

Student Authentication

What is this?

Simply stated, **authentication** is verifying that the student enrolled in a class is actually the student who is taking the course and doing all of the coursework. This is also related to course attendance and participation as well as academic honesty.

Why is this important?

Let's look at a few reasons why you should understand authentication:

- ⇒ **IT'S THE LAW.** The *Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008* has made it a requirement — institutions must have authentication procedures in place which means that students must use **college-assigned credentials** to log in to the Learning Management System (LMS), that is, their IIN & PIN.
- ⇒ **IT HELPS TO PREVENT FINANCIAL AID FRAUD.** Recently fifteen CA Community colleges were hit by financial aid fraud schemes – several involving online courses/programs ([http://www.justice.gov/usao/cae/news/docs/2012/09-2012/09-18 12StudentAidFraud.html](http://www.justice.gov/usao/cae/news/docs/2012/09-2012/09-18%20StudentAidFraud.html)). Because of this **Federal investigators are randomly auditing CA community colleges.** They are specifically looking for **standardized** and **documented** policies and procedures for distance education courses that require: attendance for **"the first day of class"** that is clearly stated to the student (i.e. in the **Schedule of Classes** footnote) and academically engaging activities conducted in the learning management system throughout the duration of a course.
- ⇒ **IT'S A BEST PRACTICE IN DISTANCE EDUCATION.** As with face-to-face classes, instructors need to interact with their students on a regular basis in order to recognize that the work individual students and student groups turn in is their own. **PCC Distance Education Policy #3230 states that all course communication, assignments and interaction must be conducted through the CANVAS LMS** (<http://www.pasadena.edu/ipro/policies/documents/DistanceEducationPolicy3230DE10411.pdf>).

Who should be responsible for this?

STUDENTS

Students need to know what is expected of them in terms of academic honesty, and they need to know that **they should not give anyone access to their online/hybrid course login information.** See *PCC Student Conduct & Academic Honesty Policy #4520*, specifically item 2p. (http://www.pasadena.edu/ipro/policies/pcc_4520.pdf) and *PCC Privacy, Security & Acceptable Use of Electronic Resources Policy #5350* (http://www.pasadena.edu/ipro/policies/pcc_5350.pdf).

INSTRUCTORS

Instructors teaching online and hybrid courses need to have clear guidelines in their course syllabus about academic honesty, course participation, and add/drop guidelines. Distance education instructors **MUST** also use the CANVAS LMS and Turnitin for student assignments. See *PCC Distance Education Policy #3230* (<http://www.pasadena.edu/ipro/policies/documents/DistanceEducationPolicy3230DE10411.pdf>).

DEANS

Administrators should make certain their faculty are aware that authentication is a critical issue in distance education and ensure **that all online/hybrid course instructors are using the CANVAS LMS for their courses.**

What steps can you take?

STEP
1

Make certain that your online/hybrid course has the standardized footnote in the **Schedule of Classes**. This footnote needs to state that **all distance education courses are conducted using the CANVAS LMS**.

STEP
2

Send out a **Welcome Letter** prior to the first day of class. This should have course login information, information about where to find the course syllabus and a link to the **course Check-In Assignment**.

STEP
3

Create a course **Check-In Assignment** that actively engages students in an interactive task using the CANVAS LMS.

STEP
4

Clearly state in the syllabus: the College's course add/drop, participation, attendance, and academic honesty policies.

STEP
5

Create engaging academic activities for students to do throughout the semester that involve instructor-student and student-student interactions.

- ⇒ WCET Briefing Paper: http://wcet.wiche.edu/wcet/docs/publications/Briefing_Paper_Feb_2008.pdf
- ⇒ PCC Distance Education Policy #3230 <http://www.pasadena.edu/ipro/policies/documents/DistanceEducationPolicy3230DE10411.pdf>.
- ⇒ PCC Distance Education Add/Drop, Participation & Academic Honesty Policies: <http://online.pasadena.edu/faculty/hb/pcccoursepolicies/>
- ⇒ PCC Standardized Footnotes: http://online.pasadena.edu/faculty/hb/coursedelivery/#Standard_Online_Footer
- ⇒ DE Welcome Letters & Syllabus: <http://online.pasadena.edu/faculty/hb/coursedelivery/>

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The Distance Education Department is dedicated to serving the diverse needs of the faculty and student populations at Pasadena City College by providing high-quality educational experiences that utilize the latest emerging technologies in electronic course delivery methods. This includes faculty and student support for online and hybrid course offerings at PCC.

Visit us online at <http://online.pasadena.edu/faculty>