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To: Members of the Faculty
From: Gene A. Jarrett, Dean of the Faculty
Re: Proctoring of In-Class Examinations
Date: May 4, 2026

For faculty approval, I present to you a proposal to revise Section VI of Rules and Procedures of the Faculty, governing the Conduct of Undergraduate Courses of Study, to provide for supervision of in-class examinations by instructional staff.

Dean of the College Michael Gordin is presenting this proposal after meeting with, and receiving endorsement from, current and former student chairs of the Honor Committee; colleagues from the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Students and the McGraw Center for Teaching and Learning; the Faculty-Student Committee on Discipline; and the Academics Chair of the Undergraduate Student Government. The Undergraduate Student Government also undertook a survey of undergraduates finding that a majority would favor proctoring or are indifferent to any change.

After considering these perspectives, on April 7, 2026, the Committee on Examinations & Standing unanimously approved a proposal that instructors act as additional observers in the room (i.e., proctors). The Faculty Advisory Committee on Policy likewise voted unanimously to endorse the proposal on April 22, 2026. If approved, this proposal would go into effect on July 1, 2026, and would apply to examinations after that date.

Dean Gordin is available to address any questions or comments from the Faculty.

To: Faculty Advisory Committee on Policy
From: Michael Gordin, Dean of the College, on behalf of the Committee on Examinations & Standing
Re: Proctoring of In-Class Examinations
Date: 13 April 2026

Since 1893, in-class examinations at Princeton University have been governed by the Honor Code, which has been renewed several times over the intervening 133 years. Investigation and resolution of suspected violations of the Honor Code during in-class examinations is under the jurisdiction of the student-run Honor Committee, the Constitution of which is reproduced in *Rights, Rules, and Responsibilities* 2.3.4. (Suspected integrity violations on all other academic assessments — problem sets, papers, take-home examinations — are under the jurisdiction of the Faculty-Student Committee on Discipline.)

Briefly summarized, the Honor Code has two components: a) a student must attest on each examination that “I pledge my honor that I have not violated the Honor Code during this examination”; and b) a student is obliged to report suspected violations to the Honor Committee, which will then investigate. This second clause has been interpreted by the faculty, in *Rules and Procedures of the Faculty* (VI.4.a) to mean that “There shall be no proctorial supervision of examinations,” but rather that the students’ obligation to report violations will serve that function.

Over the past few years, and with increasing frequency over the last six months, significant numbers of undergraduate students and faculty members have requested that the Office of the Dean of the College consider a policy change toward proctored examinations, given their perception that cheating on in-class exams has become widespread. There are several precipitating drivers of this demand. Commonly cited are the advent of generative artificial intelligence products which significantly lower the barrier to gaining unfair advantage in the context of an in-class examination. The ease of access of these tools on a small personal device have also changed the external appearance of misconduct during an examination, which is much harder for other students to observe (and hence to report). Many reports that do arrive to the Honor Committee are now anonymous because of another technological development of longer standing — social media — which has reportedly deterred students from reporting openly out of apprehension of doxxing or shaming among their peer groups. This has made it difficult for the Honor Committee and the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Students (ODUS) to follow up on concerns, even when there is significant buzz or outrage about supposedly egregious violations. If students alone are present in the examination room and students are unwilling to report, then there is no check against misconduct during assessments. Since the pandemic and especially since the introduction of artificial intelligence products in late 2022, a significant proportion of take-home examinations has been converted to in-class examinations, which has in turn escalated tensions around this issue, both among students and between students and faculty.

It is important to underscore that the Honor Committee Constitution itself does not mention supervision of examinations. The only rule that governs the presence of faculty members during

the examination is one that the faculty has imposed on itself. Introduction of proctoring would not change the Honor Code. Alleged violations of the Code during in-class examinations would still be adjudicated by the student-run Honor Committee.

Undergraduates and faculty are realistic in understanding that having an instructor supervising examinations will not eradicate cheating. However, they believe that there will be a significant deterrent effect, and that having an additional witness in the room will reduce pressure on students to notice and report concerns while they are themselves completing exams. The proctor's capacity to serve as a witness regarding suspected violations can potentially reduce both false positives and false negatives before the Honor Committee.

Before making any recommendations to the faculty, the Dean of the College met with the current and former student chairs of the Honor Committee; with colleagues from ODUS and the McGraw Center for Teaching and Learning; with the Faculty-Student Committee on Discipline; and with the Academics Chair of the Undergraduate Student Government. All endorsed a move toward supervising in-class examinations. The USG undertook a survey of undergraduates finding that a majority would favor proctoring or are indifferent to any change (a sizeable minority opposes it on the grounds that students should behave honorably, and that faculty and students should trust each other given the 1893 Honor Code compact).

After considering these perspectives, on April 7, the Committee on Examinations & Standing unanimously approved a proposal that instructors act as additional observers in the room (i.e., proctors). Proctors will be present in the room during the examination and will serve as a witness to what happens but will not interfere with the students taking examinations. In the event of a suspected violation, proctors will note their observations and will make a report to the Honor Committee. They are expected to be available as witnesses for the Honor Committee, where their testimony will be weighed by the Honor Committee according to the same standards currently used to evaluate the testimony of other witnesses. The procedures of the Honor Committee, and the due process protections and rights to appeal of those brought before the committee, do not change. The specifics of permissible and impermissible proctoring practices, including how many proctors are necessary for a large room or group, will be determined in consultation with student and faculty representatives, and will be posted and circulated widely. Students will remain bound by the Honor Code.

This policy change would require revision of one line in *Rules and Procedures of the Faculty* (see attachment).¹ If the Faculty Advisory Committee on Policy approves this proposed revision to *Rules and Procedures*, the proposal will advance to consideration by the full faculty. If this revision is approved at the May 11 faculty meeting, revisions to the guidance in *Rights, Rules, and Responsibilities* would be made in time for the AY2026-27 edition, and the College would develop a best-practice guide for faculty by the start of fall term.

¹ Because this revision would place proctors in *all* examinations, the proviso in subpoint (d) is now redundant, so it is recommended for deletion.

Original

Chapter VI: Conduct of Undergraduate Courses of Study

4. THE HONOR SYSTEM

All written examinations and tests are taken in accordance with the provisions of the Honor System. (The constitution and a description of the Honor System are given in Rights Rules and Responsibilities.) The provisions which immediately concern an officer of instruction in charge of an examination are the following:

a. There shall be no proctorial supervision of examinations, but each student shall subscribe on her or his paper the following pledge:

“I pledge my honor that I have not violated the Honor Code during this examination.”

b. Suspected breaches of this pledge which come to the attention of the Faculty shall be reported immediately to the student Honor Committee.

c. At the request of the student Honor Committee the following rules are to be observed at all examinations and tests taken under the Honor System:

1. Students may not take an examination or written test in any place other than that regularly scheduled for the examination or test, unless the instructor has granted specific permission, which must then also be granted to any other student who makes the same request.

2. All students taking examinations should, as far as feasible, sit in alternate seats, refrain from bringing books, notes and electronic devices into the examination room (except as required for taking the examination), and avoid sitting near those with whom they have studied.

3. The examiner shall insist that every student taking an examination or test write out the pledge and sign her or his name thereto.

d. When circumstances require that a student takes an in-class examination without their classmates present (either away from campus or at a different time or location from the rest of the class), the twofold obligation of the honor code is not possible. In these cases, a proctor is necessary to ensure that academic integrity standards of the honor code are maintained.

Redlined

Chapter VI: Conduct of Undergraduate Courses of Study

Proposed revision to *Rules and Procedures of the Faculty*:

4. THE HONOR SYSTEM

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a. ~~There shall be no proctorial supervision of examinations, but~~ In-class exams shall be supervised by instructional staff. Each student shall subscribe on her or his paper the following pledge:

“I pledge my honor that I have not violated the Honor Code during this examination.”

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Final

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