# 5.1.2.L. Augusta Technical College Distance Education

Augusta Technical College provides distance education programs as part of the overall mission of the College. The Distance Education program at Augusta Technical College supports the mission of the college by providing access to high quality, asynchronous educational opportunities to a diverse community of learners through the internet. By providing instruction, learning resources, and services comparable to campus-based programs, the distance education program seeks to engage the student in the learning process by the effective use of technology. Distance education courses are defined as educational processes in which the majority of the instruction occurs when the students and instructors are not in the same location. The Dean of Academic Affairs oversees the program and reports to the Provost. Responsibilities, policies, and procedures may be found in the Distance Education Policies and Procedures Manual.

In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Augusta Technical College protects the privacy of students enrolled in distance education courses by ensuring the privacy and integrity of the communications and records used within the approved Learning Management System (LMS) course. Student access to online course content is protected by a unique and secure login and password. A secure grading system is provided. Access to student coursework is restricted to the instructor and LMS administrators. Augusta Technical College also adheres to the Georgia Virtual Technical Connection (GVTC) Privacy Policy.

Only course or school email addresses are used for communication within the course. Students accessing grades within the system are limited only to their own. Once a course has been completed, student records are stored within an archived version of the course which is completed at the administrative level every few months. Instructors export and maintain their own electronic versions of course grades and other pertinent information.

Personal information is specific to the user. The only personal information displayed within a distance education course is information that the student elects to provide in response to a discussion board or an assignment. These said postings are only available to members of the class. Students are required to use only course or school email for communication. Any other personal information residing within a course is restricted to LMS administrators and is not shared with any source outside of the Technical College System of Georgia.

Every student registered in a distance education course at the College receives a unique login. The identification number assigned to students allows them access to their course content which resides within the College LMS. The password provided is generic and requires that students change the password prior to accessing their course content. The students also have access to change their password at any time after that. A secondary secure login and password is also required for entry to any third party software associated with the LMS.

Augusta Tech online students who attend any of the College campuses are required to participate in one to three proctored events. Any student enrolled in a program and taking an online course must take their scheduled proctored event(s) at the campus of their instructor. The event(s) must be monitored by the instructor of the course.

Transient students from GA Technical schools will have their events proctored through their home school and need to contact their instructors in advance as well. The instructor will contact the responsible party at that school for proctoring information.

Other transient students must locate an official proctoring site in their area the public library, other colleges, military base education site, etc. and provide instructors the contact information in advance. Students will be responsible for any fees associated with using an outside proctoring site.

Students are required to show picture identification prior to taking any proctored event. Only instructors or authorized proctors check the identification of a student. There is no other technology use to verify the identity of a student at that time; therefore, the privacy of the student is secured during exam time. The Distance Education Online Course Instructions letter notifies students prior to registration of the proctored events and states that there are no additional fees associated with the identification process.