Verification of Student Identity in Distance Education Policy

Definition
This policy applies to all for-credit distance learning courses offered by the Graduate School of Theology of St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in its undergraduate certificate programs (non-degree seeking).

Purpose
This policy endeavors to ensure that the Graduate School of Theology 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. In order to be in compliance, one or more of the following methods must be used:

1. An individual secure login and password
2. Proctored examinations, and/or
3. Other technologies or practices which are effective in verifying student identity.

All methods of verifying student identity in distance learning must protect the privacy of student information in accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). If any fees associated with the verification of student identity will be charged to students, they will be so indicated in the online catalog or on the “Tuition and Fees” page of the Graduate School section of our website (www.scs.edu).

COMPLIANCE

Secure Login and Password: Each GST student taking an online course is assigned a unique student username and has a student-generated password to log into the Moodle Online Learning Platform, which serves as our LMS. Students are responsible for providing their complete and true identity information in any identification verification process. The Moodle Platform is not linked to the administrative system of records at the Seminary, so there is no threat to security or privacy of student records in this regard.

Proctored Examinations: Very rarely will it be necessary to provide proctored examinations for online courses and faculty are encouraged to make use of a wide range of assessment techniques. In the event that an exam is needed, a full-time Faculty person is assigned to proctor exams in the Ryan Memorial Library or Vianney Hall Classroom at a scheduled day/time.
Responsibilities: All users of the secure online Moodle system are responsible for maintaining the security of usernames, passwords, and other access credentials as required. An account is given to an individual for the exclusive use by that individual. Attempting to discover another user's password or attempts to gain unauthorized access to another person's files or mail is prohibited. It is against GST policy for a user to provide someone his/her password or allow others to login to his/her account. Users are responsible for any users of their account. Users are responsible for all activity on their accounts.

No fees are charged for any verification process or for proctored exams.

Faculty teaching online courses have a primary responsibility for ensuring that students comply with identity verification policy. Faculty members are encouraged to conduct their coursework and assessment in a way which ensures academic integrity. Behavioral changes or shifts in academic performance, writing style or language used in group discussion or email correspondence may reveal a violation of the policy. Faculty should routinely ask students to share important ideas learned from texts or readings, require research papers and assignments to be submitted in stages, and/or use other methods which reinforce the verification of student identity.

The Graduate School of Theology Office is responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy.