UNCW Distance Education Authentication and Privacy Policy

## I. Proposed UNCW Policy:

The University of North Carolina Wilmington complies with the SACS COC policies regarding distance education including those related to student authentication. Each student enrolled in a distance education course is assigned a secure login and password and must use this to register for and access the distance education course. Specific course and student information is not available to any outside users. For security purposes, UNCW requires a password change every 90 days.

All students are informed of the UNCW academic honor code (Policy 04-100). Students enrolled in distance education courses must adhere to policies on electronic security that prohibit sharing of passwords (07-100-01; 07-100-02) as well as requiring students and faculty to take precautions against others obtaining access to their university computer accounts.

Faculty are encouraged to explore new technologies that may enhance delivery and security of distance education instruction as they become available. The university will explore and employ new technologies for authentication and student privacy in distance education courses as options become available and practical.

There are no additional costs associated with authentication of student identity at UNCW.

## II. Rationale:

Federal regulations effective 1 July 2011 require that institutions authenticate that students registering in distance or correspondence education are the same students participating in class or coursework, that there is a procedure for protecting the privacy of students enrolled in such programs, and that there are procedures for notifying students of any additional fees associated specifically with the verification of student identity. In response to U.S. Department of Education expectations, SACS COC has proposed the following new federal requirement, likely to be approved at the December 2011 meeting.

Proposed FR 4.8:
An institution that offers distance education or correspondence education

4.8.1 demonstrates that the student who registers in a distance or correspondence 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 institution, methods such as (a) a secure login and pass code, (b) proctored examinations, or (c) new or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identification.

4.8.2 has a written procedure for protecting the privacy of students enrolled in distance and correspondence education courses or programs.

4.8.3 has a written procedure distributed at the time of registration or enrollment that notifies students of any projected additional charges associated with verification of student identity.