

SUMMARY PROCTOR REPORT

FOR SPRING SEMESTER 2012, THE MATH DEPARTMENT, UNDER DEAN BERNSTEN, IMPLEMENTED A PROCTOR REQUIREMENT FOR ONLINE MATH COURSES. PROFESSOR CROW'S ENGLISH 40 COURSE ALSO REQUIRED PROCTOR APPROVAL THROUGH THE LAC. THE PROCTOR APPROVAL PROCESS FOR ELEVEN COURSES, WITH APPROXIMATELY 365 STUDENTS, WAS CONDUCTED BY LAC TECH, JULI MAIKAI, AND TOOK APPROXIMATELY THREE WEEKS. THIS REPORT ADDRESSES HOW WELL WE MET WASC GUIDELINES FOR DISTANCE LEARNING/ONLINE COURSES IN ASSESSMENT AND AREAS THAT NEED IMPROVEMENT.

WASC Guidelines for Distance Education: Assessment and Accountability (www.acswasc.org)

"In keeping with federal policy, WASC requires institutions that offer distance or correspondence education to have processes in place through which the institution establishes that the student who registers in a distance education or correspondence education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit. To meet this requirement, the institution must employ methods to verify the identity of the student who participates, such as (1) a secure log-in and pass code and (2) proctored examinations...in so doing, the institution must make clear in writing at the time of enrollment or registration that it uses processes that protect student privacy and must notify students of any additional charges associated with the verification of the student."

The CCCC online math courses did require a log-in, passcode, and proctored exams. However, we did not make clear up front the proctor requirement or the fees associated with proctoring. (Many students were upset that the first mention of a proctor was in the syllabus handed out after registration.) I suggest we place the proctor requirement as an advisory at the beginning of the course description in the catalog and also under testing/assessment services.

We also need to mention in the catalog that, while proctoring for a CCCC course is free at a CCCC campus, proctoring fees may apply at other institutions. (Students were upset that they had to pay an average of \$100 in proctoring fees over the semester without advance notification.)

Procedure for Selecting Proctors

Cerro Coso policy states that a proctor may be a school principal, administrator, counselor, teacher, certified librarian, military educator, or test administrator at a testing office of a community college or university. No relatives may proctor. This criteria was too broad and resulted in students finding "loop-holes" that allowed for the approval of proctors who might not otherwise be approved. For example, having an athletic director proctor athletes might be a conflict of interest. The final approval was up to the individual instructors.

After reviewing the proctoring policies of 10 other community colleges and universities, I have compiled a list of additional guidelines. If we adopted some or all of these policies, we would streamline the approval process saving countless hours.

1. Some schools require all students living within a 50 mile radius of the school they are enrolled in to have exams proctored at the local campus.

We could require students living within a 30 mile radius of CCCC campus to be proctored at that campus. Not only would this speed up the approval process, but it's free to the student.

2. Many schools provided links to pre-approved (by the school and/or NCTA) proctors and test centers.

I have compiled a similar list of pre-approved proctors and test centers currently used by CCCC. We could post proctor information on our website with links for approved proctors/testing centers. If a student lives outside the 30 mile radius they would click on the link for their location and view proctor information. For example, students in the Antelope Valley would click on the AVC link and be directed to Wade Saari. His contact information, days, hours, and fees would also be available.

3. Other guidelines we might want to consider adopting are as follows:

No students may be proctored by:

- Instructors (other than the one teaching the course), administrative personnel, and department chairs (may pose a conflict of interest and they shouldn't have this additional burden when a proctor is available)
- any person at a K-12 school (I would amend this to include preschool teachers)
- any person at your place of employment
- any family member OR friend (including step-/ex-)
- another student (some schools allowed graduate students to proctor, but not undergrads)

* Each of these situations, while not approved by other schools, was approved by CCCC instructors. By allowing so many options rather than using a few pre-approved proctors, we lose some of our ability to maintain the integrity of the testing process and increase processing time for every new proctor that is submitted.

Procedures for Establishing Student Identity and Protecting the Integrity of the Testing Process

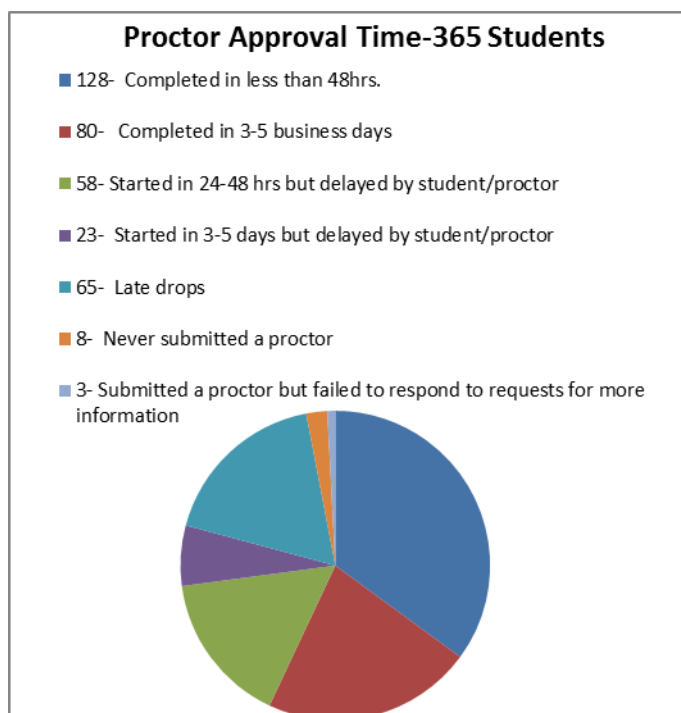
The following procedures are in place to protect the student and the integrity of the testing process. Students must show a picture ID to the proctor before the test will be administered. Proctors are required to sign a security agreement stating that they will follow the testing procedures set forth in the agreement, which includes being present for the duration of the exam. Passwords, instructions and exams are forwarded directly to approved proctors only. No passwords are given to students; the proctor inputs passwords into the computer. Completed exams are submitted electronically, faxed, mailed, or hand carried to the instructor.

In keeping with WASC guidelines, every exam for distance courses should be proctored. Most instructors required proctors for every exam; however, a few only required proctoring for the midterm and final-not for quizzes. We might want to establish a unified policy so that all courses are aligned and compliant with NCTA and WASC recommendations.

Other Recommendations

Processing time

The length of time for proctor verification averaged 1-5 business days from the time of submission. We are right on target. Most of the schools I researched allowed 3-5 business days to process proctor requests, although some allowed 5-7 business days. Here is a breakdown of the time needed to complete the process.



I was a little discouraged by the number of delays and drops. Students, slow to respond to requests for more information, delayed final approval by 2-3 weeks. Communication was hampered by the fact that many students furnished wrong email addresses for themselves or the proctor. Web mail does not notify me of undeliverable mail unless it's to another employee of CCCC, so I have no way of knowing whether or not they received my emails. Since I do not have access to student's personal information, I had to have Sherri stop her work to look up phone numbers so I could contact students. Compounding the delays was the fact that quite a few proctors were slow to return agreements. Some claimed they couldn't receive my emails at work and wanted me to use their personal email exclusively. This is against our policy and that of other schools. I suggest we have a policy that allows us to move to a second choice if the first one fails to respond within three days. I also believe most of the problems would be resolved if we designated pre-approved proctors by area as mentioned earlier.

I would also like instructors to refrain from giving exams until I have had time to complete the verification process. I only had 3 ½ business days to process a deluge of submissions before the first exam was given. Many students in this class hadn't submitted proctor information yet and those that had weren't all approved by that first deadline.

One last point to consider: If we increase the number of online courses that require proctoring, we could easily exceed one thousand submissions per semester. Using our current procedures, one person cannot process that many in three weeks or less. In addition to streamlining the process as previously outlined, we should consider having two people processing submissions or require students to submit their proctor request within one week of registration. This would allow additional time to begin processing submissions prior to the first day of class.

Technical Difficulties

It is imperative that whoever is processing proctor requests has full access to Outlook on a regular computer. I had to use web mail because my designated computer has been "frozen" so I can't use regular email any longer. Web mail is considerably slower than normal email, does not transition quickly between multiple documents, and logs me out constantly. It was very frustrating and time consuming. IT said they could not allow me the same access I had last semester because of security issues with students who might utilize the same computer.

Define Duties of LAC Tech

The duties of the LAC tech need to be clearly defined and shared with instructors. Miscommunication resulted in some students not being able to test on time. Instead of instructors forwarding exam instructions and passwords to multiple proctors multiple times, it might be easier if the instructors just forward exam instructions and passwords to the tech and he/she forwards the information to all the pre-approved proctors on our list at one time.

Testing Facilities at CCC-IWV

The National College Testing Association (NCTA) has established a set of standards and guidelines for test centers. We are in compliance with most of the guidelines except with regards to the physical setting.

"The examiner will provide a quiet environment with acceptable test-taking conditions. The room should be dedicated to testing (but can utilize various types of testing) during the scheduled session and should have controlled access. Appropriate lighting, temperature, and noise restrictions must be considered."

Cerro Coso does not have a dedicated testing space, so test-takers often share space with students, athletes, and classes who are studying, using the Success Lab, waiting for classes to start, socializing, eating, or being tutored. This inhibits our ability to consistently provide quiet distraction-free testing accommodations. This semester we often have testing going on all day. As the number of students taking proctored exams continues to increase, we might want to consider dedicating a more appropriate space in which to proctor exams that will accommodate multiple students. We have three classrooms in the LAC; Rooms 709-710 are often empty. With the exception of one evening class, all other classes in 709-710 could operate in one room and testing could take place in the other. We might want to consider this for fall. It's important that the testing space have access to computers as well. During finals, I've had as many as 18 scheduled at one time on the computers. This number will also continue to increase. (It's too bad all the empty space in the middle couldn't house a couple of rooms. ☺) I really feel that if we move forward with proctoring for distance learning, we need to offer our students a more appropriate testing environment.