

May 13, 2020

Dear UW Bothell Faculty,

Thank you for your continued dedication helping UW Bothell students through this difficult time. I hope you're also practicing self care as we work through the pandemic together. As we enter the seventh inning of a 10-inning quarter, I write to offer some information regarding the online exam proctoring tool, Proctorio.

Proctorio was vetted through faculty governance at the Faculty Council on Teaching and Learning (FCTL). A six-month license was purchased and the tool is available — through Canvas — to support faculty who may be experiencing academic misconduct issues of some form in the current "remote learning" format.

We asked UW Bothell faculty leaders, student leaders and deans to consult with their stakeholder groups and provide feedback about the use of Proctorio at UW Bothell. I want to make you aware of the concerns raised through this consultation, with the goal of helping you make an informed decision as you consider the use of this tool.

The UW Bothell constituencies who provided feedback are strongly against the use of online exam proctoring services during the remote instruction period, with exceptions made for fully online programs students intentionally signed up to take.

Note: The student body presidents at all three campuses are against using online exam proctoring for the reasons noted below.

The primary concerns provided are summarized, with clarifying information noted in italics within brackets.

- The type of teaching and learning is very different, and student assessment should reflect that. Students are under a lot of stress, and using a proctoring system will add to that anxiety.
- Student privacy is significantly affected with this type of software. The software intrudes on students' personal spaces and creates a surveillance atmosphere.
- Ethical issues identified by stakeholder groups include:
  - Treating students as if they are cheaters is inherently wrong. *[If a student is flagged for misconduct, the information leading to that flagging is then reviewed by the instructor. If an instructor accuses a student of misconduct after that review, the whole process then plays out through Community Standards and Student Conduct ([www.washington.edu/cssc/facultystaff/academic-misconduct/](http://www.washington.edu/cssc/facultystaff/academic-misconduct/)). UW-IT worked with FCTL regarding Proctorio, and the bar is being set very high to prove misconduct.]*
  - The software requires high-speed internet which not all students can access. Students also will have to purchase the necessary webcams, etc., that are required. The extra technology needs create inequity and financial hardship.
  - Some students have access to technology that allows them to bypass what the proctoring systems are trying to catch, thus providing an unfair situation for students overall.
  - Students may be detected as cheating due to their environments. For instance, they may have no control over who enters a room, etc.
  - IDs have to be verified which can impact some populations. *[IDs are not required to use Proctorio; instructors can choose not to require them.]*

- Faculty with experience using Proctorio have stated that it does not work for all students all of the time.

Additional note from the Office of Disability Resources for Students (DRS): Proctorio does not fully meet UW accessibility requirements. DRS is working with Access Technology Services in UW-IT to find a solution, but one doesn't exist yet. [If a student is not able to use Proctorio, then they will be provided alternative testing accommodation. This is done through DRS, following standard protocols.]

Through Reddit, Quizlet, social networks, phone/text collaborations and other means, instances of academic misconduct seem to be increasing. For those who need interventive support, Proctorio is what is available now.

I want you to consider the issues our community has raised, however, before choosing to use this tool, which, as I mentioned earlier, went through an appropriate review process with FCTL.

If you choose NOT to use Proctorio for the reasons articulated above or those of your own, I suggest that you consider the following recommendations we received from stakeholders to support our students (and you) this quarter:

- Adjust exams to be given as take-home, open-book exams. They are not only possible across disciplines but can facilitate better student learning outcomes, especially for our diverse student populations.
- Invest energy in helping students feel fully prepared for exams and in helping them develop a strong sense of integrity and honesty.
- Trust our students to follow the academic integrity policy on their own. UW Bothell students are the best — and we can trust them to take exams without using an invasive proctoring service.

My guess is that this won't be the only time when we consider an alternate form of student assessment, but we still need to be thoughtful. Weighing the analysis provided by our campus community, I believe the costs of using Proctorio at UW Bothell outweigh the benefits at this time.

The bottom line is this: It is your decision whether to use Proctorio or not. I hope you'll give it full consideration based on your own analysis and with the feedback provided above.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bjonyeigh', written in a cursive style.

Bjong Wolf Yeigh, Ph.D., F.ASME  
Chancellor and Professor of Engineering