

## **Minutes**

### **University Academic Affairs Committee Meeting**

**Monday, October 6, 2025, 3:15 PM,**

In attendance:

Theres Grana (Chair, CAS), Alex Honold (COE), Varun Makhija (CAS).

Ex-Officio: Rita Dunston (Registrar), Debra Schleef (Assoc. Provost), Melissa Yakabouski (VP enrollment management)

Other Attendees: Jerry Slezak, Director, Digital Learning Support

1. Call to order 3:20.

2. New business.

Per request of a faculty member, our committee discussed Academic integrity of online quizzes and exams. Input from members unable to attend was obtained before and after the meeting. Some of that is included here. Due to the wide-ranging and recursive discussion, points are summarized under headings, vs. being given in chronological order of the discussion.

Historically the institutional stance has been that we do not integrate tools that detect cheating into Canvas.

Some students taking online exams are obviously cheating.

There are tools to detect cheating, but these have drawbacks, including:

Online tools not always accurate so they may miss cheating. For example, lock down browsers just lock the computer but a phone could be accessed.

Worse, tools could also flag a false positive, which then the Honor Council will have to deal with. This will include watching videos of students taking exams.

Surveillance using software/AI is very intrusive.

Technology is an arms race so anything we adopt will also have ways to circumvent.

Anxious students might freeze up.

Using tools to detect cheating has these possible benefits:

Discourages cheating so students who don't cheat are fairly assessed

Holds accountable students who do cheat

Shows the great value we place on academic integrity and the Honor Code

Where we could use more information

What is the false positive rate?

What are other schools in Virginia are using and do their Honor systems get cases with false positives?

If wanted to adopt something like Respondus, would UMW pay for it? We also do not have Turn it in, which is used elsewhere.

The way forward:

No simple, easy solutions are available. This is a multifaceted problem that will require a multi-faceted solution.

How we assess learning is something faculty can control so training may be beneficial. Something like the Refocus training or session(s) by the teaching center may be helpful.

Emphasis on the honor code in class discussion. "If you want to cheat, what are you gaining by it?"

Monitoring exams, such as by video is the prerogative of faculty, but faculty cannot see what students can see.

Asynchronous online courses may need different solutions than in-person courses.

No motion was developed. A wider discussion by departments is recommended. Contact our committee if you have experience with monitoring software or something to share.