

SPECIAL REPORT

of the

**AD HOC COMMITTEE ON
ONLINE LEARNING**

concerning

**THE CREATION OF A TESTING CENTER
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST**

Presented at the
654th Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate
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Recommended Testing Center for UMass Amherst

Proposed by the Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Online Learning, University of Massachusetts Amherst and endorsed by the Faculty Senate Undergraduate Education Council.

Background:

There is a growing need for using PCs to deliver exams on our campus as more classes utilize digital question databases for quizzing and homework that could be extended to course exams. Also, off-campus opportunities exist to provide proctored testing for distance learners and anyone needing a certified, proctored exam (e.g., TOEFL is moving to digital exams at approved sites).

We will explore partnering with a testing center like ACT Centers™ that are located around the country. Software now exists from commercial vendors to lock down a PC to access only approved materials during the exam. For example, Respondus LockDown Browser™ is a custom browser that locks down the testing environment within WebCT or Blackboard. When students use Respondus LockDown Browser they are unable to print, copy, go to another URL, or access other applications. When an assessment is started, students are locked into it until they submit it for grading. OWL and WebCT could be used to deliver and handle grading and recording of student performance. The instructor must provide a proctor knowledgeable about the exam and the rules under which students must take the exam. The instructor must reserve the testing room prior to the day of the exam and will be granted access on a time available basis. OIT will provide a room monitor capable of answering questions related to the computer equipment and handle reporting of any technical problems.

Recommendation:

That UMass Amherst under the direction of the Office of the Provost working in collaboration with OIT, develop a pilot testing center within the next academic year using PCs that are equipped with software to enable a “locked down” state so that students can only interact with the approved material and cannot access email or other software. The exams will be delivered to these computers at agreed upon times between the instructor and the monitor of the PCs. The instructor will provide a proctor who is knowledgeable about the exam contents and instructions for taking the exam to be in the room along with the room monitor for the duration of the exam.

MOVED: **That the Faculty Senate approve the Creation of a Testing Center at the University of
42-06 Massachusetts Amherst, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 06-037.**