recording a short (<15 minute) video with their computer camera on, or an audio file only with the camera off. The Media tool allows for students to delete and start over; however, it does not permit screen sharing, which means that students could not incorporate visual materials (i.e., photos, charts, graphs, etc.) if those are required for the project. Students could also create videos using their phones ([iMovie](#), for example) or even [TikTok](#). Beyond the Canvas Media tool, students could create an audio only file, or podcast, simply with the voice-recording feature on many mobile phones. Additionally, several free software platforms, such as [Audacity](#) or [PodBean](#), are available online.
- **Websites.** Another option is having students create websites. There are several options, such as Google Sites, [Wix](#), and [Weebly](#), that are free and fairly easy to use. Students could post links to their sites in a discussion board and their peers could comment on Canvas and interact on the student websites.

In all the above examples, it is suggested that you give students the opportunity to see each other's work by submitting links in a discussion board on your Canvas page. Additionally, please note that the Reinert Center is not endorsing any of the above software or online platforms; we are simply sharing options.

## Resources

Berry, S. (2022). *Creating Inclusive Online Communities: Practices that Support and Engage Diverse Students*. Stylus Publishing.

Martin, D. (2023). [Are Your Assessments Fair and Balanced?](#) Faculty Focus.

McLaughlin, L. and Ricevuto, J. (2021). [Assessments in a Virtual Environment: You Won't Need that Lockdown Browser!](#) Faculty Focus.

For more information or to discuss how you might incorporate these ideas into your courses, contact the Reinert Center by [email](#) or submit a [consultation request form](#).