

Policy: Administrative Policy for Student Identity Verification in Distance Learning

I. Scope:

This policy applies to all credit-bearing distance learning courses or programs offered by Rochester Institute of Technology from application for admission, to a student's graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from the university.

II. Policy Statement:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Rochester Institute of Technology complies with the provisions of the United States Federal Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA), which requires colleges and universities to have processes in place to ensure that the student registered for a credit-bearing course(s) is the student participating in the course(s), completing the course(s), and receiving academic credit for the course(s).

The University ensures compliance with the HEOA as follows:

III. Procedures:

A. Student verifies identification by using RIT's secure login and pass code and,

B. Student completes confirmation of student identification for each course taken using the Student Identity Verification Checklist (SIVC). The SIVC checklist includes:

1. *Identity Verification:* Student must attest to being the same person depicted in the photo. Each student must submit an RIT-approved photo¹ to the Office of the Registrar within two weeks of the commencement of taking any class at RIT.
2. *Code of Conduct:* Student must affirm having read and understood Code of Conduct for Computer Use. All users of RIT's computing and network facilities are required to comply with the policies of RIT's Code of Conduct for Computer Use (C08.2)².
3. *Academic Integrity:* Student must affirm having read and understood RIT policies related to academic integrity.

Faculty are responsible for identifying changes in student behavior and coursework, such as changes in writing styles, academic performance, or different behavior in group assignments. Such changes may merit an investigation by the faculty member to determine whether the student is in violation of the Student Academic Integrity Policy (D08.0)³.

4. *Course Syllabus:* Student affirms having read the course syllabus.

If students do not complete B above then:

C. Faculty reach out to students who did not complete the verification and verify identity within the course before submission of final grades using one of the following methods:

1. Compare the SIS class roster photo to the appearance of the student via live web/video conferencing sessions; or

2. Through an externally proctored activity provided by an external proctoring service; or
3. Through new or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identification (e.g., web video conferencing).

D. Instructor Acknowledgement: The following instructor acknowledgment below appears on the grade roster submission:

By submitting final grades, I attest that I am aware of the Student Identity Verification in Distance Learning Policy and affirm:

*(1) The students' completion of the Student Identity Verification Checklist **OR***

*(2) I have verified each student's identity through means outlined in the above said policy **OR***

(3) I have made a reasonable attempt to verify each student's identity according to the policy.

IV. Fees:

All fees associated with distance education courses and programs, including any fees relating to identity verification (such as webcam requirements for webcam-based identity verification methods), must be posted on the course registration site.

V. Student Privacy:

All Rochester Institute of Technology policies regarding student privacy and information security apply to distance education courses and faculty who are teaching these courses are expected to follow these policies.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)⁴ 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 records⁵. Additional information on RIT security policies and standards can be found at: <https://www.rit.edu/security/content/intro-policies-standards>

Responsible Office:

The Innovative Learning Institute (ILI) is responsible for developing and ensuring compliance with this policy in the University's various colleges and administrative units. They will inform deans and administrative officers when changes to the policy are made. Faculty who are teaching distance education courses are responsible for complying with this policy.

Effective Date: October 2, 2018

Policy History:

Revised February 2, 2018

Revised April 11, 2018

Approved by the Provost June 8, 2018

Revised October 2018

¹ RIT Photo Submission: <https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/registrar/id-photo>

² C08.2 Code of Conduct for Computer Use: <http://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/c082-code-conduct-computer-use>

³ D08.0 Student Academic Integrity Policy: <https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/d080>

⁴ Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA): <https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/registrar/student-privacy>

⁵ D15.0 Educational Records Policy: <https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/d150>