



**EXCELSIOR
UNIVERSITY**

FACULTY HANDBOOK

DECEMBER 2025



EXCELSIOR.EDU

Message from the Provost



Dear Faculty:

I extend a warm welcome to all faculty at Excelsior University. At Excelsior, we believe in the power of education to achieve equity. Our educational model was designed with the needs of today's adult students in mind. Our academic philosophy promotes equity and excellence for all students with the bedrock of meeting students where they are and preparing them for sustained academic and professional success. We believe in rigorous, student-centered, strengths-based, personalized instruction.

You are vital members of the Excelsior community, and I always welcome your voices. Our students interact most with all of you, so your influence on their future is significant. I believe the work you do every day is important and should be celebrated and supported. Faculty are the lifeblood of this institution, and I encourage all of you to be as involved in our community as possible. This guidebook is meant to inform and provide guidance around some of our operating procedures, philosophies of teaching and learning, faculty expectations, and policies and procedures. Do not hesitate to reach out to me personally if you ever want to provide feedback on your teaching experience here at Excelsior University.

I look forward to working with all of you in the year ahead. In the words of John Dewey, "Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris".

Christopher Cassirer, ScD, MPH
Provost and Chief Academic Officer

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About Excelsior University

Founded in 1971, Excelsior University is an accredited, not-for-profit distance learning institution focused on providing educational opportunity to adult learners. Excelsior contributes to the development of a diverse, educated society by valuing lifelong learning, with an emphasis on serving individuals who are historically underrepresented by higher education.

Excelsior was founded as the Regents External Degree Program of the New York State Board of Regents. In April 1998, the Board of Regents granted Excelsior (then known as Regents College) an absolute charter to operate as a private, not-for-profit, independent college, and on January 1, 2001, Regents College changed its name to Excelsior College. Excelsior has become the largest online institution in New York state, and in acknowledgment of the breadth of its programs and bold future, the institution became Excelsior University effective August 1, 2022. Like all accredited higher education institutions in New York state, Excelsior University is a member of the University of the State of New York.

Today, Excelsior is governed by a board of trustees composed of individuals from across the United States who are prominent in the fields of business, education, government, and the professions. Excelsior University awards associate and baccalaureate degrees in business, health sciences, liberal arts, nursing, public service, and technology, and master's degrees in business, health sciences, nursing, public service, and technology.

More than 190,000 people have earned degrees from Excelsior University.

Excelsior's student body represents a diverse group of adult learners:

- ▶ The average age of an Excelsior student is 36; about 48% are male, and 52% are female.
- ▶ Forty-four percent of our enrolled students are people of color.
- ▶ Twenty-six percent of our students are active-duty or Reserve military personnel, and 14% are military veterans.
- ▶ Twenty-five percent of our students come from New York state; the remaining are from the rest of the United States and abroad.

The faculty of Excelsior University, both full time and part time, are drawn from many colleges and universities as well as from industry and professions. They teach our courses, establish and monitor academic policies and standards, determine degree requirements and how credit may be earned, and recommend degree conferral to the Excelsior University Board of Trustees.

The Mission

Excelsior University provides educational opportunities to adult learners, with an emphasis on those historically underrepresented in higher education. The University meets students where they are—academically and geographically—by offering quality instruction and the assessment of learning.

Excelsior CARES: We All Own the Student Experience

The following guiding principles, collectively known as Excelsior CARES, shape the environment in which we work and set the standard to which we hold ourselves. Each Excelsior employee is compassionate, agile, respectful, and committed to excellence and service.

Excelsior Is Compassionate: We go above and beyond to listen to and understand our students' and our colleagues' needs. We embrace and celebrate the diversity and unique talents of our students, staff, and faculty. We assume positive intent and are open to listening to all perspectives. We ask questions, seeking first to understand and to work toward common goals.

We create and foster a safe environment to make mistakes and speak up. We provide the support our students need to develop and succeed. We exhibit the behaviors we expect to see in others. We believe in leadership from the heart and strive to create an environment of collaboration, teamwork, and empowerment. We are empathetic, student-centered, and motivated by a people-first approach.

Excelsior Is Agile: As an institution, we embrace change as a necessary part of our growth. We design programs and services with students' needs and career goals in mind, meeting them where they are academically and geographically. We create an environment that promotes innovation to improve the student experience. We are committed to continuous quality improvement in everything we do. We believe in reaching across the University and working collaboratively to fulfill our shared goals. We proactively consider the implications of our actions on all stakeholders. We are flexible and responsive to our students and each other.

Excelsior Is Respectful: We act respectfully toward all with whom we interact. We honor our past and acknowledge our challenges, seeing them as opportunities to work together to create a better future. We believe in our staff and faculty, and we invest in their capabilities. We empower them to be collaborative problem-solvers, create a foundation of trust, and ensure an excellent student experience. We model honesty, integrity, and consideration for differences in all our interactions with colleagues, students, and the broader community.

Excelsior Is Excellence: We are committed to excellence in our programs, services, and operations. We achieve excellence when we meet and exceed the expectations and goals of our stakeholders, as well as when we enable our students to be successful in their pursuits. We believe in the transformative power of education. We create a high-quality, individualized experience that enriches the lives of students in their personal and professional journeys.

Excelsior Is Service: Service to students is at the core of everything we do. We are empowered with the resources and training necessary to provide an excellent student experience. We are accountable to each other and the student, and readily share information to enhance our capabilities. Each student's opportunity and challenges become our own. We act and follow through to ensure that student needs are met. We serve our students with joy, enthusiasm, and dedication. Their success is our success.

Faculty at Excelsior University

Faculty positions at Excelsior University are filled by individuals who may serve the institution through various employee and/or contractual relationships with the University.

Faculty Rights and Responsibilities

The responsibilities and rights of faculty members at Excelsior University derive from their membership in a learned profession whose members, within a faculty, perform the dual function of cultivating areas of knowledge as coherently structured intellectual disciplines and of educating students in these areas.

Statement of Academic Freedom

1. Academic freedom means that both faculty members and students can engage in intellectual debate without fear of censorship or retaliation.
2. Academic freedom establishes a faculty member's right to remain true to their pedagogical philosophy and intellectual commitments. It preserves the intellectual integrity of our education system and thus serves the public good.
3. Academic freedom in teaching means that both faculty members and students can make comparisons and contrasts between subjects taught in a course and any field of human knowledge or period of history.
4. Academic freedom gives both students and faculty the right to express their views—in speech, writing, and through electronic communication, both on and off campus—without fear of sanction, unless the manner of expression substantially impairs the rights of others or, in the case of faculty members, those views demonstrate that they are professionally ignorant, incompetent, or dishonest with regard to their discipline or fields of expertise.
5. Academic freedom gives both students and faculty the right to study and do research on the topics they choose and to draw what conclusions they find consistent with their research, though it does not prevent others from judging whether their work is valuable and their conclusions sound.
6. Academic freedom means that the political, religious, or philosophical beliefs of politicians, administrators, and members of the public cannot be imposed on students or faculty.
7. Academic freedom gives faculty members and students the right to seek redress or request a hearing if they believe their rights have been violated.
8. Academic freedom protects faculty members and students from reprisals for disagreeing with administrative policies or proposals.
9. Academic freedom gives faculty members and students the right to challenge one another's views but not to penalize them for holding them.

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10. Academic freedom protects a faculty member's authority to assign grades to students so long as the grades are not capricious or unjustly punitive. More broadly, academic freedom encompasses both the individual and institutional right to maintain academic standards.
11. Academic freedom gives faculty members substantial latitude in deciding how to teach the courses for which they are responsible.
12. Academic freedom guarantees that serious charges against a faculty member will be heard before a committee of their peers. It provides faculty members the right to due process.

(Reprinted from Nelson, C. & Watt, S. (1999). *Academic keywords: A devil's dictionary for higher education*. Routledge.)

Faculty Recruitment

Faculty qualifications are a combination of the highest level of degree attainment in, or related to, the field/industry of focus, relevant graduate credits, professional experience, and/or professional service. Typically, faculty hold a degree level above what they are teaching, where doctoral degrees require a doctorate, but deans and the provost can use a combination of aforementioned factors—including progress toward credentials—to finalize hiring decisions.

If the academic work was conducted outside the United States, the candidate must present confirmation from a credential evaluator that their degree is recognized by the evaluating agency as comparable to a degree from an accredited institution in the United States.

The provost's office may grant exceptions to candidates with foreign academic credentials from universally recognized institutions. Excelsior University is committed to hiring qualified individuals who reflect the society in which we live and the students we serve.

To this end, all areas of the University will use equitable employment measures and affirmative actions to employ protected group members in all job categories, in accordance with applicable state and federal law. This affirmative action will include specific activities in recruitment, hiring, upgrading, and other areas designed and taken for the purpose of eliminating the present effect of past discrimination or to prevent discrimination.

Faculty Categories and Roles

Faculty at Excelsior University are grouped into one of two categories, each with a distinct status:

- **Full-time faculty**
- **Part-time faculty**

The dean of a particular college or school determines an individual's category based on established criteria common across the University. An individual may perform more than one faculty role and belong to more than one faculty category. These categories may be filled by full- or part-time faculty who are on- or off-site.

Instructors of a course may include department chairs, full-time faculty, and part-time faculty. The terms faculty and instructor are used interchangeably when discussing teaching and learning.

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MEMBERS OF THE FACULTY

Department Chairs

Department chairs are members of the University's full-time faculty with the primary responsibility for all aspects of hiring, curricula, courses, student success, and instructional quality. Department chairs are experienced teachers who supervise the course design and revision work of subject matter experts (SMEs), and mentor and supervise instructional faculty. They also teach courses and work directly with students, as assigned by their dean. Department chairs participate in University governance through service on councils, committees, and task forces. Additional key parts of the department chair role include curriculum development, implementation, and evaluation; selection, orientation, and mentoring of part-time instructional and clinical faculty; and engaging with students.

The primary responsibilities of department chairs include the following:

- ▶ Department leadership and administration
- ▶ Department curricula
- ▶ Department teaching and learning analytics
- ▶ Assessment of teaching, learning, curricula, and accreditation
- ▶ Hiring and managing faculty
- ▶ Instruction of courses as designated by their contracts
- ▶ Participation in scholarship, e.g., publishing, presenting, conferences, research
- ▶ Participation in service, e.g., participation in councils, accreditation reviews, rope teams, student and faculty clubs and organizations

A full job description with more detailed roles and responsibilities is available through the deans and/or the Office of Human Resources.

Full-Time Faculty

The full-time faculty position is a non-tenured teaching role with responsibility for the teaching, development, and revision of curricula in the faculty member's subject area. In addition, full-time faculty participate in the analysis of student learning outcomes, mentoring faculty colleagues, and program reviews. Full-time faculty work closely with deans and other academic leaders and staff across the University.

The primary responsibilities of full-time faculty include the following:

- ▶ Instruction of courses as designated by their contract
- ▶ Curriculum development, implementation, and evaluation
- ▶ Using teaching and learning analytics to drive instruction and deploy interventions
- ▶ Participation in scholarship, e.g., publishing, presenting, conferences, or research
- ▶ Participation in service, e.g., participation in councils, accreditation reviews, rope teams, or student and faculty clubs and organizations.

Part-Time Faculty

The category of part-time faculty is reserved for faculty who have a contingent relationship with the University and teach or develop curricula on a contractual basis. Part-time faculty may also be invited to participate in service opportunities.

The primary responsibilities of part-time faculty include the following:

- ▶ Instruction of courses as designated by their contract
- ▶ Using teaching and learning analytics to drive instruction

FACULTY ROLES

Faculty Committee Members

Excelsior University has curriculum committees that review curricular changes, approve new offerings, review assessment data, and make recommendations for programmatic changes. Additionally, these committees advise the dean on current issues within their fields or disciplines. Membership varies by school but typically includes department chairs and school leadership.

Additionally, the colleges have University governance, advisory, and ad hoc committees (see [Academic Governance](#) for a list of governance councils). These committees provide essential advice, leadership, and support for the continuing development of high-quality education programs; insight into trends affecting education, employment, and professional practice when appropriate; and guidance and assistance in program evaluation, as well as recommendations on existing and future curricula and how to implement strategic priorities within the schools. The committees are program advocates and support public relations.

The deans or their designees are responsible for the initial recruitment effort of faculty committee members.

Thesis Reader

A thesis reader guides the student through the thesis process and offers advice on both content and style. Excelsior University thesis readers (TRs) possess terminal degrees from regionally accredited institutions and/or recognized special competence in required fields.

Subject Matter Expert

The subject matter expert (SME) is a part-time or full-time individual with discipline-specific expertise who plays a key role in the design and revision of course content. The SME works as part of a team with the department chair, instructional designer, and other staff across the University during the course development process.

The primary responsibilities of the subject matter expert include the following:

- ▶ Complete an orientation before engaging in the course development process.

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- ▶ Be available throughout the agreed-upon course development timeline and able to meet project deadlines throughout the development process. This includes but is not limited to identifying learning resources and content, creating engaging assignments, and creating valid assessments of learning.
- ▶ Respond to questions or requests from department chairs and instructional designers within 24 hours.
- ▶ Prepare to develop the course:
 1. Become familiar with Microsoft SharePoint, which is used to share documents and manage the development process.
 2. Review all resources provided by the department chair or instructional designer (e.g., textbooks, OER, virtual machines, V-sims).
 3. Engage in a kickoff meeting hosted by the department chair and/or instructional designer.
 4. Collaborate with the department chair and instructional designer to create a timeline with milestones and deliverables for the course development project.
 5. Create and identify measurable course and module outcomes that align to program- and University-level learning outcomes, as appropriate.
 6. Develop a course content organizer in collaboration with the instructional designer that addresses the major elements of the course, including outcomes, assignments, and activities, prior to developing specific course content.
- ▶ Develop the course:
 1. Collaborate with the instructional designer throughout the design process and share information, content, and documents via SharePoint.
 2. Regularly attend meetings with the instructional designer throughout the course design process. At a minimum, meetings will occur biweekly.
 3. Use the Excelsior University course shell as the framework for the course.
 4. Meet predetermined deadlines for milestones and deliverables.
 5. Create original innovative learning activities that promote critical thinking and provide multiple ways to achieve learning outcomes.
 6. Create original course content and curate course content that is current and relevant, professionally written, and that is either original or appropriately sourced and cited.
 7. Develop original learning activities and assignments that relate to the program and course outcomes; are appropriate to the content area and level of the course; meet disciplinary standards; reflect Excelsior's commitment to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI); and align with the [University's Learning Outcomes](#), as applicable.
 8. Develop original assessments of student learning aligned with course outcomes, including the associated evaluative tools (e.g., rubrics, grading criteria, quiz and test items with keys, distractors, and rationales). Utilize publisher-developed assessments as agreed upon with the department chair.

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9. Use the Excelsior University syllabus template to develop the final syllabus.
 10. Provide all originally created content in an editable format (no PDFs or images of documents).
 11. Create original high-quality multimedia content with transcripts for any audio or video created (e.g., voice-over, PowerPoint, podcasts). Utilize preexisting content (e.g., YouTube, publisher-generated media, etc.) as agreed upon with the department chair.
 12. Collaborate with the instructional designer to ensure the course meets current accessibility guidelines in accordance with the University's [accessibility policy](#).
 13. If a lab is required, work with the department chair to fulfill all obligations for the creation and distribution of lab materials (e.g., virtual machines, V-sims).
- Quality review:
1. Respond promptly to requests for revisions during the quality review process as the course is being finalized.
 2. Compose a table of all coursework per module for inclusion in the syllabus, including week, module title, required materials, assignments, online discussions, and course outcomes related to the module.
 3. Participate as requested in the video conference review of the course with the department chair and the instructional designer.

Nursing Clinical Faculty

The clinical faculty are responsible for teaching in the nursing clinical practicum courses. The clinical practicum courses include a weekend of direct, hands-on care in a hospital with patients across the life span.

The primary responsibilities of clinical faculty include the following:

- Adhere to all practices and procedures outlined in the [Clinical Faculty Playbook](#).

Compensation

Part-Time and Clinical Faculty Consulting Fees

- ▶ Part-time faculty committee members are compensated as consultants with an honorarium for their services to the University on a per diem basis.
- ▶ Clinical faculty are compensated at a flat rate per term assignment.
- ▶ Current rates of compensation are available from the dean's office in each academic unit.

Travel Expenses

- ▶ Meals, lodging, transportation costs, and miscellaneous expenses will be reimbursed to faculty members according to University guidelines, which are available from the Fiscal Office.
- ▶ Expense report forms with instructions and specific information about preapproving travel, the use of receipts, and rates of reimbursement are available from the dean's office in each academic unit.

Instructional Expectations

Instructional Expectations for All Courses

Refer to the [Faculty Playbook](#).

Instructional Expectations for Hybrid and Face-to-Face Courses

Some courses may be offered with on-site experiences. The following list outlines additional expectations for faculty who agree to serve as instructors and facilitators for a hybrid or face-to-face course for Excelsior University.

- ▶ Modify delivery of the curriculum for the classroom portion of the course, as necessary, based upon the online course outline, textbooks, and materials, as available.
- ▶ Meet in person for the entire scheduled time. Should you be unable to attend any class session, contact the on-site program coordinator and schedule your substitute.
- ▶ Submit the students' participation or absence through the learning management system (LMS).

Communicating with Faculty, Staff, and Departments

The following list provides directions on how to contact the University regarding students or academic issues.

- ▶ **College of Arts and Sciences**
Email clas@excelsior.edu or contact the member of the faculty responsible for the course.
- ▶ **College of Nursing and Health Sciences**
Email cnhs@excelsior.edu or contact the member of the faculty responsible for the course.
- ▶ **Ombudsperson**
The ombudsperson's office is responsible for serving students and staff who have questions or concerns related to University policies, procedures, and customer service issues. The team reviews requests for exceptions to the course refund policy, leaves of absence, military course extensions, and withdrawals (MW grades) due to military deployment. The ombudsperson's office can be reached at ombudsperson@excelsior.edu.
- ▶ **Student Rights and Responsibilities Office (SRRO)**
Excelsior University is committed to fostering an environment that values honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage in keeping with the University's [Code of Conduct](#). The Student Rights and Responsibilities Office (SRRO) was created to provide support to students, staff, instructional faculty, and community members who feel they have witnessed or been impacted by a violation of established University policies governing student behavioral conduct. The Student Behavioral Conduct Incident Reporting Form can be found at excelsior.edu under Resources. The Student Rights and Responsibilities Office (SRRO) can be contacted via email at srro@excelsior.edu.

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► **Accessibility Services**

Excelsior University is committed to the principle that every individual should have an equal opportunity to enroll in an Excelsior University degree or certificate program, to register for courses or examinations to demonstrate their knowledge and skills under appropriate conditions, and to complete a degree. Excelsior seeks to assure access by providing reasonable accommodations to individuals with physical, mental, or learning disabilities recognized under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). Reasonable accommodation is the provision of aids or modification to testing, services, or a program of study that facilitates access by individuals with disabilities.

Students can expect to receive the accommodation as verified and written by the Office of Accessibility Services. When a student discloses a disability directly, refer them to Accessibility Services at acs@excelsior.edu or 844-427-4356.

► **Troubleshooting**

The technical support team is available to help with any questions or problems related to the Excelsior University website, MyExcelsior accounts, the Excelsior University Library, online practice exams, or online courses. This includes questions or problems related to creating or signing into your MyExcelsior account, accessing online publications, participating in an online chat, or uploading assignments to an online course.

Information on the resolution of technical problems can be found at help.excelsior.edu.

- **Faculty Connects** (home.excelsior.edu/faculty) is a portal to courses, University policies, the human resources management system, and general information.

Evaluation Practices

Instructional Faculty Evaluation Process

1. Timeline

Newly hired faculty members are evaluated at the end of their first term teaching at Excelsior. A second evaluation will be conducted at the end of their first year. If a faculty member teaches only one course during their first year at Excelsior University, the second evaluation will be conducted at the end of the second term they teach at Excelsior.

All “active” faculty will be evaluated every three years after the completion of the end-of-first-year evaluation. An active instructional faculty member is one who is currently teaching or who has taught during the 365 days leading up to the evaluation date.

Additional evaluations can be conducted at the discretion of the dean or designee.

2. Minimum Criteria

Excelsior has an instructor evaluation process that relies on three main sources of information:

a. *Student course evaluations*

Student course evaluations are completed at the end of each course and stored in the course evaluation database. Information from these evaluations is used as part of the instructor’s overall performance evaluation.

b. *Instructional faculty evaluation form*

The performance of each instructor is evaluated by determining the degree to which the individual has performed their duties according to the instructional faculty expectations as described in their contract, in this handbook, and in the faculty playbook. In addition to these minimum criteria, each academic unit may set additional evaluation criteria based on the specific needs of the program.

c. *Evaluators*

The deans or designees are responsible for evaluating instructional faculty members.

Nursing Clinical Faculty Evaluation Process

Clinical faculty are evaluated on the same schedule as instructional faculty. Clinical part-time faculty are also evaluated on their performance in the clinical setting, including their preparedness for the clinical practicum, engagement with students in the clinical setting, and evaluation of student clinical performance.

Committee Member Evaluation Process

1. Timeline

Committee members are evaluated every three years. However, each committee may implement its own process of evaluation based on the specific needs of its programs and the specific requirements of the accrediting agency that oversees a degree program.

2. Minimum Criteria

Each academic unit has an evaluation process in place for committee members that relies on two main sources of information:

- a. Committee member evaluation form.** The performance of each committee member is evaluated by determining the degree to which the member performs their duties as specified in their contracts.
- b. Compliance with University and college policies and procedures.** All committee members are evaluated on the degree to which they comply with specific policies and procedures as set forth in this handbook and by the University.

In addition to these minimum criteria, each academic unit may set additional evaluation criteria based on the specific needs of the program.

Subject Matter Expert Evaluation Process

Subject matter experts will be evaluated after each course that they develop by the dean or dean's designee and will be evaluated based on the quality of their work as determined by the degree to which they meet the expectations and responsibilities of course developers.

Excelsior University Employee Evaluation Process

For faculty who are Excelsior University employees, performance reviews are a formal occasion for feedback and documentation about job performance at Excelsior University. The purpose of the performance management system is to review an employee's overall performance and to develop a culture of performance management that provides feedback about individual performance regarding specific work-related competencies such as job knowledge, work quality and productivity, communication, teamwork, initiative and accountability, flexibility, and adaptability.

Direct supervisors are responsible for writing performance reviews for each staff member. The Office of Human Resources notifies all parties one month prior to the date performance reviews are due.

Once evaluations are completed and the supervisor and staff members have met to discuss the results, they are then reviewed by the next level of management. The final official copy is submitted to the Office of Human Resources.

For more specific information regarding the performance review process, contact the Office of Human Resources at 518-464-8532.

Professional Development, Scholarly Inquiry, and Innovation

Overview

The University is committed to supporting professional development, scholarly inquiry, and the innovative pursuits of its faculty in ways that align to its mission. Highly qualified and engaged faculty who are passionate about curriculum development and innovations in teaching and learning are central to providing an outstanding student experience. The University's approach to faculty development is multifaceted and evolving and is implemented in multiple ways.

Professional Development

Resources and support for faculty development, including scholarly inquiry and innovative and creative pursuits, are available through the Office of the Provost as well as other areas within and outside the University. Adult student-centered principles embedded in the Excelsior University mission, strategic plan, academic philosophy, and the [Excelsior CARES credo](#) underpin faculty development and curricular initiatives. Excelsior University is committed to providing faculty members with tools and resources to ensure they have the capabilities to create, deliver, and continually evaluate student learning and curricula.

Resources and supports include:

- ▶ The director of faculty development provides workshops, webinars, conferences, and roundtables in addition to faculty onboarding and support.
- ▶ The Office of Human Resources provides education and training in areas such as leadership, management, diversity and inclusion, and ethics.
- ▶ Partners and consultants who provide professional development workshops and programs in areas of interest to the faculty, such as accessibility and accommodation, outcomes assessment, open education, academic integrity, and best practices in online teaching and learning.

The University also provides professional development opportunities for all faculty members via its learning management systems: Canvas and Brainier.

The [Faculty Connects page](#) is another web-based platform for faculty to access professional development resources, information, and a peer-to-peer exchange of ideas. This platform allows for asynchronous access to professional development opportunities.

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Scholarly Inquiry

Scholarly work of our faculty and staff is featured on the [Faculty and Staff Published Works webpage](#). Categories on the page include books, blog articles, PhD dissertations, journal articles, conference presentations, and podcast/video interviews. Items to be shared can be sent to FacultyScholarship@excelsior.edu, where they will be reviewed prior to publication on the page.

Innovations and Creative Pursuits

Excelsior supports innovations in teaching and learning in a variety of ways. The University engages with vendors and consultants to support faculty interested in seeking and employing innovations in the design and development of online courses.

Faculty Communication

Because Excelsior University faculty are dispersed all over the globe, we have implemented various communication tools and strategies to foster frequent and open communication between the faculty and the staff and administrators. Those tools, processes, and bodies are described in the section that follows.

These are University-wide efforts and do not include the many and varied communication strategies utilized within the different colleges.

It should also be noted that we will continue to explore different communication strategies with our faculty as emerging technologies and social networking facilitate more opportunities for communication and engagement.

Faculty Email

To improve communication with faculty and to promote the Excelsior University name to students, the University has provided all Excelsior faculty with an Excelsior University email address. In response to suggestions from University faculty, Excelsior has arrived at a set of policies regarding the use of Excelsior University email and messaging systems:

- ▶ Noninstructional faculty may choose to use either their own personal or professional email addresses in correspondence with Excelsior University, or they may opt to use their Excelsior email address.
- ▶ All online instructional faculty are expected to correspond with their students via the learning management system. All replies to students should be within the LMS or via Excelsior University email.
- ▶ The “forwarding” function for Excelsior University email facilitates the use of a faculty member’s @excelsior.edu address. Excelsior University emails should not be forwarded to a personal email address.

Faculty Desk

The Faculty Desk, or Salesforce Faculty Management Portal, allows faculty to modify parts of their profile, upload new documents to replace expired documents, update their professional experience, review teaching assignments, and monitor their teaching payment information. Please note that all demographic information, however, must be updated in UKG Pro.

Profiles must be updated annually. See [instructions for uploading/updating faculty CV/resume information](#).

- ▶ To access the Faculty Desk, visit the Faculty Connects portal and click “Faculty Desk.” Or bookmark this direct link for your convenience:
https://excelsior.lightning.force.com/lightning/n/My_Faculty_Profile

Faculty Services and Support

Faculty Training for Course Instructors and Developers

One of the goals at Excelsior University is to update our faculty in best practices, academic policies, and instructional technologies. Faculty are required to attend periodic training sessions and are expected to participate in all preterm meetings. In addition, completion of FAC 100 is considered a condition of employment and is provided without cost or compensation.

Faculty are expected to complete faculty orientation before teaching.

FAC 100 New Faculty Orientation

This training has been developed for instructors to ensure that they:

- ▶ Know the expectations of Excelsior University regarding teaching their courses,
- ▶ Understand the University's philosophy and perspectives on effective instruction, and
- ▶ Are equipped with the techniques and strategies for managing their online courses.

CAN 200 New Faculty Orientation

This is a self-paced orientation designed for faculty who have never used the Canvas learning management system (LMS) for Excelsior University. This course will provide faculty with knowledge to:

- ▶ Navigate within Canvas,
- ▶ Communicate effectively using the Canvas communication tools,
- ▶ Grade and use rubrics, and
- ▶ Incorporate instructor tools into their Canvas classroom.

Library Support for Faculty

The Excelsior University Library provides services to support the needs of the faculty and students.

1. Providing Resources to the Institution

The library provides access to research databases encompassing articles, e-books, and videos. The librarians can help identify all types of resources suitable for assignments, projects, and research.

2. Course Development Services

The liaison librarian will assist faculty in identifying resources for course content and assignments. The library facilitates the adoption of open educational resources, the utilization of open educational practices, and scholarly publishing. The librarians can assist in the selection of resources to achieve the following outcomes in courses:

- ▶ Developing information literacy skills
- ▶ Identifying appropriate research tools

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- ▶ Enhancing information search techniques
- ▶ Evaluating sources
- ▶ Applying proper citation formats

3. Research Assistance for Faculty and Students

The librarians can assist with faculty research. Requests can be made by phone, email, chat, one-on-one consultation meeting, or by using our course development request form for assistance. In addition, faculty can refer students they feel could benefit from one-on-one research assistance.

Contact Information

Email: library@excelsior.edu

Phone: 844-427-4377

Form: [Course Development Request Form](#)

Academic Decision-Making and Policy Development

Academic Governance

The Office of the Provost at Excelsior University is responsible for the overall academic quality of the University's programs, courses, examinations, advising, and student support services. The Office of the Provost has implemented a shared governance structure to support inclusive participation in planning and decision-making processes. The following is the list of academic affairs governance councils.

NAME	MAIN PURPOSE
Academic Affairs Council	The Academic Affairs Council (AAC) ensures high academic quality and rigor to create a robust academic student experience leading to increased retention and graduation. The AAC serves as the hub of communication for all academic councils. In addition, the AAC shall cultivate a culture of innovation to advance academic excellence in alignment with the University's strategic priorities.
Academic Integrity and Appeals Council	The Academic Integrity and Appeals Council (AIAC) ensures the highest standards of academic integrity, cultivating a culture of integrity and overseeing the policies and procedures around academic integrity student appeals and exceptions.
University Curriculum Council	The University Curriculum Council (UCC) is responsible for suggesting policies governing the undergraduate and graduate program curriculum and instructional programs. The UCC shall review and make recommendations concerning any proposed changes to any undergraduate and graduate curriculum.
Deans' Council	The Deans' Council (DC) reviews matters related to academic programs, outcomes, academic affairs, and the overall academic experience at Excelsior University.

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NAME	MAIN PURPOSE
Faculty Steering Council	The Faculty Steering Council (FSC) discusses issues of concern and areas of best practice in the faculty community as it relates to faculty retention, student success, and the goal of meeting objectives of the strategic plan. The FSC ensures that the faculty has multiple touchpoints with the University community through engagement opportunities.
Institutional Review Board	The Institutional Review Board (IRB) shall ensure that when research is conducted within the institution, the rights and welfare of the human research participants are adequately protected. The IRB possesses the professional competence necessary to ascertain the acceptability of proposals in terms of institutional commitment and regulations, applicable law, standards of professional conduct and practice, and compliance with the Belmont Report.
Student Advisory Council	The Student Advisory Council (SAC) provides an interactive forum for students to review or provide feedback on and discuss the student experience at Excelsior University.
Teaching and Learning Council (TLC)	The Teaching and Learning Council (TLC) works to cultivate a culture of innovation and advance academic excellence in alignment with the University's strategic priorities. It serves as a forum for faculty and staff to discuss the current state of instructional practices, explore new teaching strategies and share best practices, work with the Faculty Development Office to support training opportunities, work with Instructional Design and Development (IDD) to pilot new course design ideas, and consult with the Provost's Office and academic leadership on questions or topics related to teaching and learning at the University.
University Assessment Council	The University Assessment Council (UAC) provides thought leadership and consultation on assessment of teaching and student learning at course, program, and University levels.

Academic Policies and Procedures

It is the faculty member's responsibility to be familiar with all the policies related to their activity as a faculty member at Excelsior University.

Complete information on these policies and procedures can be found by going to the Excelsior website at excelsior.edu/policies.

Excelsior University Website and Resources

Through the University's website, students and faculty have access to a wealth of information designed to help them succeed. Each personal, secure MyExcelsior account serves as the gateway to a variety of support services and other information tailored to each user's specific needs, as well as to general announcements from the University.

A variety of website shortcuts are available so students and faculty can directly access many resources and support services. Keep in mind that because the MyExcelsior section of the website is customized to an individual's status, not all links are available to all users. The following are some of the commonly accessed areas.

- ▶ **Personalized MyExcelsior Account**
- ▶ **Faculty Resources :** my.excelsior.edu ▶ *Choose the **Resources** option in the sidebar navigation menu.*
- ▶ **Faculty Connects:** home.excelsior.edu/faculty
- ▶ **Student and Faculty Policies:** excelsior.edu/policies



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