

Instructional Faculty Agreement Letter: Attachment A

Expectations for Instructional Faculty for Online Courses

The following list outlines the expectations for faculty who are hired as instructors and to facilitate an online course for Excelsior College.

- 1. Fulfill all requirements and adhere to all College policies. Most notably, instructional faculty must be aware of and adhere to the College policies that most directly impact instruction (see vii. Academic Policies and Procedures in the *Faculty Handbook*).**
 - a. Faculty who are new to Excelsior College are required to successfully complete the orientation for new faculty course prior to facilitating their first course. Exceptions to this requirement must be approved by the provost.
 - b. Faculty who do not have experience using the Learning Management System (LMS) must complete the orientation for the current learning management system.
 - c. Faculty must agree to facilitate the course as it is designed, making no changes to content or implementation guidelines. Confer with appropriate staff if there are questions or concerns about course content or requirements.
- 2. Prepare to teach the online course.**
 - a. Review selected textbooks, materials, course outline, and syllabus before the first day of class.
 - b. Access support services and resources for faculty. The Center for Excellence in Teaching, Learning and Assessment (CETLA) is a portal for course facilitators and developers at all levels of experience and for anyone else interested in online teaching and learning. Its purpose is to provide a gateway to the resources and tools needed to create and maintain high-quality learning experiences for adult learners at a distance. Faculty web pages/CETLA Portal is located at <https://my.excelsior.edu/group/faculty-myexcelsior/home>.
 - c. Actively learn about the array of academic and learning support services available to students, including the Excelsior College Library, Smarthinking, and the Online Writing Lab (OWL).
- 3. Manage the online course.**
 - a. Post a welcome message and introduction in the discussion area prior to or within the first 24 hours of the course, including information about office hours. Encourage students to post welcome statements to each other.
 - b. Conduct a minimum of one regularly-scheduled office hour per week using the LMS chat room feature or other College-supported synchronous tools, such as ACPRO. The requirement to schedule office hours can also be met by letting students know that office hours can be arranged by appointment. Office hours are intended to provide students with the ability to communicate with instructors in a real-time, synchronous environment. In the event that the office hours must be cancelled, students should be given advance notice and provided with information concerning alternate office hours.
 - c. Conduct all course-related communication within the LMS communication tools (i.e., Blackboard My Messages, online chat, whiteboard, Q & A forum).
 - d. Demonstrate clear understanding of the Excessive Absenteeism Policy for Online Courses. Review the weekly attendance report, verify their accuracy, handle student requests for excused absences and, if approved, note "Exception" in the LMS grade book. Collaborate with the faculty program director or school designee on AW grade appeals; when appeals are approved, assist the student in getting back on track.
 - e. Contact students who appear on Early Alert reports to follow up on individual issues around attendance or performance and recommending support services as appropriate.

4. Teach and facilitate the course.

- a. Respond to all student communications within two days. If a student concern requires additional time to resolve, please send an acknowledgement to the student to indicate receipt of his/her message.
- b. Post announcements relevant to address upcoming activities, encourage use of learning support services, clarify expectations, student concerns, etc.
- c. Log into the course to review and participate¹ at least:
 - i. three different days each week for 15-week courses
 - ii. four different days each week for 8-week courses

Notify the faculty program director and students if the minimum participation requirements cannot be met.
- d. Promote discussion board participation by posting substantial² responses to select student postings at least three different days per week.

5. Assess student learning.

- a. Assess student submissions and interactions promptly and substantively, and intervene as needed.
- b. When rubrics are provided, adhere to all rubrics to assess student learning.
- c. Provide each student with timely, substantial feedback on assignments that contribute to the final grade.
- d. Provide feedback to the class after team summaries have been posted for each discussion assignment.
- e. Provide formative feedback to each student midway through the course if not sooner. This evaluation should take the form of an email with comments based upon the components of all relevant scoring rubrics and work completed to date.
- f. Grade all formative assessments within seven days of receipt for 15-week courses and within four days of receipt for 8-week courses.
- g. Submit grades in the LMS online grade book and keep the grade book current.

6. Course Wrap-Up and Completion.

- a. Grade all final, summative projects and submit final course grades by 5:00 pm Eastern time on the fifth day after the end of the term.
- b. Encourage students to complete the Excelsior College online course evaluation which is available in all courses ten days before the end of the term.
- c. Complete a faculty course evaluation within one week of the completion of the course term.
- d. Stay engaged in the course with any students who have been granted course extensions (incompletes). Be sure to adhere to policy guidelines and time lines.

1 Participation includes posting discussion topics, discussion responses, posting announcements, sending messages within the course system, providing feedback on assignments, or assessing grades.

2 Substantial posts, for example, should include critical feedback or suggestions from the instructor which promote further student engagement, and not be simple agreement or a simple statement of encouragement.

Contact List

The following list provides directions on how to contact the College regarding student or academic issues.

School of Liberal Arts

Undergraduate Programs: Contact the full-time faculty member responsible for the course or the assistant or associate dean via email at slacourses@excelsior.edu.

Graduate Programs: Contact the associate dean/director of graduate programs via email at mlsadvisor@excelsior.edu.

School of Business & Technology

Email the online course management team at bt_Courseissues@excelsior.edu.
See initial School of Business & Technology course emails for more information.

School of Nursing

Associate degrees in nursing: learnteam@excelsior.edu

Baccalaureate degree in nursing: nursingbachelors@excelsior.edu

Master's degree in nursing: nursingmasters@excelsior.edu

School of Health Sciences

Email shs-courses@excelsior.edu or contact the faculty program director responsible for the course.

School of Public Service

Email spscourses@excelsior.edu or contact the faculty program director responsible for the course.

Ombudsperson

The Ombudsperson Office is responsible for serving students and staff who have questions or concerns pertaining to fee-related matters, College policies, and customer service issues. The online ombudsperson is part of the ombudsperson team and reviews student refund appeals for Excelsior College courses, appeals for INL 102 resets, and appeals for military deployment extensions and withdrawals.

The online ombudsperson can be contacted at: eonlinecourses@excelsior.edu.

Technical Support

The Technical Support Team is available to help with any questions or problems related to the Excelsior College website, MyExcelsior accounts, MyExcelsior Community, the Excelsior College Library, online practice exams, or online courses. This includes questions or problems related to creating or signing into a MyExcelsior account, accessing online publications, participating in an online chat, or uploading assignments to an online course.

To access help:

Help Desk Online Ticket

Email: TechSupport@excelsior.edu

Call: 877-84A-TECH (877-842-8324) ext. 2010