

**MICHIGAN STATE**  
**UNIVERSITY**

December 15, 2011

**MEMORANDUM**

To: John Powell, Chairperson, The Steering Committee

Fr: Laura Dillon, Chairperson, University Committee on Undergraduate Studies (UCUS)

Re: Report of the Ad Hoc Taskforce on Assessment

On December 1, 2011, the University Committee on Undergraduate Studies (UCUS) discussed the report of the Ad Hoc Taskforce on Assessment and its recommendations with Taskforce members Adele Denison, Byron Brown and Brendan Guenther.

In its December 15, 2011 meeting, UCUS crafted the following recommendations to the Steering Committee for consideration regarding the issues raised in the report.



**OFFICE OF THE  
PROVOST**

Michigan State University  
East Lansing, MI 48824-1046

c: Doug Estry  
Jackie Wright

# UCUS Recommendations

Regarding

## Report of the Ad Hoc Taskforce for Assessment

The University Committee on Undergraduate Studies recommends adoption of the changes to the language in the Code of Teaching and the Integrity of Scholarship and Grades recommended by the Office of the Provost with following modifications.

### 1. Code of Teaching Responsibility

Change suggested by Office of the Provost:

**Item 2: Course syllabi:** Instructors shall be responsible for distributing a course syllabus (either in print or electronic form) at the beginning of the semester. The syllabus shall minimally include:

- o instructional objectives;
- o instructor contact information and office hours;
- o grading criteria and methods used to determine final course grades;
- o date of the final examination and tentative dates of required assignments, quizzes, and tests, if applicable;
- o attendance policy, if different from the University attendance policy and especially when that attendance policy affects student grades; and
- o required and recommended course materials to be purchased, including textbooks and supplies;
- o *any required proctoring arrangements.*

**UCUS recommends** the word “*and*” be deleted from its current position and added to the end of the sixth item and adding the following statement to the last item (recommended by the Office of the Provost): “*to which students must adhere.*”

#### **UCUS Rationale for Modification:**

The recommended language implies that it would be necessary to include proctoring arrangements in face-to-face courses that do not require action on the part of the student. The intent is that students be made aware of proctoring arrangements that will require additional expense, travel, or other specific actions they must take.

#### **Change recommended by UCUS:**

**Item 2: Course syllabi:** Instructors shall be responsible for distributing a course syllabus (either in print or electronic form) at the beginning of the semester. The syllabus shall minimally include:

- o instructional objectives;
- o instructor contact information and office hours;
- o grading criteria and methods used to determine final course grades;
- o date of the final examination and tentative dates of required assignments, quizzes, and tests, if applicable;
- o attendance policy, if different from the University attendance policy and especially when that attendance policy affects student grades;~~and~~
- o required and recommended course materials to be purchased, including textbooks and supplies; **and**

- *any required proctoring arrangements to which students must adhere.*

## 2. Code of Teaching Responsibility

Change suggested by Office of the Provost:

**ITEM 3: Student Assessment and Final Grades:** Instructors shall be responsible for informing students, in a timely manner so as to enhance learning, of the grading criteria and methods used to determine grades on individual assignments. Instructors shall be responsible for assessing a student's performance based on announced criteria and on standards of academic achievement. Instructors shall submit final course grades in accordance with University deadlines. *Assessment methods should be appropriate to the learning objectives of the course. In that context, Instructors are expected to take reasonable steps to create an assessment environment that promotes academic integrity. If proctoring or other security measures are necessary to ensure integrity of assessments, then such measures should be administered consistently in all course delivery methods, e.g. face-to-face or online.*

UCUS recommends changing the suggested addition by replacing “if” by “when”; replacing “consistently in all course delivery methods” by “in a manner consistent with the design and delivery of the course”; and deleting “e.g. face to face or online”.

### UCUS Rationale for Modification:

The UCUS wording is stronger than the suggested wording, requiring that administration of measures necessary to ensure integrity of assessments is not just consistent within a delivery method, but is also consistent with the course design. The course design should determine the measures necessary and how the measures are administered.

### Change suggested by UCUS:

**Item 3: Student Assessment and Final Grades:** Instructors shall be responsible for informing students, in a timely manner so as to enhance learning, of the grading criteria and methods used to determine grades on individual assignments. Instructors shall be responsible for assessing a student's performance based on announced criteria and on standards of academic achievement. Instructors shall submit final course grades in accordance with University deadlines. *Assessment methods should be appropriate to the learning objectives of the course. In that context, instructors are expected to take reasonable steps to create an assessment environment that promotes academic integrity. If **[When]** proctoring or other security measures are necessary to ensure integrity of assessments, then such measures should be administered ~~consistently in all course delivery methods~~ **in a manner consistent with the design and delivery of the course, e.g. face-to-face or online.***

## 3. Integrity of Scholarship and Grades

Change suggested by Office of the Provost: Item 1

**Item 1.** The principles of truth and honesty are recognized as fundamental to a community of scholars. The University expects both instructors and students to honor these principles and, in so doing, to protect the validity of University education and grades. Practices that maintain the integrity of scholarship and grades include providing

accurate information for academic and admission records, adherence to unit-approved professional standards and honor codes, **proctoring**, and completion of original academic work by the student to whom it is assigned, without unauthorized aid of any kind. To encourage adherence to the principles of truth and honesty, instructors should exercise care in planning and supervising academic work.

UCUS recommends that the word “*proctoring*” not be inserted but the following statement be added after the last sentence: “*and implement proctoring standards appropriate to the design of the course.*”

#### **UCUS Rationale for Modification:**

Placing the word “*proctoring*” in the recommended location makes proctoring a student responsibility, which it is not. UCUS recommends that language regarding responsibility for proctoring move to the section indicating variables that are the responsibilities of the instructor.

Change suggested by UCUS:

**Item 1.** The principles of truth and honesty are recognized as fundamental to a community of scholars. The University expects both instructors and students to honor these principles and, in so doing, to protect the validity of University education and grades. Practices that maintain the integrity of scholarship and grades include providing accurate information for academic and admission records, adherence to unit-approved professional standards and honor codes, **proctoring**, and completion of original academic work by the student to whom it is assigned, without unauthorized aid of any kind. To encourage adherence to the principles of truth and honesty, instructors should exercise care in planning and supervising academic work **and implement proctoring standards appropriate to the design of the course.**

#### **In addition to the changes above, the committee has further recommendations for consideration by the Steering Committee:**

The University Committee on Undergraduate Studies supports the recommendation from the Ad Hoc Taskforce on Assessment that MSU consider initiating consortial arrangements and/or development of testing facilities to accommodate the growing need for proctoring in an online environment.

The University Committee on Undergraduate Studies strongly recommends that the University look more deeply at the issues unique to online education and proctoring to develop and publish standards of practice for MSU courses. This may include an inventory and consolidation of all policies and practices regarding development and implementation of online course components, courses, and assessment practices.