Verification of Student Identity in Online Learning Policy

Summary

Hocking College must abide by the United States Federal Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) of 2008, Public Law 110-315, that requires the verification of student identity in distance or correspondence education.

Purpose

The College needs to establish and periodically review a process to determine that a student registered for an online course is the same student that participates in, completes, and receives credit for the course. Students seeking registration in online courses will be required to provide appropriate identification to establish their identity.

Scope

This policy applies to all credit-bearing distance education courses and programs offered by Hocking College.

Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Hocking College operates in compliance with the provisions of the United States Federal Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) concerning the verification of student identity in distance education.

All credit-bearing courses and programs offered through distance education methods must verify that the student who registers for a distance education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives academic credit. According to the HEOA, one or more of the following methods must be used:

a) An individual secure login and password issued by the College
b) Proctored examinations, and/or
c) Other technologies or practices that are effective in verifying student identification.

Any online student work, assessments or activities that are graded or contribute to a student's grade must be submitted via a system that verifies the student's identity as noted above.

All methods of verifying student identity in distance education must protect the privacy of student information. If any fees associated with the verification of student identity will be charged to students, they will be so indicated in the online catalog, in the semester course offerings booklet or on the "Tuition and Fees" website.

Secure Login and Password:

Each Hocking College student is assigned a unique username and password to log into the College's learning management system (currently Moodle). Students are responsible for providing their complete and true identity information in any identification verification process.

Proctored Examinations:

Many students enrolled in online courses are required to take one or more tests in the College's Testing Center, where students' picture IDs are checked. However, the College does not currently require that all students enrolled in online courses take at least one examination in the Testing Center. Individual faculty members who teach online courses may decide whether to require proctored examinations for students. This is the case for faculty teaching mostly online science courses, such as mathematics, biology, or chemistry.

Pedagogical and Related Practices:

Online instructors have a responsibility to identify changes in students' activity in online courses. Examples of changes could be a sudden change in academic performance, change in writing style, and odd statements by students in discussions or email. Faculty are advised to provide more than one kind of assessment type and to ask students to share important ideas learned from references.

Responsibilities:

All users of the College's learning management system are responsible for maintaining the security of usernames, passwords, and other access credentials as required. An account is given to an individual for the exclusive use by that individual. Attempting to discover another user's password or attempts to gain unauthorized access to another person's files or mail is prohibited. It is against

College policy for a user to give someone his or her password or allow others to use his or her account. Users are responsible for any and all users of their account. Users are responsible for all activity on their accounts.

Faculty: Faculty teaching courses through distance education methods hold primary responsibility for ensuring that students comply with the College's identity verification policy. As technology and personal accountability are not absolute in determining a student's identity, faculty members are encouraged to design courses that use assignments and evaluations that support academic integrity.

The Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs is responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy and that deans, department chairs, and program coordinators are informed of any changes in the policy in a timely fashion.

Enforcement

Failure of employees to comply with this agreement/policy will be addressed through the College's Employee Handbook. If warranted, an employee's failure to comply will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Failure to comply may also be a violation of civil/criminal law and may cause the employee to be subject to applicable penalties.

Failure of students to comply with this agreement/policy will be addressed through the College's Student Handbook. If warranted, a student's failure to comply will result in termination of access to College technology resources. Failure to comply may also be a violation of civil/criminal law and may cause the violator to be subject to applicable penalties.

Definitions

Distance Education - Includes Online Learning and Correspondence Education. This includes courses that are on campus but include a portion of credits completed online

Online Learning - Mediated instruction other than face-to-face instruction that relies on the Internet for part or all of communication, collaboration, interaction, assignment submission and/or assessment for a credit bearing course or program

Correspondence Education - Correspondence education occurs when an institution provides instructional materials, by mail or electronic transmission, including examinations on the materials, to students who are separated from the

instructor. Interaction between the instructor and the student is limited, and is primarily initiated by the student; courses are typically self-paced