



The Integrity Imperative: **Protecting Your Institution's Reputation in the AI Era**

Integrating the use of AI in higher education can help faculty expand learning opportunities, increase engagement within the classroom, and empower new ways of educating today's learner. As more exams move online, studies reveal that 80% of college students use AI chatbots, and up to 90% admit to cheating at some point¹. With this data, academic leaders must consider how to accurately measure learning in an AI-driven environment. Investigating tools, such as online proctoring solutions, that support the positive use of AI allows

Key Takeaways

- AI is reshaping how students learn — and cheat.
- Unchecked AI use threatens institutional credibility and accreditation.
- Faculty need tools and policies that protect their time and uphold fairness.
- Secure online proctoring creates accountability and preserves trust.
- The result: stronger reputation, better learning, and sustainable integrity.

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The Institutional Costs of Unchecked AI Misuse

AI has many valid and emerging uses in the education landscape, but students and your institution may suffer serious consequences if it's misused. While AI does have the potential to increase student engagement and provide real-time feedback on assignments, it can hinder students' ability to truly master their studies. It also puts their reputations at stake. Accusations of plagiarism may plague student integrity, while an overreliance on AI shortcuts can lead to learning losses. Chatbots can also generate inaccurate or biased content, which further degrades students' knowledge base.

Academic leadership must also keep a close check on AI use in their classrooms. Widespread academic dishonesty and AI misuse can damage the institution's reputation, put accreditation at risk, and lead to faculty burnout, as the burden of policing cheating typically falls on instructors.

Reputational damage

Widespread cheating devalues a degree and can harm the institution's brand and alumni relations, particularly if it erupts into a large public scandal. Negative media attention may decrease matriculation rates as fewer students enroll and current students leave for other institutions. Faculty and staff attrition is also a concern. Some may not want to be affiliated with an employer that is plagued by scandal and credibility issues.

When the public loses trust in an institution, it not only damages the school's reputation but de-values graduates' degrees and creates more hurdles in the job market for alumnae. Alumni financial contributions may drop, impacting operating budgets, scholarships, and programs that improve the student experience.

Accreditation risks

Accrediting bodies, such as HLC and SACSCOC, expect colleges to demonstrate that their programs are honest, fair, and trustworthy. Failure to protect academic integrity by fairly and securely assessing students is a major red flag. Accreditors see it as a serious breakdown in all processes, not just in assessments. That, in itself, negatively impacts quality and trust, but can also lead to warnings, probation, or the full loss of accreditation, which threatens financial aid eligibility, enrollment, and the value of every degree the institution awards.

Faculty burnout

Academic dishonesty is not just a student problem; it also significantly drains faculty time and morale, as they spend hours policing and investigating cheating infractions instead of teaching. Faculty burnout can erode the culture of integrity even further.

In fact, many faculty (48%) ignore cheating because they don't feel like they have enough evidence to warrant reporting academic dishonesty.² AI detection tools often don't provide legitimate evidence of cheating, and given the number of studies that show AI detectors aren't accurate, it's unclear at what point faculty should take action if AI detection software indicates a percentage of the essay was AI-generated. Is 25% the threshold? 50%? 75%?

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of faculty say the process to report cheating is too time-consuming, and 66% don't think their institution will do anything about it anyway.

Some faculty are attempting to modify their assessments and assignments to mitigate the impact of AI. This takes significant effort and can take more time to review and grade. For example, instead of multiple-choice tests that can be answered by AI, they may assign authentic assessments that require students to complete more tailored projects. This requires the instructor to watch video presentations, review portfolios, and undertake other time-consuming endeavors.

The process to formally report cheating is also very time-intensive and emotionally stressful for faculty. 30% of faculty say the process is too time-consuming, and 66% don't think their institution will do anything about it anyway.³ This is part of the snowball effect that creates a culture of cheating.

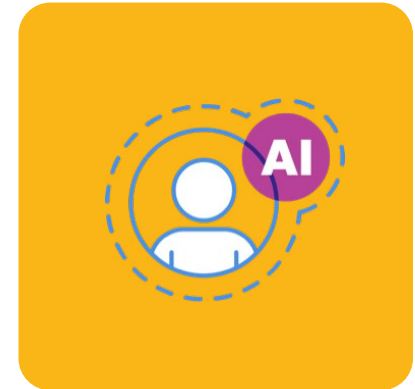
When students assume others are cheating and that faculty and the institution don't care or won't do anything about it, a cheating culture emerges.⁴ But the thing about cheating is that the more it happens, the more it happens—and with each instance, students see it as a less serious offense.⁵ They begin to believe cheating is common behavior, that it's acceptable, and then begin justifying it.

Blueprint for an Enforceable AI Policy

AI tools rely on technologies such as large language models (LLMs), machine learning (ML), and natural language processing (NLP) to generate human-like responses that can appear accurate and credible, even when they're not. Even early versions of ChatGPT achieved top 15 to 20% scores on exams such as the LSAT and GRE.

Instructors can utilize AI detection tools that scan for writing patterns, such as word choice and sentence structure, to identify AI-generated text. Plagiarism detection tools compare text against huge databases of content to identify copied or paraphrased content from other sources. AI detection tools can usually detect text that is 100% AI-generated, but realistically, students will edit and adapt the content just enough so it's not caught.

	Unchecked AI Use / Risks	Secure AI Integration / Solutions
Institutional Reputation	Erodes trust among students, alumni, and employers	Strengthens public confidence and preserves degree value
Faculty Time & Morale	Faculty spend hours reviewing, reporting, and re-grading	Faculty regain 8+ hours per course per semester to focus on teaching
Student Learning Outcomes	Overreliance on AI leads to shallow understanding and skill	Authentic assessments verify real learning and mastery
Accreditation & Compliance	At risk due to inconsistent assessment integrity	Accreditation strengthened through documented integrity measures
Operational Efficiency	Manual investigations, inconsistent enforcement	Centralized data, automated reporting, and clear policy enforcement
Institutional Culture	Culture of suspicion and disengagement	Culture of integrity, fairness, and accountability
Long-Term Risk	Reputational damage, enrollment decline, potential financial aid loss	Future-ready institution that models responsible AI use



All institutions should have an enforceable AI policy statement that sets expectations for acceptable AI use at your institution. To make it clear and easy to understand for learners, it should:

- Describe the institution's stance on AI
- Define what the institution considers to be AI tools
- Clearly explain what the institution considers acceptable AI use
- Outline the negative impact of using AI tools on the institution
- Show how the AI policy will be enforced

In addition to AI policy, institutions are encouraged to consider more tangible solutions, such as integrating online proctoring software with your LMS to create a secure testing environment that boosts academic integrity. Most coursework and exams can be remotely proctored so that students won't be able to do the following unless the instructor allows it:

- Use chatbots or software and access websites
- Refer to books or notes unless approved by the instructor
- Paste pre-copied content (e.g., text or formulas)
- Search for information on their cell phones
- Ask voice assistants like Siri or Alexa for answers

From Policy to Practice: Strengthening Integrity with the Right Tools

Once clear policies are established, institutions can turn to technology to help put those principles into consistent practice. In such a dynamic higher education environment, preventing AI misuse helps leaders be proactive and innovative while future-proofing their institutions. If you have the right technology in place, like Honorlock's proctoring solution, your institution and faculty can effectively integrate AI use in their courses without worrying about misuse. This allows institutions to keep up with the times and truly prepare students for the real world, in a secure manner.

Easily implement and scale

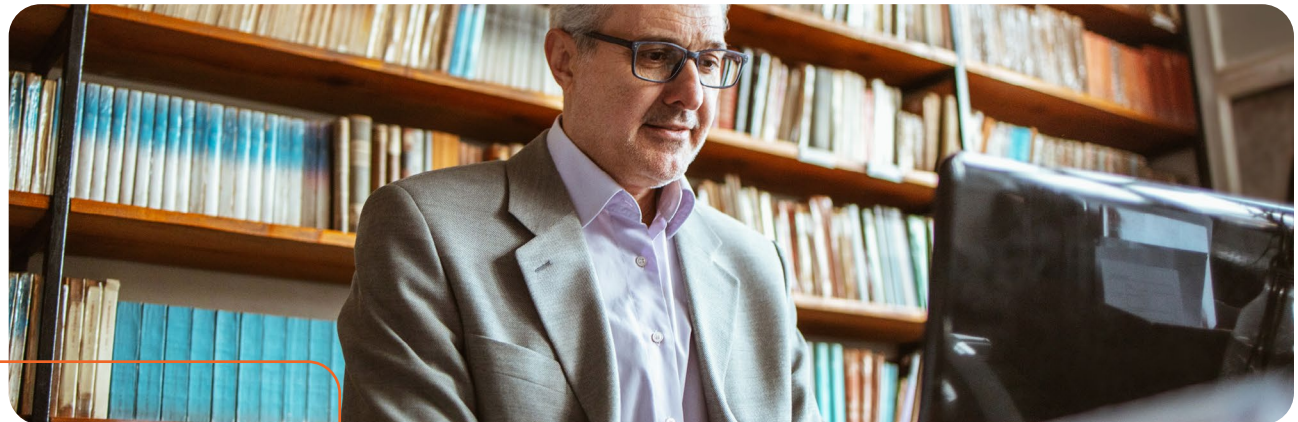
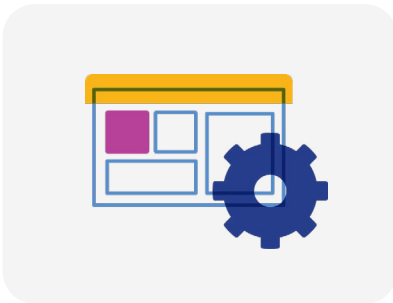
Choose a solution that's easy to roll out and scale department- or university-wide with minimal burden on IT staff. The software integrates with LMS such as Canvas, Blackboard, Moodle, D2L,

Open LMS, Intellum, and Docebo, and provides open APIs for custom integrations.

Honorlock collaborates with your team to integrate your LMS with the proctoring platform in about an hour, which:

- Creates a seamless test environment
- Protects data security and privacy
- Provides in-depth exam reports with timestamped recordings in the LMS

Paul Fisher, CIO of Seton Hall University, reports, "The implementation of Honorlock was one of the easiest implementations of technology I've ever done."



Reinforce decision-making with data

Actionable analytics are crucial when important administrative decisions are at stake. Administrators can use data gathered from online proctoring for strategic planning and accreditation reports, and to:

- **Fix larger problems before they spread.** If you see a sudden increase in students trying to use their phones, or trying to access chatbots or specific websites, you can immediately update your school's policies and communicate with instructors to address it.
- **Manage your budget effectively.** You can see which departments are using the service and which aren't. This helps decide if you're paying for the right number of licenses or if certain instructors need more training.
- **Ensure accountability.** The reports show you which instructors are actually reviewing flagged exam videos. If potential cheating is regularly being overlooked, leadership can help ensure the process is being followed, which makes the system more effective.
- **Protect exam content.** You can see if and where your exam questions have been leaked online and send one-click takedown requests, which allow you to remove them and update your content.

Honorlock's reporting dashboard provides leadership with immediate oversight into academic integrity across the institution. Administrators have access to in-depth, filterable reports with time-stamped HD recordings all in one easy-to-use portal.

Realize ROI with remote proctoring

Investing in Honorlock should not be viewed as a cost, but as a way to:

- Protect the value of the degrees your institution confers
- Save hundreds of hours of faculty time
- Reduce the risk of costly academic integrity scandals



"Honorlock allows faculty to focus on what they do best: teach. The time savings reaped by faculty is an estimated 8½ hours per semester per course. That's nearly three weeks-worth of class time returned to the faculty member to focus on instruction and student engagement rather than monitoring assessments or reviewing incident reports."

Brian Marchman,

Former University of Florida Assistant Provost and
Director of Distance & Continuing Education

How South Plains College Protected Academic Integrity Against AI



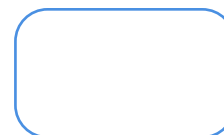
At South Plains College, faculty faced the reality that AI is changing how students approach their coursework and assessments. They grappled with questions such as, “Can I use AI to build my course?” and “What guidance should I give students about using it?”

Heather Medley, Instructional Designer at South Plains, explains, “Figuring out what counts as ethical AI use isn’t simple. We need both a framework and a community that provides faculty with clear guidance and students with a consistent message about what’s okay.”

To address this, South Plains runs a Community of Practice that hosts regular workshops and speaker sessions where faculty explore new AI tools, share classroom-tested strategies, and talk openly about challenges. These transparent conversations, paired with Honorlock, create a secure environment that matches the institution’s integrity standards and supports responsible AI use.

Rather than treating proctoring as an afterthought, South Plains positions Honorlock as a meaningful part of its integrity strategy. This alignment gives students confidence in the fairness of assessments and allows faculty to redirect their energy toward teaching, mentoring, and preparing students for an AI-forward workplace.

Ultimately, the emphasis on integrity reinforces the college’s reputation. Medley summarizes, “Protecting academic integrity isn’t just about catching cheating. It’s about making sure our students graduate with degrees that mean something. Our community trusts that a South Plains degree represents real learning, and Honorlock helps us keep that trust.”



Future-Proofing Your Institution: A Strategic Approach to AI in Assessments

AI chatbots are here to stay, and students will only get savvier in using them to assist with assignments and assessments. But it's vital that you protect the academic integrity of your institution and curtail cheating that may accompany AI use. To future-proof your institution in this AI era, take a strategic approach to AI in assessments and implement an online proctoring solution such as Honorlock. Not only will it help to protect your institution's reputation, but it will also ensure fair assessments, support faculty, and help students truly master their studies.

"We're paying for a service that just works. We're getting a full-time position on the distance education team back. Now that she doesn't have to spend 100% of her time making proctoring work, she can focus on value-added work for our students. There's so much more we can do."

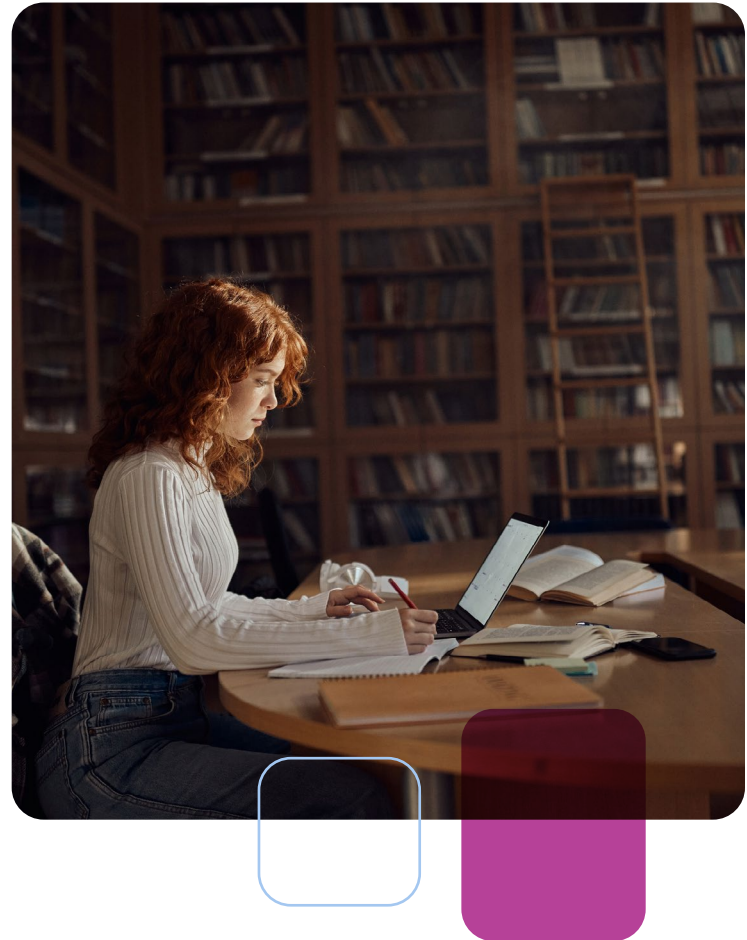
Stephanie Ungerank,

Director of Distance Education,
Arkansas State University-Beebe

Honorlock brings integrity, humanity, confidence, and positive outcomes to the proctored testing experience. Interested in learning more about Honorlock's online proctoring solutions? [Connect with us today.](#)

Resources

1. Cantiello, J., & Geschke, R. H. (2024). Preventing Academic Dishonesty in Online Courses: Best Practices to Discourage Cheating. *The Journal of Health Administration Education*, 40(2), 205–230
2. <https://honorlock.com/blog/why-do-students-cheat/>
3. MacLeod, Paul & Eaton, Sarah. (2020). The Paradox of Faculty Attitudes toward Student Violations of Academic Integrity. *Journal of Academic Ethics*. 18. 1-16. 10.1007/s10805-020-09363-4.
4. <https://scholars.georgiasouthern.edu/en/publications/academic-dishonesty-in-online-courses-considerations-for-graduate-3>
5. Shu, L. L., Gino, F., & Bazerman, M. H. (2011). Dishonest Deed, Clear Conscience: When Cheating Leads to Moral Disengagement and Motivated Forgetting. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 37(3), 330-349. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167211398138> (Original work published 2011)





Honorlock helps institutions protect their reputation with a highly effective academic integrity solution built for today's AI-driven learning environments. By combining live human proctors with advanced AI and patented technology, Honorlock saves instructors time, reduces institutional risk, and gives students confidence in the fairness of their assessments.

[Learn More](#)





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