

Texas A&M Adds Partner for Online Proctoring

Michael Hart - 10/27/16

Texas A&M University system has signed with a third party to provide online proctoring services for the 143,000 students taking exams at its 11 campuses and associated online courses.

Examity technology is designed to secure exams, verify the identity of test takers and prevent cheating by the test takers. It can integrate with an institution's learning management and test delivery systems, including Moodle and Blackboard, so students can take tests through the online portals they normally use for school.

Professors and departments have the flexibility to select the level of security that matches the test being given, regardless of whether it is a live or automated situation. They can choose to provide online tests that are fully automated, ones that have human proctors watching and listening to students via webcam as they take test, or ones that are recorded and spot-checked.

There is, however, an authentication process that accompanies every Examity test. With online test-taking, one of the biggest concerns is that the person taking a test is the person who is supposed to be doing so. Test-takers are IDed, must answer a challenge question and need to provide a biometric signature.

At one of the highest security levels, as an example, the proctoring process uses a student's own webcam and microphone to observe the student as he or she takes a test. When something unusual occurs, comments are noted and flags issued to inform instructors, who can review the video after the test has been given. Yellow flags are issued when the proctor observes a minor violation; red flags are issued when the student shows "clear cheating behavior."

Examity representatives said it will proctor 50,000 college-level tests per month* this year. Other clients for its online proctoring products include the University of Cincinnati, University of Arizona and Temple University's School of Business.

** Editor's note: This information has been updated from a previous version of this story, which under-reported the number of tests Examity will proctor this year. We apologize for the error.*