POLICY & PROCEDURE DOCUMENT

NUMBER: 1.3120

DIVISION: Academic Affairs

TITLE: Verification of Student Identity in Distance Education Courses

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I. Purpose and Scope

Western Kentucky University holds firmly to the belief that student identity is most reliably verified, regardless of course delivery format. Due to the physical separation of distance education courses, WKU has put in place resources to assist instructors in this verification. This WKU policy is required by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools – Commission on Colleges policy statement "Distance and Correspondence Education," adopted by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees in June 2010.

II. Policy

1. Instructors will be able to demonstrate that the student who registers in a WKU distance education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the credit by verifying the identity of a student who participates in class or coursework by using, at the option of the instructor, methods such as (1) secure login and pass code (2) proctored examination, and (3) new or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identification as they are developed. These resources will be supported by the WKU Information Technology Division and the Academic Affairs Division through the Distance Learning Office.

2. WKU does not charge students a proctoring fee when examinations for distance learning courses are taken at WKU. The Distance Learning Office maintains information for proctoring charges at other sites in the state of Kentucky as options for students who choose to have their exams proctored off-campus.

III. Procedure

1. All courses taught using Blackboard as the learning management system have

secure logins and pass codes that are required of every student taking that course in order to access course materials, take online examinations, and engage with peers within the online classroom.

2. Instructors may elect to use proctored examinations in distance education courses. The Distance Learning Testing Center, a unit of the Distance Learning Office in the Division of Extended Learning and Outreach, assists instructors by

   a. scheduling student exams in on-campus testing centers; or

   b. working with students who wish to take their examinations at another location, by communicating with the proctor at that location, delivering the exam and receiving it when complete, or communicating necessary pass codes for proctored online examinations.

3. The Distance Learning Office continues to explore new and alternative technologies that will assist the instructor to verify student identity and will support those technologies as they become available for instructor use.

IV. Related Policies

SACSCOC Policy Statement Distance and Correspondence Education http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/Distance%20and%20correspondence%20policy%20final.pdf

Fees for proctor sites in Kentucky are made available to students through the Distance Learning Testing Center website http://www.wku.edu/testing/ky-proctors.php

Fees for proctor sites available in the United States are made available through the National College Testing Association website linked from http://www.wku.edu/dl

V. Reason for Revision