

## OFFICIAL

Policy and Procedure Statement 2.17  
Revised 11/2009  
Review Cycle: June 1, ENY  
Review Date: 06/01/2012  
Reviewer: Director, Office of Extended  
& Distance Learning

Proctoring Distance  
Learning Examinations  
(37 paragraphs)  
[Attachment A](#)  
[Attachment B](#)

## GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Texas State is committed to meeting the needs of distance learning students who for whatever reason are unable to complete course examinations on campus.
2. The number of distance learners and course offerings is increasing and requires that the university have a policy and procedure that addresses the administration of proctored examinations for resident credit courses.
3. Faculty use of the procedure outlined in this document is voluntary.
4. This PPS identifies the procedures for students requesting an examination to be proctored off campus, for instructors who have examinations that may need to be proctored, and for the Office of Extended & Distance Learning to follow in administering examinations to proctors; criteria for approving an examination site; and proctor responsibilities.
5. This PPS conforms to the rules and regulations of the Board of Regents of The Texas State University System (BOR) and of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), and to the quality standards of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

## DEFINITIONS

**Administer**—To manage or oversee. The Office of Extended & Distance Learning can administer the proctoring of paper-based examinations by off-campus testing centers, and an examination proctor or the course instructor can administer a proctored examination.

**Computer-based examination**—For this PPS only, the Office of Extended & Distance Learning defines computer-based examination as an examination that a student completes using a computer. A computer-based examination is an examination delivered via an online testing program such as TRACS. For a computer-based examination proctored at an off-campus location, the instructor corresponds directly with the testing center.

**Distance education**—A course is considered to be offered by distance education if students receive more than one-half of the instruction at a location different from that of the instructor. A distance education course can be delivered synchronously or asynchronously to any single or multiple location(s) through electronic, correspondence, or other means. The course may be formula-funded

or offered through extension, and it may be delivered to on-campus students and those who do not take courses on the main campus.

**Distance learner**—A student who receives more than one-half of the instruction for a course at a location different from that of the instructor. The distance learner's course can be delivered synchronously or asynchronously to single or multiple location(s) electronically, by correspondence, or by other means.

**Off campus**—For this PPS only, the Office of Extended & Distance Learning defines off campus as a location other than the Texas State University-San Marcos campus or the Round Rock Higher Education Center (RRHEC) campus.

**On campus**—For this PPS only, the Office of Extended & Distance Learning defines on campus as either the Texas State University-San Marcos campus or the RRHEC campus.

**Paper-based examination**—For this PPS only, the Office of Extended & Distance Learning defines paper-based examination as an examination that a student completes using a pen or pencil and paper. The Office of Extended & Distance Learning can administer the proctoring of paper-based examinations by off-campus testing centers.

**Proctor**—(n.) Impartial individual who gives an examination, along with any special instructions about taking the examination, to a student and monitors or supervises the student while he or she takes the examination. The proctor may be the course instructor who administers an exam outside of a normally scheduled class meeting or a testing center employee. The proctor ensures the integrity and security of the examination process.

(v.) To give an examination to a student and monitor or supervise the student while he or she takes the examination.

**Testing center**—The Office of Extended & Distance Learning defines testing center as a facility at an accredited community college, college, or university that proctors examinations for distance learning students.

## **PURPOSE**

6. To establish policy and procedure through which students enrolled in distance education courses through Texas State University-San Marcos may take proctored examinations as designated by the instructor. Participants included in these guidelines are the instructor, the student, the Office of Extended & Distance Learning, and the proctor. Individual procedures for the instructor, the student, and the Office of Extended & Distance Learning are provided in this PPS.

## **POLICY**

7. The instructor determines if an examination may need to be proctored.

8. A proctored examination that is not administered by the instructor must be administered at an official testing center during regular testing center hours at an accredited community college, college, or university at the student's expense.
9. The Office of Extended & Distance Learning will only proctor examinations for courses offered through the San Marcos campus if special circumstances prevent the course instructor from proctoring the examinations on campus. Individual students who have a conflict with the time scheduled for the instructor-proctored examination may have an examination proctored at the Testing Center on the Texas State campus or at the RRHEC for a fee.
10. Faculty who choose to use this procedure must clearly indicate to students the number of proctored examinations in their course.
11. Faculty who choose to use this procedure must inform students that they are responsible for any extra expenses in proctor fees for each proctored examination.
12. The instructor chooses whether proctored examinations for distance learners are administered as computer-based or paper-based examinations.
13. The Office of Extended & Distance Learning will administer off-campus proctoring of paper-based examinations for up to 2 examinations for the same distance education course in the same semester.
14. Instructors are responsible for administering the proctoring of computer-based examinations.
15. The Office of Extended & Distance Learning is not responsible for examinations that are delayed in the mail, lost in the mail, or lost by the testing center.

### **PROCEDURE: INSTRUCTOR**

16. The instructor reserves the right to establish any specifications related to the administration of proctored examinations including, but not limited to, the dates and times of the examinations, materials to be included and excluded, and hardware and software requirements.
17. In choosing the method of examination, the instructor considers the importance of security for the examination to be proctored; since not all electronic testing centers have secure technology for administering computer-based examinations, the most secure type of off-campus proctored examination is a paper-based examination.
18. The instructor informs students at the first class meeting or at the beginning of the course that proctored examinations may be necessary for the course; informs students of the scheduled dates of examinations for the course; and indicates whether proctored examinations will be paper-based, with administration coordinated by the Office of Extended and Distance Learning, or computer-based. The instructor informs students that proctored examinations that are not administered by the instructor must be administered at an official testing center during regular testing center hours at an accredited community college, college, or university at

- the student's expense. A list of acceptable proctored testing centers in Texas is available at <http://www.correspondence.txstate.edu/students/testing-sites.html> . The instructor should request the names of those students who will need proctored examinations by the end of the first full week of class.
19. If any students in the course will take paper-based examinations proctored at off-campus locations:
    - a. The instructor provides these students with the Proctor Request (see [Attachment A](#)).
    - b. The instructor completes the Proctored Examination Information Form (see [Attachment B](#)) and submits this form, along with all examinations to be proctored for the course and any special instructions for students or the proctor (e.g., materials allowed for use on the examination, expected testing dates, time limit) to the Office of Extended & Distance Learning by Friday of the first full week of class during the semester in which the course is offered.
  20. If a computer-based examination is to be proctored at an off-campus location, the instructor reviews and approves the student's selected testing center. The instructor e-mails instructions for accessing the examination via computer, including passwords if required, along with any special hardware or software requirements.

### **PROCEDURE: STUDENTS**

21. If a student needs to take a proctored examination off campus, the student informs the instructor of this need and selects a testing center within the first full week of class. A list of acceptable proctored testing centers in Texas is available at <http://www.correspondence.txstate.edu/students/testing-sites.html> .
22. For paper-based examinations that are to be proctored at an off-campus location, with administration coordinated by the Office of Extended and Distance Learning, the student completes the Proctor Request (see [Attachment A](#)) and submits this form to the Office of Extended & Distance Learning for approval by Friday of the second full week of class during the semester the course is taken. In filling out the Proctor Request, the student schedules a date and time for each examination. It is the student's responsibility to confirm with the selected testing center that examinations can be proctored at that testing center on or between specific dates required by the instructor.
23. For computer-based examinations that are to be proctored at an off-campus location, the student informs the instructor of the selected testing center, and the instructor reviews and approves the testing center selected by the student. After the instructor approves a testing center for a proctored computer-based examination, the student schedules a date and

- time for each examination. It is the student's responsibility to inform a potential testing center if proctored examinations will be computer-based and to verify that the testing center has the hardware and software necessary to administer the computer-based examinations.
24. It is also the student's responsibility to complete examinations on or between specific dates required by the instructor.
  25. If the Office of Extended & Distance Learning does not receive the Proctor Request for paper-based examinations by Friday of the second full week of class, the student will need to take the examination on campus.
  26. If the selected testing center for paper-based examinations is approved, the Office of Extended & Distance Learning provides the examination, along with instructions and information on any materials allowed for use on the examination (e.g., calculator), to the testing center.
  27. The student takes the examination at the approved testing center at the scheduled time. The student is responsible for all fees charged by the testing center for administering and returning the examination.
  28. If the student needs to take a proctored examination for the course at a different testing center than that originally indicated on the Proctor Request, the student notifies the Office of Extended & Distance Learning as soon as possible.
  29. The student may contact the Office of Extended & Distance Learning by e-mail at [distanced@txstate.edu](mailto:distanced@txstate.edu) or by phone at 800-511-8656 or 512-245-2322 with any questions or problems regarding the process.

#### **PROCEDURE: THE OFFICE OF EXTENDED & DISTANCE LEARNING**

30. For paper-based examinations in a Texas State distance education course that are to be proctored off campus, with administration coordinated by the Office of Extended and Distance Learning, the Office of Extended & Distance Learning receives from the instructor within the first full week of class the following: the Proctored Examination Information Form (see [Attachment B](#)), all paper-based examinations to be proctored off campus for the course that semester, and any special instructions for the student or the proctor. Within the second full week of class, the Office of Extended & Distance Learning receives the Proctor Request (see [Attachment A](#)) from students in the course who will have paper-based examinations proctored off campus.
31. The Office of Extended & Distance Learning verifies that it has received Proctor Requests from all students listed on the Proctored Examination Information Form.
32. The Office of Extended & Distance Learning reviews the students' selected testing centers. The Office of Extended & Distance Learning either approves each selected testing center, or informs a student why a specific testing center was not approved and advises the student how to select an acceptable alternative testing center.

33. Four to six weeks before a student's scheduled testing date, the Office of Extended & Distance Learning sends the following to the selected proctor: a paper copy of the examination, any special instructions from the instructor for students or the proctor, and instructions on whether the completed examination should be returned to the Office of Extended & Distance Learning or to the instructor.
34. The Office of Extended & Distance Learning receives completed examinations from the proctor and, depending on the instructor's preference, either immediately submits the examinations to the instructor or files these examinations with those of other students in the same course, to later be submitted to the instructor together.
35. The Office of Extended & Distance Learning retains Proctor Requests, Proctored Examination Information Forms, and the originals of paper-based examinations in a secure location for the length of the semester in which these materials are used.
36. The Office of Extended & Distance Learning maintains a list of acceptable proctored testing centers in Texas, which is available at <http://www.correspondence.txstate.edu/students/testing-sites.html> .

### **CERTIFICATION STATEMENT**

37. This PPS has been approved by the reviewer listed below and represents Texas State's Division of Academic Affairs policy and procedure from the date of this document until superseded.

Review Cycle: \_\_\_\_\_ Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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