

# ***Discussion Based Assessments and Virtual Office Hours***

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## **Virtual Office House**

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University's Worldwide Division is the online/virtual college of the university. Instructors teach virtually using a variety of synchronous and asynchronous modalities. Each instructor is required to have 5 weekly office hours. Instructors can choose to use a virtual office platform, phone call or other method to be accessible to students. Students frequently don't use virtual office hours because most instructors are readily accessible, however, using discussion based assessments puts those hours to good use.

## **How to determine best virtual office hours?**

- Google Forms (easy and free)
- Doodle Poll
- Other

## **What is a discussion based assessment (DBA)?**

- Instructor and student have a focused discussion about student learning
- Instructor asked specific questions regarding course content to assess student understanding
- No more than 30 minutes
  - Want to avoid student fatigue

## **How do you conduct a DBA?**

1. Create a schedule and decide date/time for DBA
2. Prepare student ahead of time as to the process
  - a. Phone call, Google Voice, Skype or other method like Adobe Connect
3. Determine what questions you will assess (previous assessed material is helpful)
4. Start of DBA, small talk with student will help them relax
  - a. Ask how they are doing, program of study, assure not to stress, etc.
  - b. Remind them of process and how long it will take
5. Tell student you are going to start the DBA
6. Ask first question listed on the rubric
  - a. Be sure to ask follow-up questions, probe student for more detail
    - i. Use open ended questions to illicit further response
    - ii. Provide feedback to student
7. Ask remaining questions
8. Tell student when the DBA has concluded
9. Provide any additional feedback
10. Update student grades/records as necessary to reflect DBA
  - a. Great for bonus points or to re-assess activities where the student performed poorly

**Benefits:**

- Great way to ensure academic integrity (who is really doing the work)
- Collect feedback from students
- Help improve grades

***Tips for a successful Discussion Based Assessment\****

Tip 1: Be sure that you have completed all module assignments, readings, etc.

Tip 2: Call on time—if no answer, leave a message that includes your name and telephone number

Tip 3: If you need to reschedule a DBA, be sure to let the instructor know

Tip 4: When completing the DBA, find a quiet place with minimal distractions

Tip 5: Have your notes ready as well as any questions that you still may have regarding the module

Tip 6: Listen carefully to the questions being asked by the instructor

Tip 7: Speak clearly and take your time, if you need a moment to collect your thoughts, let the instructor know

\*Modified from <https://vlearn.mnps.org/vblog/2019/3/4/dba-discussion-based-assessment-golden-rules>