

Proctoring Tool Evaluation Work Group

Purpose and Function Statement

On October 13, 2020 the College's Distance Learning Committee (DLC) recommended the formation of a workgroup to "offer input on [the College's] next proctoring software" in light of the anticipated expiration of the College's current proctoring software/tool ("tool") contract with Proctorio on June 30, 2021. The workgroup, comprised primarily of faculty, was to evaluate proctoring tool alternatives and recommend a tool or tools to the DLC for its consideration and possible recommendation to the College. The workgroup also had student members and considered student concerns about the use of such tools, including concerns about privacy and data retention and use.

Membership

As the Distance Learning Committee provided a Recommendation on online proctoring, it was clear that there are disciplines that do need an online proctoring tool or service in order to meet external requirements such as accreditation or board exams, or articulation requirements. Faculty with concerns in these disciplines as well as faculty who have been concerned about maintaining academic integrity reached out to the Distance Learning Faculty Coordinator to express an interest in participating in this workgroup. The Assistant Distance Learning Coordinator contacted departments which had previously expressed concerns about online proctoring, and departments in the Natural Sciences and Technology and Health which might also have such concerns.

Meghan Chen (Dean, Library & Learning Resources, Co-chair)
Catherine McKee (Assistant Distance Learning Coordinator, Business Administration, Co-chair)
Hugo Aguilera (Computer Resources Technician, Faculty Center for Learning Technology – FCLT)
Jem Bonfiglio (student representative to DLC)
Julie Bray-Ali (Earth Sciences, Astronomy)
Kelly Coreas (Respiratory Technology)
Brenda Domico (Accounting and Management)
William Eden (student Canvasador)
Mike Hood (Earth Sciences, Astronomy)
Jaime Hooper (Nursing)
Parisa Mahjoor (Chemistry)
Bruce Nixon (Mental Health)
Jamie Phillips (Animal Sciences)
Jimmy Tamayo (Mathematics and Computer Sciences)
Leo Rojas (student representative to DLC)
Sofia Ruiz (Student Trustee)
Andrew Sanchez (Mental Health)

Methods of Consultation

All workgroup meetings were held via Zoom. The workgroup met on March 12, March 19, March 26, April 2, April 9, April 16, April 22, April 23, and April 30, in addition to several planning meetings attended by Meghan Chen, Hugo Aguilera, and Catherine McKee (February 16, March 15, April 29). Other than the planning meetings, all meetings were scheduled for 90 minutes although meetings occasionally ran as long as two hours. Basecamp was set up to contain resources and documents, and all workgroup members, including the students, were given access. Final recommendation was made at the last meeting (April 30).

Background of the Topic that Led to the Workgroup Meeting

Since the onset of COVID, students have expressed increased concern regarding the use of online proctoring tools, specifically Proctorio, the college's current proctoring tool. This led the Academic Senate to ask the DLC to set up a workgroup to review online proctoring options. This was timely because the College's contract with Proctorio, expires on June 30, 2021.

The DLC on October 13, 2020 recommended the creation of the Proctoring Tool Workgroup to investigate possible alternatives to Proctorio in light of student concerns about online proctoring in general and Proctorio specifically, and faculty concerns about Proctorio. The DLC asked Catherine McKee to co-chair the workgroup with Meghan Chen. Hugo Aguilera provided the technical expertise and coordinated with the various vendors of proctoring tools under consideration.

The following actions were taken in the meantime, in order to address constituent concerns:

- FCLT held a meeting with a representative from Proctorio and students (Canvasadors) to ensure students understand how Proctorio uses data,
- Student-facing resources on Proctorio were incorporated into the Mountie Student Hub,
- the FCLT posted a "Mythbusters" blog entry about Proctorio, and
- the FCLT coordinated two workshops with a representative from Proctorio.

Information Findings from the Workgroup

1. The spring 2020 transition to temporary remote instruction meant that many more faculty were using the college's online proctoring tool, Proctorio, meaning many more students were experiencing online proctoring for the first time.

2. Students expressed concern about the use of online proctoring tools relating to recording and retention of student data, intrusion into student devices and technology, and equity issues. These often related to the required use of a webcam for proctoring.
3. Faculty expressed concern about the use of online proctoring tools relating to authentic assessment, academic integrity of online assessments, and the reported increase in cheating/plagiarism referrals to the Office of Student Life since the College transitioned to temporary remote instruction and online learning in March 2020.
4. Some disciplines' accrediting bodies or articulation agreements require proctoring of assessments, including those administered online.
5. There are multiple online proctoring tools available, including
 - Proctorio
 - ProctorU
 - ProctorFree
 - Honorlock
 - Respondus
6. The workgroup assembled a list of features upon which the tools might be evaluated, including those considered necessary:
 - 24/7 technical support for faculty and for students,
 - Tool integration into Canvas,
 - Whether the tool itself required the use of a webcam,
 - Whether the tool offered the option of some kind of human proctoring in addition to artificial intelligence (AI).
7. The workgroup compiled a list of features considered preferred but not necessary:
 - Tool compatibility with mobile devices,
 - Tool compatibility with publisher or third-party exams,
 - Tool compatibility with Canvas New Quizzes.
8. During the evaluation process other features were recommended by some of the vendors, including
 - Detection of student mobile device use during exams,
 - AI face detection,
 - AI face recognition, in which the program compares the face to the photo on the test-taker's ID,
 - AI lockout of students based on certain parameters (software tampering, internet connectivity issues, etc.),
 - Digital Millennium Copyright Act takedown notices sent to websites (Chegg, etc.), and
 - Exam review by professional proctors.

9. Honorlock gave group members two weeks of access in order to try out the tool and was the only vendor to do so. Faculty members imported test questions and tried the tool from the student perspective as test-takers and from the faculty perspective. One faculty member “cheated” (his young son walked in view of the webcam) and Honorlock flagged this as possible cheating. The faculty member also experienced good and speedy customer service from Honorlock when he suffered a technical problem during an exam.
10. The workgroup’s required/preferred features and the vendors’ recommended features were combined into a spreadsheet that allowed side-by-side comparisons of the five tools being considered. The spreadsheet, created by Hugo Aguilera, made it easier for the workgroup to compare the tools in order to reach its final recommendation to DLC. Students participated in the final discussion of the tools. In the end, the recommendation was unanimous for Honorlock.

List of Resources/People Consulted by the Workgroup

The following vendors were invited and provided the workgroup a demonstration of their tool:

- HonorLock
- ProctorFree
- ProctorU
- Proctorio
- Respondus

Students, listed above, viewed the vendor demos as part of the workgroup, were encouraged to ask questions of the vendors and during meetings, voiced their opinions about the tools, and voted on the tools at the final meeting. Jem Bonfiglio and Leo Rojas also attended the DLC Special Meeting at which the recommendation was presented on May 4 and voiced their opinions there.

Hugo Aguilera provided critical support for the workgroup by providing technical knowledge and by contacting the vendors and setting up the demonstrations for the workgroup. He also assembled a list of questions to be asked of every vendor and prepared a spreadsheet (included with this report) which compared the various tools in an easy-to-understand fashion.

Specific, Achievable Recommendations

The Proctoring Tool Workgroup recommends the following:

1. That the college enter into a contract with Honorlock for academic year 2021 – 2022.

2. That the college attempt to enter into a contract with Honorlock as soon as possible, before the end of academic year 2020 – 2021, encompassing summer session 2021, to give faculty the option to try Honorlock before fall semester 2021.
3. That the college attempt to extend the contract with Proctorio through the end of summer session 2021 to give faculty who are familiar with Proctorio an opportunity to continue using it during summer.
4. Given that the College can determine how long Honorlock will retain student data, that the College make this determination and communicate it to Honorlock, and share this information with students.
5. That the college offer training to faculty on how to use Honorlock, including
 - a. Proctoring options included,
 - b. Equity considerations (why faculty might not want to require the use of a webcam, etc.), and
 - c. Sample syllabus language.
6. That the college update the Mountie Student Hub with information about Honorlock, providing students with as much information about
 - a. What Honorlock does and doesn't do,
 - b. How long Honorlock retains student data (based on the College's directions),
 - c. How students can minimize their concerns about Honorlock (removing it between exams, etc.), and
 - d. Why students may benefit from taking proctored online exams.
7. That the College consider other ways it might make this information available to students.
8. That during spring 2022 the college consider re-evaluating Honorlock to determine whether it is meeting the needs of faculty, students, and the College as a whole.