Slippery Rock University

Policy 2.5 Student Identity Verification in Distance Learning

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy applies to all credit-bearing distance education courses or programs offered by the Slippery Rock University, beginning with the application for admission and continuing through to a student's graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from study. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Slippery Rock University 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.

The HEOA requires that institutions offering distance education or correspondence courses or programs have processes in place to ensure that the student registering for a course is the same student who participates in the course or receives course credit. The Act requires that institutions use one of the following three methods:

- A secure login and pass code;
- Proctored examinations; and
- New or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identification.

For this purpose, Slippery Rock University requires all students to use their official University ID and password for purposes of identity verification for distance learning.

PROCEDURES

1. <u>The SRUID system is a University authentication and security measure to ensure that accounts are managed more securely across University campuses</u>. All students at Slippery Rock University are provided a SRUID for secure access to University systems, including for distance learning upon depositing to campus. New students set up their account and are directed to use the password management to store a four digit pin and two security questions to be used in the event that students need to change their password or reclaim their SRUID. In the event this has not been done, students can contact the Help Desk and verify their identification through a variety of questions with full-time staff.

2. <u>Students are responsible for providing their complete and true identity information in any identification verification process.</u> It is against University policy for a user to give someone his or her password or to allow others to use his or her account.

3. <u>Slippery Rock University's learning management system integrates with University authentication services to ensure appropriate and secure student access to courses and other Student Information Systems</u>. All users of the University's learning management system are responsible for maintaining the security of IDs and 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.

4. In addition, the University's Student Information System provides instructors access to class rosters that includes student photos associated with their name and account. The learning management system also provides student photos associated with their account, and if set up by the student, is visible in areas of the course including the discussion. Live audio and video of students interacting in the course is also a feature of the learning management system. As technology and personal accountability are not absolute in determining a student's identity, faculty members are encouraged to use these technologies and to design courses that use assignments and evaluations that support academic integrity.

5. At this time there are no additional student fees associated with student verification. Slippery Rock University is currently experimenting with a video tool used for identification/integrity purposes. In the event any verification fee is needed, it will be posted on the course registration site to provide an advance alert to students.

6. Slippery Rock University 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.sru.edu/academics/academic-services/academic-records/policies-regulations-and-catalogs

SANCTIONS

Students who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action through the Student Code of Conduct Policy

RESPONSIBILTY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The Office for Information and Administrative Technology Services (IATS), part of the Division of 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. IATS is also responsible for ensuring that university-level processes remain in compliance with this policy.

SCOPE OF POLICY COVERAGE

This policy applies to all students taking distance education courses.

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Authority for creation and revision

Reviewed by: ASA Academic Policy Committee, 1.30.16
Approved by: University Cabinet, 8.07.17