SCC Keep Teaching: Alternatives to Exams

1. **Series of quizzes**: offer a low-stakes opportunity for students to demonstrate mastery of material, and give you ongoing information about student understanding. Frequent quizzing has also been shown to reinforce student understanding.

2. **Student-developed quiz questions**: writing quiz questions both builds and demonstrates students’ understanding of the material. This assignment can be structured as a collaborative group activity.

3. **Open-book, take-home assessments**: many disciplines already have a tradition of take-home exams, typically involving more conceptual or applied questions that students cannot quickly look up in a textbook.

4. **Professional presentations or demonstrations**: students can create audiovisual presentations using a variety of media, powerpoint, prezi, and other tools.

5. **Annotated anthology or bibliography**: this project gives students choice in selecting works while assessing their higher-order abilities to evaluate sources, compare multiple perspectives, and provide rationales for their choices.

6. **Fact sheet**: students create a one-page fact sheet on a topic. Students must select relevant facts and explain them clearly and concisely.

7. **Peer- and self-review activity**: these allow for personal reflection on learning and peer-to-peer instruction, both of which reinforce and deepen understanding. Students do need instruction in the task of providing constructive feedback. Targeted rubrics laying out expectations for student work are very helpful.

8. **E-Portfolio**: a student-selected portfolio of work from the semester. Students compile their best or representative work from the semester, writing a critical introduction to the portfolio and a brief introduction to each piece.

9. **Non-Traditional Paper or Project**: creative assignments work best when they have some “real-world” relevance and offer students some choice in delivery format.

10. **Group Project**: group projects require students to demonstrate mastery of subject matter and develop their ability to communicate and work collaboratively. It is crucial to make your assessment criteria and grading scheme clear, and to ensure that there are clear, explicit expectations for each team member.

*(From Karen Harris, Rutgers, Remote Exams and Assessments: Tips for Exams and Assessments)*

The South Central College CTLE supports, promotes, and enhances excellent, effective, and inclusive teaching to support student engagement, learning, and success.