

DISTANCE EDUCATION Procedure

Privacy and Verification of Student Identity

1. *Student Privacy* – the college protects the privacy of all students, including distance learning students, through the strict adherence to the rules of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 as Amended (FERPA). All college employees complete required training in FERPA rules at the time of hire and annual refresher trainings are offered.
2. *Verification of Student Identity* – The college issues each student a unique identification number at the time of initial registration and each college employee upon the date of employment. Student and employee unique identifiers (such as VCCS usernames and EMPLID employee identification numbers) are required for students and faculty to access the college's online class environment within Canvas. Canvas is a secure environment for faculty members to post assignments and exams while ensuring the privacy of individual student assessments and grades.
3. *Secure login and password* – Each distance learning faculty and student enters their user ID and password into the intranet login portal. This user ID and password combination identifies faculty and students to the system on each subsequent course visit.
 - a. All college accounts are secured through a multi-factor authentication process.
 - b. All parties accept responsibility for the security of their password.
 - c. The intranet system requires all passwords to be updated every 180 days.
 - d. Student information is individualized within Canvas and protected from outside intruders.
 - e. Faculty information within Canvas is protected from student views and outside intruders.
4. *Secure Online Coursework* – Faculty members teaching online classes will promote the security of students' data and course grades by utilizing a learning management system grade book that prohibits students from accessing other students' grades or posting class grade reports that identify students by confidential code only. Many security features are provided within the learning management system by default, including but not limited to passwords and customized quiz features for time and type of questions, monitoring student engagement, and browser security settings that prohibit access to other sites or printing of materials.
5. *VCCS information security standard* – The college adheres to the VCCS Information Security Standard 9.3 Access Control and secures personal information from unauthorized access, use or disclosure. Confidential information, including grades, private contact information, or personal information directly attributed to a student, is transmitted through secure interaction.

Faculty Preparedness and Quality Assurance

1. Faculty who teach online in any of the defined modalities of distance education as outlined in the policy statement are expected to adhere to the procedures for effective and quality teaching and learning as outlined in the [Handbook for Distance Learning](#).
2. Faculty are expected to adhere to all Department of Education regulations, SACSCOC principles of accreditation, and VCCS requirements regarding distance education.
3. Faculty Training Requirements – To teach online at the college, faculty are required to complete the following training either before or within the first semester of teaching online:
 - a. *Design Camp* – A two-credit online self-paced learning experience designed to reinforce online teaching and learning best practices as well as new approaches to teaching in an online environment using the Canvas Learning Management System. Completion results in a completion badge attached to the user’s Canvas profile.
 - b. *Reboot Camp* – Self-paced learning experience designed to reinforce and expand upon changes to federal regulations for qualified distance instruction and the implementation of best practices for online teaching and learning. The materials are relevant to all courses where content is delivered entirely or partly online. Completion results in a RSI badge attached to the user’s Canvas profile. Starting in fall 2023, this training will be included in Design Camp.
 - c. To maintain eligibility to teach online, instructors must complete an Online Course Evaluation Self-Assessment for one of their online courses every two years from their initial Design Camp (or RSI) badge completion date. The ITO with the support of the Deans will work with instructors to verify the evidence of the self-assessment and use the assessment as a discussion tool for continuous improvement. Faculty will receive a self-assessment badge upon completion of this step. [Link to Self-Assessment](#)
 - d. All instructors are encouraged to complete professional development directly related to online teaching every year. Faculty may include this professional development as part of their scholarly engagement domain in the faculty evaluation.
4. Instructional Technology Office
 - a. Teaching solely via educational technology requires evolving instructional strategies and appropriate technology. The Office of Instructional Technology (ITO) coordinates the resources to offer support to faculty in the creation, management, and improvement of distance learning offerings.
 - b. The ITO staff will also support faculty in the use of the LMS and complying with requirements for distance learning within the VCCS.
5. Student Services and Academic Support will encourage and connect students with training and resources that foment success and readiness for learning environments.
6. School division deans will oversee curriculum and continuation of programs that meet the requirements for distance learning within the VCCS.
7. The Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs will ensure the college is compliant with federal regulations and NC SARA regulations.
8. At the direction of the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, eLET Committee shall initiate a review of the procedure following the first academic year of implementation and then thereafter review on a 2-year cycle.

Document History:

Approved: President Cheryl Thompson-Stacy, 2009

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Revised: President Kim Blosser, April 2022