

Some collected wisdom in Economics of using Crowdmark

Jennifer Murdock, September 5, 2019

1 Formatting the test/exam when using Crowdmark

You create a pdf file with your test/exam that you upload to Crowdmark. Here are some tips.

- Overall format: <https://crowdmark.com/help/creating-an-assessment-template/>.
- Give ample space right after each question (or part of a question) and *tell students to write in PENCIL and use an ERASER*.
- Have an *even* total number of pages. For example, have six or eight pages (including the cover page), but not seven. Answers in the wrong spot complicate marking.
- If you have materials for students to review when answering, consider using supplement (not in Crowdmark). In other words, a separate attachment with any figures, tables, and/or excerpts that students consult when formulating their answers. This is a good idea in general as students can easily reference materials when writing their answers. Aside from making the test/exam more convenient for students, this lessens the number of Crowdmark pages (so that the pdf files to e-mail for printing are smaller *and* fewer pages need to be scanned after the test) and makes formatting the test/exam paper substantially easier. See the sample test at <http://homes.chass.utoronto.ca/~murdockj/teaching/#crowdmark>.
- If you have a team of marking TAs, I would recommend having each specialize in a question or part of a question. Use the flexible grading features introduced in December 2017: <https://crowdmark.com/blog/new-feature-flexible-grading/>.

2 Photocopy requests when using Crowdmark

Crowdmark photocopy requests are submitted via our usual protocols. It does require more explanation. Here is a sample photocopy request e-mail:

Sample photocopy request: I am writing with a copy request for a Crowdmark test with a separate supplement for Test #5 in ECO220Y1Y, L0201, L0301, and L0401. The attached pdf file (ECO220_Murdock_Test_5_447 booklets.pdf) contains 447 unique tests where each test is eight pages long (for a total of 3,576 pages = 447*8). Double-sided, each test is four sheets. It should be stapled every 4 sheets (8 pages). However, I do not need copies of all 447 tests: only pages 1 to 3,456 of the attached file, which corresponds to test papers for 432 students (3,456 = 432*8). Also, I need 432 double-sided and stapled copies of the attached pdf file (TT220_5-APR19-SUPPLEMENT.pdf), which is a standard (non-Crowdmark) request. I do NOT want the supplement stapled to each test paper.

3 Accessibility Services when using Crowdmark

In large enrollment courses, there is at least one student writing with Accessibility Services. Standard protocol is to e-mail the test. With Crowdmark, unique copies of the test must be

copied from the big pdf file containing all the unique tests for the entire class. This requires using Adobe Acrobat. This is a few minutes of extra work and double-checking for the instructor. **Note well:** Do *not* mess around with the big pdf file that Crowdmark produces. Keep that intact in your photocopy request: that is why Section 2 asked for only a subset of the large file to be printed. Crowdmark uses a special looping technology to keep the file sizes extra small and you do not want to mess that up. Instead, you can print (in Adobe) the last five tests (supposing that you have five students writing with Accessibility Services) and e-mail those: the loss of looping does not matter because it is only a few tests anyway.

4 Scanning papers

With a traditional paper based test, TAs share test papers. With Crowdmark, TAs mark the questions (pages) they have been assigned online. This requires scanning. First, the staples need to be removed. This is efficiently done by cutting the edges off the pages. The TA Scanning Coordinator will help you and your TAs through the remaining steps. Look for an e-mail from the TA Scanning Coordinator before your Crowdmark test.

5 Use the keyboard shortcuts and comment library

For a great summary of marking see: <https://crowdmark.com/help/grading-tools/>.) Also, when marking in Crowdmark, notice “Shortcuts” in the top right, which is a useful quick reference. The short-cuts significantly improve marking efficiency. Also, make sure to use the comment library: <https://crowdmark.com/help/using-the-comment-library/>.

6 Use the tags and filters

In the top right of the “Grading Grid” in Crowdmark, you can see “Filter evaluations.” Use the tags (shortcut t) to tag papers for review. This allows others to easily filter by these tags.

7 If you have a Head TA, make them a Facilitator

In Crowdmark, Facilitators can do almost everything that instructors can. If you have a Head TA (or a single TA), promoting them will enable your Head TA to help you more.

8 Check grading times

Crowdmark records time spent on active grading. You can monitor time spent marking by TA (go to “Team” in Crowdmark) and/or by page (go to “Dashboard” in Crowdmark). This enables both real time monitoring of progress, reality checks for your DDAH forms, and learning about how the question prompts you write translate into marking time.