

March 1, 2010

To: John W. Powell
Chairperson, Executive Committee of Academic Council

From: Gillian Bice
Chairperson, University Committee on Academic Policy

RE: UCAP Review of Proposal to Amend the Code of Teaching Responsibility and Integrity of Scholarship and Grades - Proctoring

Cc: Doug Estry, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education
Jackie Wright, Secretary for Academic Governance

Per request of the Executive Committee of Academic Council (ECAC), the University Committee on Academic Policy (UCAP) reviewed the proposal to amend language in the Code of Teaching Responsibility and Integrity of Scholarship and Grades policy to include specific references to proctoring [Memoranda from Provost Wilcox (dated 11/11/10) and Associate Provost Stanford (dated 11/5/10)]. At its February 10, 2011 meeting UCAP voted to commit to an ad hoc subcommittee for further discussion and commentary. On February 24, the full committee unanimously endorsed the report of the subcommittee (appended to this memo).

UCAP Position:

The issue of proctoring is one of high priority, especially in the context of delivering quality educational experiences in online and hybrid courses. However, the proposed changes and additions to the Code of Teaching Responsibility and the Integrity of Scholarship and Grades policy potentially have the unintended consequence of generating additional concerns and challenges associated with implementation. It is the view of the committee that proctoring needs to be addressed in a thorough review in order to identify problems and best practices for solution.

UCAP recommends ECAC consider referral to an ad hoc task force/working group, and makes the following recommendations as to composition of the body:

- Faculty members involved in teaching online and hybrid courses and representing multiple colleges and various disciplines, as well as different course levels (100 – 400, grad, grad-prof, etc), course enrollment sizes and semesters of offering
- Students (undergraduate and graduate)
- Pedagogical expert (from the College of Education)
- The Director (or designee) of the MSU Testing Center
- Representative from the College of Engineering Center for Education
- Representative from VuDAT
- Representative from the Office of the Registrar
- Representative from the Office of the Ombudsman
- Individuals with proctoring experience, especially online and hybrid courses

University Committee on Academic Policy

Subcommittee Response

Proposed Amendments to the Code of Teaching Responsibility and Integrity of Scholarship and Grades, Proctoring

UCAP recognizes the need to address issues of proctoring, grade consistency, and academic integrity within the newer methods of course delivery, i.e., both on-line and hybrid models. However, we disagree that placing a few phrases within the current Code of Teaching Responsibility and Integrity of Scholarship and Grades will suffice to address the complexity of issues associated with new models of course delivery. Moreover, UCAP questions why additional requirements should apply to all MSU courses when the problems they purport to address are not pertinent to courses based on more traditional models.

The proctoring concern is by and large singular, in that on-line and hybrid courses allow for a greater margin of academic dishonesty than traditional courses taught on campus. However, the proposed solution and respective implementation create a myriad of problems. In essence, the proposed solution does not adequately address the problem and may cause serious problems of implementation and sustainability in the future. We note other problems and ambiguities in the questions that follow.

Offerings of on-line and hybrid courses will most likely continue to increase in the future. Therefore, we suggest that the University conduct a review of best practices in on-line education assessment and evaluation to form a new document specific to *Guidelines for Assessment and Examinations in On-line and Hybrid Courses*. These guidelines would help faculty and students alike fulfill their responsibilities for academic integrity.

Questions that arise from a review of the issues and the proposed changes to the COTR and ISG are:

1. How can the faculty best fulfill their responsibilities in on-line settings?
2. How would the faculty ensure that students taking online courses, especially those who are located out-of-state or in another country, will have a proctor; that the proctor is legitimate; and that the student being proctored is in fact the student enrolled in the course?
3. How would proctoring be administered consistently across sections of the same course delivered in different modes? Faculty can proctor their course on campus, but cannot do so in other settings.
4. Some courses are taught in the classroom, but have examinations on-line. How would this new policy affect such courses?
5. How deep does this proctoring policy permeate students' work? For example, where do take-home quizzes/exams and essays fall under this policy, and how would faculty distinguish which assignments fall under the proctoring policy and which do not?
6. Are students required to find their own proctor for on-line courses?

7. If the onus is on students to find a proctor for exams, should they incur costs associated with third party proctors?
8. Should services such as proctoring for on-line courses be covered by tuition much as faculty time for proctoring examinations is covered for on-campus courses?
9. Is it possible to ensure that all students taking online courses can find an “approved” proctor or “prove” the proctor is a legitimate arbiter of student integrity?
10. If students cannot find an appropriate proctor within an appropriate timeframe, do they forfeit the course tuition and grade?
11. If special proctoring arrangements are required of students, will they be notified in the Schedule of Courses before enrolling in the course?

Ad Hoc Committee Members

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