Lebanon Valley College

Policy Title
Lebanon Valley College Student Identity Verification in Distance Education

Policy Description
This policy applies to all credit-bearing distance education courses or programs offered by Lebanon Valley College, beginning with the application for admission and continuing through to a student’s graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from study.

Policy Procedures
The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Lebanon Valley 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,

b) Proctored examinations, and/or

c) Other technologies or practices that are effective in verifying student identification.

All methods of verifying student identity in distance learning 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 or on the “Tuition and Fees” website.

Compliance

Secure Username and Password: All students who enroll at Lebanon Valley College are provided with a secure username and password. A letter containing the student’s username and password is either distributed directly to the student at an orientation session or mailed to their home address.

Passwords must be at least eight characters in length; contain at least one alphabetic and one numeric character; be different from the last five passwords; and not be easily guessable (license plate, telephone number, birthday, etc.). Users are required to change their passwords at least every 180 days (more frequently for some users), and are encouraged to change their password more frequently, and should immediately do so if the password may have been compromised. Users who have forgotten their password or allowed it to expire may reset their password through a secure website. The generated password is random and follows the password characteristics guidelines described above.
Users are held responsible for all activities associated with their accounts. Upon using his or her LVC username and password for the first time, a user agrees to the College’s Password Policy.

Lebanon Valley College uses Canvas as its learning management system. The Canvas system integrates with College authentication services to ensure appropriate and secure student access to courses and other Student Information Systems. All users of the College’s learning management system are responsible for maintaining the security of passwords, or any other access credentials as required. Attempting to discover another user’s password or attempts to gain unauthorized access to another person's files or email is prohibited.

Verification of Identity: Students are responsible for providing their complete and true identity information in any identification verification process. It is against College policy for a user to give someone his or her password or to allow others to use his or her account.

In order to verify the identity of students attending class, the College’s Student Information System provides instructors access to class rosters that includes student photos associated with their name and account. In addition, Lebanon Valley College provides technology for live audio and video interactions in distance learning courses and faculty are strongly encouraged to use these technologies as part of their distance education courses.

In the event that an exam for a distance course must be proctored, the instructor is required to make arrangements in advance with students. These arrangements must include advance notification of any fees associated with proctoring.

Responsibilities

All users of the College's learning management systems are responsible for maintaining the security of usernames, passwords and any other access credentials assigned. Access credentials may not be shared or given to anyone other than the user to whom they were assigned to for any reason. Users are responsible for any and all uses of their account. Users are responsible for changing passwords periodically to maintain security. Users are held responsible for knowledge of the information contained within the most recent College Catalog as well as the Student Handbook. Failure to read College guidelines, requirements and regulations will not exempt users from responsibility.

Students are responsible for providing complete and true information about themselves in any identity verification process, in accordance with the Student Conduct Code.

Faculty teaching courses through distance education methods hold primary responsibility for ensuring that their individual courses comply with the provisions of this policy. Faculty are responsible for informing the Director of Information Technology of any new technologies being used to verify student identity, so that published information on student privacy can be maintained appropriately, and so that the college can coordinate resources and services efficiently. Because technology and personal accountability may not verify identity absolutely or ensure academic integrity completely, faculty are
encouraged, when feasible and pedagogically sound, to design courses that employ assignments and evaluations unique to the course and that support academic integrity.

Chairs and directors of college-level units are responsible for ensuring that faculty are aware of this policy and comply with its provisions. Chairs and directors are also responsible for ensuring that academic awards and degree programs within their units comply with the provisions of this policy.

The Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs is responsible for ensuring college-wide compliance with the provisions of this policy and that chairs and directors are informed of any changes in a timely fashion. The Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs is responsible for publishing college-wide information on how identity verification processes protect student privacy. The Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs is also responsible for coordinating and promoting efficient use of college resources and services, and for ensuring that college level processes (e.g., admissions or registration) also remain in compliance with this policy.

**Student Privacy**

Lebanon Valley College complies fully with the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. 1232g. This act protects the privacy of student information in distance education by requiring, with certain limited exceptions, that the student's consent must be obtained before disclosing any personally identifiable information in the student's education records. Additional information on FERPA and student record access can be found at [http://www.lvc.edu/registrar/ferpa.aspx](http://www.lvc.edu/registrar/ferpa.aspx).

**Definitions**

**Distance Education** – Defined in Federal regulations as “education that uses one or more of the following technologies 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: (i) the internet; (ii) one-way or two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices; (iii) audio conferencing; or (iii) video cassettes, DVDs and CD-ROMs using in a course in conjunction with the previous technologies.”

**Distance Education Programs** – Per Middle States Commission on Higher Education, “institutions must submit a substantive change request for the initiation or expansion of distance education or correspondence education wherein 50% or more of the courses or credits in one or more academic programs are provided through the alternative delivery. The Commission requires approval for the first two programs for which 50% or more of the academic program(s) will be offered through distance or correspondence education. The predominant mode of delivery is the deciding factor in determining whether a hybrid/blended program or course is considered distance or correspondence education versus onsite/residential education. Institutions offering alternative delivery are required by Federal regulation to have processes through which they establish that the student who registers is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit.”
Lebanon Valley College does not currently offer, nor have we as yet initiated, any academic program in which 50% or more of the courses or credits are provided through distance education.