

CAMPUS & COMMUNITY

The Honorlock Debate: Privacy vs. Integrity



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With online learning reshaping the traditional college experience, an emerging trend is taking place: the use of online proctoring services to prevent cheating.

While there are several proctoring services available, UW-Superior utilizes Honorlock, which uses a Google Chrome browser extension to track or limit student activity during exams. Though many colleges were introduced to proctoring services after the rise of remote learning during the COVID pandemic, UWS was ahead of the curve.

In 2019, after the university prohibited the use of outside proctors, such as librarians, a small group of instructors were tasked with providing solutions. Dr. Steven Rosenberg, a Mathematics and Computer Science Department professor, was part of that team and recalls they looked at proctoring

solutions based on, “affordability, student-friendliness, and reliability.”

The university administration chose Honorlock, which is now used in some online courses at UWS. Heather Kahler, a teaching professor in the Mathematics and Computer Science Department, was also a part of the team and says that using Honorlock is about integrity. “I feel that it is my responsibility as a professor to evaluate student work and, when assigning a grade, to do my best to ensure that the student to whom I am assigning a grade is, in fact, the one who did the work,” said Kahler.

Similarly, when the online computer science major was introduced at UWS, Rosenberg said his only concern was, “To find a way to ensure that each student was the one doing the work they turned in.”

A typical exam using Honorlock might begin with a

student showing a photo ID, giving a 360-degree room scan, and taking a picture of their face. The Honorlock website states that instructors are able to choose from a selection of proctoring features such as browser lockdown, voice detection, ID verification, and can even use AI-enabled technology to alert live proctors to the presence of nearby devices.

While these features are meant to create a fair test environment, some are worried. UWS student Talon Morton said he has concerns about what the company might do with the information they gather and finds certain requirements invasive. “I think it is ridiculous that Honorlock requires me to show a photograph ID and to take a scan of my room,” stated Morton.

Kahler understands that students might feel uncomfortable being watched, saying, “The setting I use does not involve a live proctor and

I watch the recording only if necessary.”

While Rosenberg has not received criticism from students about his Honorlock requirements, he states that he does not require students to show a photograph or ID before taking an exam. Nevertheless, students like Morton have justified concerns about the safety of any data collected.

Major companies like AT&T, Ticketmaster, and even the United States Postal Service have all disclosed data breaches in the past year. According to Honorlock, the standard retention period for student data is one year.

One solution regarding privacy concerns might involve less intrusive photo identification. Currently, UWS does not provide student IDs to distance learners, forcing them to use other forms of photo identification, such as a driver’s license, when required by

Honorlock.

Morton suggests that timed exams and tests designed to encourage critical thinking, rather than just answers that can be looked up, are better ways to combat cheating while also protecting student privacy.

“Generally, I feel like that Honorlock is an effective cheating measure as it would intimidate students to not cheat,” Morton explained. “The risk of harming students through a privacy violation significantly outweighs the potential cheating that will happen on the exam.”

Kahler and Rosenberg say they know people can find ways around Honorlock rules, but believe that the service is the best option they have to ensure academic integrity.

One thing is for sure, with UWS’ growing number of online courses, online proctoring services are not going anywhere.

Harvesting Creativity with Creative Writing Center’s Upcoming Harvest Festival

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When farmers harvest their produce, they often share it with others. Similarly, when artists create, they often share it with others. Sharing can create a sense of community, regardless of what is being shared. This is one concept the president of Creative Writers Collab, Daniel Dow, has in mind for the Creative Harvest Festival.

“Since COVID, a big thing that has been lacking is the feeling of community,” said Dow. “With the CHF, I idealistically hope the festival will build roots not just among the community but also among students and staff.”

The event aims to build a sense of community, encourage creative collaborations, and provide a platform for individuals to showcase their work.

Amanda Dunlavy, an active member of the Creative Writers Collab, said, “I’m excited for the CWC to introduce ourselves and become a part of something bigger. Putting ourselves out there and gaining new creative collaborations and friendships

is going to make us stronger as a group. It’s a great way for growth on both a personal and organizational level.”

The Creative Harvest Festival is on Tuesday, Oct. 8, from 12 p.m. to 3 p.m. in the Jim Dan Hill Library at the University of Wisconsin-Superior. All are welcome to attend this free event in person or online. Students, staff, and organizations from Superior’s community are encouraged to participate.

As Dunlavy, an online student of UWS, prepares to attend, she reflects on the boundless nature of creativity, saying, “The sheer limitlessness of creativity. Whatever a mind can think of can be turned into some-powerful, inspiring, emotional, scary, name it,” said Dunlavy. a never-ending process brings about wonder-things in numerous forms, and anybody find joy in it.”

One can register for event via SharePoint the QR code from the Presenting time slots last between five to ten minutes and signing up

only takes a few moments.

“It might seem scary at first to be the center of attention and expose a piece of yourself that you worked hard on,” said Dunlavy. “But we are a very conscientious group who are working through and learning the same things you are. We are here to support our fellow Superior classmates, judgment-free and open to help in any way we can.”

The Creative Harvest Festival at the University of Wisconsin-Superior is a wonderful opportunity for the community, students, and staff to unite and celebrate creativity.



Scan the QR above to be registered for the Creative Harvest Festival



Booths looked to also get students involved with student organizations at ‘Jacket Fest through games, drawings, and snacks. Photo by Evan Ludwig | The Promethean

Connecting Students with Opportunities at ‘JacketFest

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UW-Superior students had over a 100 student clubs and organizations, on-campus departments, resource organizations, and external employers attend this year’s ‘JacketFest. The annual event allows students to see the opportunities available to them in the Twin Ports.

Due to the weather, this year’s ‘JacketFest was held indoors in the YellowJacket Union. Both the YU Great Room A and the YU Atrium were filled with tables gearing to grab student’s attention or involvement. Despite being indoors, a record 289 students attended this year’s event.

“This was by far this was the most success indoor ‘JacketFest,” said Alison Garver, UWS’ Student Affairs Director. “We were a little disappointed when the weather turned out fine, but the [student] organizations did a crazy amount of recruiting this year. It looks like students are really looking to be involved this year.”

Each year ‘JacketFest is hosted by Student Involvement, The Link Center, and Student Employment and is for UWS students only. Coming up on Oct. 17, The Link Center will be holding their annual Fall Career & Internship Fair. That event will be open to UMD, CSS, LSC students and community members.