2014 Student Technology Fee Proposal:

turnitin
(An Anti-Plagiarism Service by iParadigms, LLC.)

Prepared for: Student Technology Fee Advisory Committee
Prepared by: Robert Fuselier, Assistant Director, Technology

December 12, 2013
Executive Summary

What is Turnitin?
Turnitin is a plagiarism detection service that is used to evaluate the content of a submitted document and reports the probability of plagiarism against:

- Over 40 billion current and archived web pages
- Over 300 million student-submitted documents
- Over 130 million academic journals and publications
- Library databases and digital reference collections

Instructors use the results to not only detect unoriginal work, but also to teach students what constitutes plagiarism and how to properly cite sources.

Why does FSU need Turnitin?
Plagiarism is a major concern for many universities, especially with the high availability of online resources and ease of copying information. FSU needs anti-plagiarism tools that are dependable, accurate, and easy to use. Continuing our Turnitin license can help FSU achieve the follow goals:

- Check student work against a larger domain of materials than provided by our SafeAssign, our current anti-plagiarism service.
- Allow instructors who prefer and are familiar with Turnitin to continue using the service.
- Present an alternative solution when SafeAssign results are called into question.
- Serve as a plagiarism detection tool for high-stakes works, such as dissertations or exams.

Who will benefit from Turnitin?
The Turnitin service benefits any college or department that takes advantage of FSU’s Blackboard system, including:

- 40,000 students who are enrolled in at least one Blackboard course each semester.
- 2,700 faculty members acting as ‘instructor’ in at least one Blackboard course each term.

How will Turnitin be supported?
Turnitin is a service that is delivered as an extension of Blackboard. The Office of Distance Learning (ODL) is currently managing this service and offers support to instructors and students through:

- **Training:** Workshops are offered by the ODL faculty and Blackboard support groups to provide the best practices and technical skills necessary to get the most out of the service.
- **Technical Support:** The Blackboard help desk fields calls, email requests, and trouble tickets from instructors and students to answer questions and assist with problems.
- **Documentation:** Tutorials, videos, quick-start guides, announcements, and other resources are posted on the support tab in Blackboard by the user support group for students and instructors.
- **Administration:** Blackboard administrators apply patches and updates, run reports, and work with Turnitin engineers to manage the service from a technical perspective.
Project Concept

Background
From 2005-2009 Turnitin was FSU’s primary tool for detecting plagiarism. Unfortunately, large license cost increases began to make it an unaffordable solution and eventually we were obligated to research alternatives.

A detailed comparison of Turnitin to a newly bundled Blackboard product, SafeAssign, was held by researchers at the FSU Center for Assessment & Testing. It was concluded that the services were comparable and a recommendation was made to adopt SafeAssign as the new anti-plagiarism service.

The results of the ODL: Assessment & Testing Turnitin/SafeAssign study can be found at:


After the new service had been in place for two years, we began receiving complaints from instructors on an increasing basis that SafeAssign was not meeting their needs. FSU experienced loss of the SafeAssign service on many occasions during critical periods (mid-terms, final exam week, etc.). Additionally, several faculty members expressed concerns that SafeAssign was not detecting cases of plagiarism that they felt Turnitin would have captured.

In 2011, The Office of Distance Learning funded a short pilot to reevaluate Turnitin and found that the service had become more robust (with new features such as GradeMark and PeerMark, which allowed instructors and students to digitally markup papers), and was more reliable than the Blackboard SafeAssign service.

We would like to continue offering this service to the university and will ultimately be appealing for centralized funding for Turnitin so this service can be offered as an ongoing tool for instructors.

Goals
As previously mentioned, renewing the Turnitin license would provide instructors, researchers, and support staff access to the service and allow the university to:

- Check student work against a larger domain of materials than provided by SafeAssign
- Allow instructors who prefer and are familiar with Turnitin to continue using the service.
- Present an alternative solution when SafeAssign results are called into question.
- Provide an additional resource for plagiarism detection against high-stakes works, such as dissertations or exams.
- Allow access to Turnitin for researchers to evaluate the effectiveness of the service compared to SafeAssign.

All of these goals would be beneficial to the university and support our mission of teaching and learning.
Project Benefits/Cost

Benefits
By improving our ability to detect plagiarism, FSU will be able to provide an improved learning environment and a better quality of service for both our students and faculty. Below are some of the benefits the university may experience by pursuing this project:

Improving Learning: Acting as an educational tool, the system can identify unoriginal content and provide an opportunity for instructors to help students understand plagiarism and provide motivation for others to improve the quality of their work.

Ensuring Academic Honesty: By taking advantage of anti-plagiarism tools, instructors are better able to ensure the originality of a student’s work and enforce FSU’s Academic Honor Policy.

Providing Quality of Service: The opportunity to evaluate Turnitin provides meaningful insight into the performance of SafeAssign, our current anti-plagiarism service. Additional research will also allow us to make educated decisions regarding longer-term contractual commitments.

Impact
Because the Turnitin service is provided through FSU’s Blackboard system, it has the potential to impact thousands of students and instructors. Over the last year, Turnitin:

- Was added to a course site by 1,377 instructors.
- Was used by over 31,640 students.
- Had over 129,376 paper submissions by students.

These statistics represent usage by over two-thirds of our student population and nearly half of our faculty.

Cost
The Office of Distance learning has negotiated a three-year renewal for the Turnitin license for $192,000. There is currently $80,000 allocated to fund the license and we are hoping to receive the remaining $112,000 to cover the full cost. This licensing option saves the university $71,000 over the single-year renewals.
Project Plan

Actions

The Turnitin service is funded by the Student Technology Fee on a trial basis for evaluation by instructors and researchers. Since the service has already been installed and is currently being supported by Office of Distance Learning staff, an implementation plan is not necessary. However, our ultimate goals will be to promote the service and gather data to support a formal request for centralized, recurring funding. Our approach will be as follows:

1. **Marketing:** When the pilot was initially announced at the beginning of the fall semester, there was a large influx of instructors who were interested in using Turnitin for plagiarism detection. A similar campaign will be held to promote the new grading features of Turnitin, as well as regenerate interest in the originality reporting aspect. This campaign will be renewed each semester included in the evaluation period.

2. **Training/Demonstrations:** Training sessions and demonstrations will be held by the ODL faculty and the Blackboard support team for instructors who are new to the service or would like to learn more about it. Additional support materials and training guides will also be made available on the support site. Training will be held every semester as requested by faculty.

3. **Research:** In order to justify a recurring funding request, research will be performed to gather usage statistics and determine user satisfaction.

Milestones

Since Turnitin is currently deployed in the Blackboard system, the focus of the second part of the pilot will shift from implementation to generating product awareness, training and support, and gathering data for research.

- **Marketing Announcements and Materials Distributed:** Reached upon successful distribution of announcements and marketing materials informing users of the service.
- **Training Sessions Held & Training Resources Posted:** This milestone has been achieved when all scheduled training session have been held and all knowledge base material has been completed or updated.
- **Research Results Reported:** After the funding for the pilot has expired, research results will be made available to evaluate the feasibility of funding the service for an extended period.

Marketing and training milestones will be met each semester and research will be completed following the close of the pilot.
Evaluation Plan

Overview
The success of the project will be evaluated based on the number of instructors and students using Turnitin, the quality of the service, and ultimately by a long-term commitment by the university for recurring funding.

Usage
Over the evaluation period, reports will be run to determine the number of courses taking advantage of the Turnitin service. These reports can also provide data regarding the number of students impacted by the service and the number of faculty using it in a class.

Quality of Service
At the end of the period, the quality of the service will be evaluated based on system availability during peak times, responsiveness of Turnitin support staff, and support requests received from faculty and students.

Project Team
The team necessary for the implementation and support of Turnitin for the university consists of four primary groups:

- **Blackboard Administrators**: The Blackboard Administrators are responsible for installing, testing, and deploying the service.
- **Blackboard User Support**: The Blackboard help desk on campus provides user support, documentation, and training for students and faculty.
- **Turnitin Representatives**: Staff from Turnitin may be called upon to provide documentation or software required to install and run the service. They will also provide technical support.
## Student Technology Fee Budget Template for 2013-2014 Project Funding Proposal

**Project Title:** 2104 Student Technology Fee Proposal: TurnItIn  
**Organization or College:** Office of Distance Learning  
**Department or Unit:**

### Project Period

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start Date:</th>
<th>End Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### I. Senior/Key Personnel

List senior and/or key personnel whose compensation will be funded through project non-recurring funds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Middle Name</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>Project Role</th>
<th>Requested Funds</th>
<th>Salary</th>
<th>Fringe Benefits</th>
<th>FTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
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<td>D.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Funds Requested for Senior/Key Personnel**  
$ -  

### II. Student & Other Personnel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Requested Funds</th>
<th>Salary</th>
<th>Fringe Benefits</th>
<th>FTE</th>
<th>Funds Requested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Graduate Students | $ -  
| Undergraduate Students | $ -  
| Other Personnel | $ -  

**Total Funds Requested for Students & Other Personnel**  
$ -  

**Total Salaries, Wages & Benefits**  
$ -  

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*Student Technology Fee Budget Template for 2013-2014 Project Funding Proposal*

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*Student Technology Fee Budget Template for 2013-2014 Project Funding Proposal*
### Student Technology Fee Budget Template for 2013-2014 Project Funding Proposal

#### III. Equipment

List items and dollar amounts for each item, including software, (or multiple items of the same type with a total cost of) over $2,000 - add lines as needed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Funds Requested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. 3-Year TurnItIn License</td>
<td>$112,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total for items over $2,000</strong></td>
<td>$112,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total for Additional items (less that $2,000 each)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Funds Requested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Equipment Costs</strong></td>
<td>$112,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### IV. Other Costs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Funds Requested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Materials &amp; Supplies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultant Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment or Facility Rental/Use Fees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Project Costs (describe in budget justification)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total for Others Costs</strong></td>
<td>$ -</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Project Cost**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Funds Requested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Project Cost</strong></td>
<td>$112,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>