

5.1.2.1. OFTC Distance Education Student Privacy Procedure

This procedure applies to students enrolled in distance education courses at Oconee Fall Line Technical College.

Definitions

Distance Education- Distance Education is defined as a formal education process in which the majority of instruction occurs when students and instructors are not in the same place. Distance education courses at Oconee Fall Line Technical College are online or hybrid courses.

Blackboard- The learning management system utilized by the Technical College System of Georgia and Oconee Fall Line Technical College to offer distance education courses through a web-based platform.

Procedure

Oconee Fall Line Technical College utilizes secure logins/passwords and proctored events to verify the identity of students enrolled in distance education courses. All students enrolled in distance education courses must use a secure login/pass code to submit assignments and access materials. In addition, all courses offered through distance education require at least one proctored event.

Students use a secure logon and password to access online courses through Blackboard. Reliability, privacy, safety, and security for Blackboard courses are provided by Georgia Virtual Technical Connection (GVTC). All the courses are loaded onto a server that Blackboard maintains for privacy, reliability, and security. GVTC is the contact for any server-level administrative changes.

When a student enrolls in a class that utilizes Blackboard, the student is automatically enrolled into that course through the integrated learning platform that allows Banner and Blackboard to communicate. Students utilize their OFTC usernames and passwords to access Blackboard.

All information in Banner, including student identification numbers, is protected in compliance with the Family Educational Records and Privacy Act (FERPA) and is not shared. Any records maintained electronically by Student Affairs or instructors are protected by username and password. OFTC faculty and staff do not have access to students' OFTC passwords. Students must use their unique logon and password combination to access course materials, submit assignments, and review grades.

In addition to using secure logons/passwords, Oconee Fall Line Technical College also requires that every online student complete at least one proctored test or assignment as a means of verifying identity. Students may secure an off-campus proctor, who must be approved by the course instructor.

Oconee Fall Line Technical College does not assess any fees associated with verification of identity of distance education students. Students who choose to use an off-campus proctor may be assessed a proctoring fee by the proctoring site.

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