

Verification of Student Identity Policy

Loras College must operate in compliance with the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) of 2008 (Public Law 110-315), Federal Requirement 34 CFR §602.17(g), and HLC Policy Number FDCR.A.10.050 that requires the verification of student identity in distance or correspondence education.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to establish identity verification procedures for students enrolled in distance education courses. According to the provisions of the HEOA, 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. The HEOA has identified the following as acceptable methods of identity verification:

1. An individual secure login and password,
2. Proctored activities, and/or
3. Other technologies or practices that are effective in verifying student identification.

Policy:

All credit-bearing courses and programs offered through distance education methods at Loras College 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. Any of the following methods may be used for verification of identity:

1. Use of a secure login and password.
Loras College students are assigned a unique username and password to log into the College's learning management system (E-Learn). This login and password is connected to the student ID and are used to access Email, grades, course registration. Students are required to authenticate each time they log into E-Learn to access their course(s).
2. Proctored activities, in-person exams, and other activities that require face-to-face interaction between faculty and students and minimize the possibility of academic dishonesty; and/or
3. 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.

Students are responsible for providing their complete and true identity information in any identification verification process.

Loras College does not charge additional fees for student identity verification. Students in an online course may be required to use a computer equipped with a web camera and headset. Faculty state the expectation of the use of a camera and headphone in their course materials and syllabus.

All methods of verifying student identity in distance education must protect the privacy of student information.

Responsibilities:

All users of the College's learning management system are responsible for maintaining the security of usernames, passwords, and other access credentials. An account is given to an individual for the exclusive use by that individual.

Students are responsible to read the course syllabus so they know the course policies regarding how assignments will be evaluated (submission using E-learn, in-person exams, proctored exams, etc.) and whether any special equipment is required for the course (web cam and/or microphone).

Faculty teaching courses through distance education methods hold the primary responsibility for ensuring that students comply with the College's identity verification policy. Given the limitations associated with confirming a student's identity in distance education, faculty members are encouraged to design courses that use assignments and assessments that support academic integrity.

Faculty who teach distance education courses must submit the course for review and approval to the Distance Education Committee prior to the course being placed on the schedule.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs is responsible for ensuring that faculty are informed of this policy and the college is in compliance with this policy.

Definitions as stated by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC):

Distance-delivered courses – Courses in which at least 75 percent of the instruction and interaction occurs via electronic communication, correspondence or equivalent mechanisms, with the faculty and students physically separated from each other.

Distance-delivered programs – Certificate or degree programs in which 50 percent or more of the required courses may be taken as distance-delivered courses.

Distance education – Education that uses one or more of the technologies listed below to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously. The technologies may include:

1. The internet.
2. One-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite or wireless communications devices.
3. Audio conferencing.
4. Video cassettes, DVDs and CD-ROMs, if the cassettes, DVDs or CD-ROMs are used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed above.

Correspondence education – Education provided through one or more courses by an institution under which the 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, is not regular and substantive, and is primarily initiated by the student. Correspondence courses are typically self-paced. Correspondence education is not distance education.