



# **ONLINE FACULTY MANUAL**

UPDATED 06/09/2020

## A Word of Encouragement to ALL Faculty

Arizona Christian University aims to reach every student in every learning environment. We recognize that there are times when online learning will be a possible course of action in the gain for their degree. We want to encourage your learning environment and bring forward a blessing you will never forget. We desire for YOU to reach your students in ways that no other university will contact them!

With these goals in mind, we have developed a manual here to offer support when planning for your course, renewing your class, or wishing to push a little harder in your current course. You can do this! We brought you onboard to deliver a learning community that is both engaging and successful.

Sincerely,

The Online Team!

# ACU ONLINE CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

## ONLINE CLASS TERM DATES

An online week for undergraduate students is Monday through Sunday. Each Module will begin on a Monday at 12:00 AM and end on Sunday at 11:59 PM. Online adjuncts will receive access to their Canvas course 10 days before the start date of the class.

## COURSE SET-UP

Faculty will receive access to their course 10 days prior to the start of class. Online courses at Arizona Christian University are designed (including textbook selection) by Deans, Department Chairs, and subject matter experts. Any revisions to online classes must go through the Dean or Department Chair who oversees the course and the Department of Online Studies; this ensures consistency with textbook and assessment practices in the ground courses. Online adjuncts are required to complete the following course-set up activities 5 days before the start date.

- Welcome Video:** Prepare a 60-second Introduction Video of yourself to be posted to the “meet your colleagues” section of your classroom. Introductions should offer your students a stronghold on “who” you are and “what” you are like. Feel free to provide some of your personality in this section to increase student engagement. Please post your introduction video 5 days before the start of class.  
Sample Template  
Section 1: Educational Background (2-4 sentences)  
Section 2: Professional Background (4-6 sentences)  
Section 3: Personal Interests (2-4 sentences)
- Welcome Letter:** A welcome letter template will be given out at every R&R meeting. Please use this letter to fill in the blanks pertinent to your upcoming classroom and email it to your classroom 7 days before class.
- Faculty Contact Information:** Your faculty information should be reviewed and updated for all classes before the start of each class. Please review the contact information on the Homepage of your course in which you wish to be seen by your students. Some personal information may be avoided for security purposes.
- Classroom Due Dates:** Please ensure all course due dates are embedded within each Canvas module of your classroom. Discussion Question 1 for each week is due on the respective Wednesday by 11:59 PM of each module. Discussion Question 2 for each week is due on the respective Friday by 11:59 PM of each module. Weekly assignments are due on Sunday of each week by 11:59 PM.
- Link Check:** Before the start of class, please review each module to ensure all embedded links are working. Sometimes URL information can alter and can cause inaccurate webpage access. Please ensure all URL information is correct and is accessible to students.
- Collaborative Groups:** Many times, a course will require group work. Faculty will need to develop Groups within Canvas that will encourage student participation within their group if an assignment requires group participation. The faculty should create class groups two modules in advance of the assignment start date. Please refer to the syllabus or modules to determine if collaborative groups are required for your course. After your course groups have been created, please utilize the announcement tab to inform your students of the upcoming collaborative group assignment. [Groups Overview \(Instructors\)](#)
- Course Template:** Each online course is constructed using a standard template.  
**Online course module sequence and content follow the same structure and should not be altered.**

## **FACULTY PRESENCE IN THE ONLINE CLASSROOM**

Faculty presence in the online classroom is of the utmost importance to ensure students feel engaged and part of the ACU community. ACU expects online adjunct faculty to be dutifully committed to enriching the online learning environment for our online students.

Faculty presence in the online classroom can be developed in several ways, including weekly announcements, welcome videos, comments in the discussion threads, responses to questions, substantive and productive feedback on student assignments, office hours, and so on. Although online learning is asynchronous, faculty play a key role in making the student feel connected to the University community.

### **Weekly Announcements**

Each week, online faculty are required to post a weekly announcement (video required) articulating how the previous weeks learning objectives and activities/assignments tie into the upcoming weeks learning objectives and activities/assignments. Use the weekly announcement thread to set proper expectations for students regarding assignments, discussion post requirements, and office hours. Weekly announcements are a great channel to address areas of struggle students may be experiencing with the classroom content. Weekly announcements set the tone of the course. ACU encourages faculty to use this space to create a transparent and engaging space between faculty and students.

### **Discussion Posts**

Faculty are expected to oversee and contribute to the weekly discussion forums by engaging with students in ways that add value, challenge students, and encourage further learning of the content. Faculty are expected to respond to each student once per week, modeling effective substantive responses. Faculty are expected to be present in the discussion forum at least 4 days per online week.

### **Instructor Questions & Responsiveness**

Instructors are encouraged to develop a habit of checking the Instructor Questions thread and Canvas (or arizonachristian.edu email box) for new topics and new posts each time the classroom is accessed.

ACU policy requires adjunct faculty to respond to student inquiries within 24 hours during the weekdays and within 48 hours over the weekend.

### **Assignment Grading**

1. **Feedback:** Faculty are required to provide constructive feedback for all weekly assignments. The feedback for the assignments will be in addition to the rubric included in the classroom (if the assignment has a rubric). It is preferred that faculty provide feedback within the document itself (i.e., essay, PowerPoint, or other submitted materials). Depending on the program used or assignment sought, the directions to including feedback within the submissions will vary. If you have trouble, it is best to reach out to your department chair or email [onlinestudies@arizonachristian.edu](mailto:onlinestudies@arizonachristian.edu) for assistance.
2. **Turn-Around Time:** Faculty are required to provide grades to students within seven (7) days of the assignment due date. If applicable, the grading rubric should also be attached to the returned work for an even more in-depth understanding of their results. **Note:** Final course grades are due the Wednesday after the last day of class.

## **FINALIZING GRADES IN CANVAS & POPULI**

At the end of an 8-week online course, faculty must finalize grades in both Canvas and Populi to ensure gradebook accuracy on student transcripts. Faculty will be sent instructions for finalizing grades in Canvas and Populi via email. The online department sends out communication on the 7th week of every online course term. The email reminds faculty of pertinent dates needed to finalize grades in both Canvas and Populi, and how to change a final grade for a student if grades have already been finalized.

### **Canvas**

To finalize grades in Canvas, the instructor must check the Canvas gradebook to ensure all gradebook cells are filled in with grades. Even if a student received a 0 within the gradebook, the instructor should ensure that the number 0 is implemented within the respective cell for the student's grade.

Finalized grades in Canvas must be completed by the following Tuesday after the 8-week course ends by 5:00 PM AZ time.

### **Populi**

Grades in Populi are maintained in the course grade book. Finalize grades in Populi must be completed by the following Wednesday after the 8-week course ends by 5:00 pm AZ time.

For courses hosted in Canvas, the grades are imported from Canvas during the nightly sync of the two tools. For courses hosted in Populi, grades are stored from the assignments to the Populi gradebook. The instructor can also manually [Edit Grades]. While the semester grade is shown on the student's schedule, the student's transcript will show that the grade is "IP" (In-Progress) until the course is Finalized. Finalizing a course means that the course is "locked" from any further updates.

To view the course gradebook in Populi:

For instructors, click on the course from your Faculty Tab.

For Academic Administrators:

- Go to Academics>Academic Term>Courses
- Select the term from the term drop-down box
- Click on the course abbreviation, in blue type.

Verify the grades. If the instructor just completed grading in Canvas, the grades in Populi will update during the next nightly sync. Wait until the following day to finalize grades. Once grades are appropriately reflected in Populi, then finalize the course.

At the bottom of the Gradebook, check the box to "Finalize course and all students", then click [Submit].

Finalized courses are identified with the Lock Icon.

**Note:** Due to the time of day that Canvas and Populi sync, it is important faculty follow the timelines above. Grades are pushed from Canvas to Populi at 12 PM EST.

### **Grade Changes**

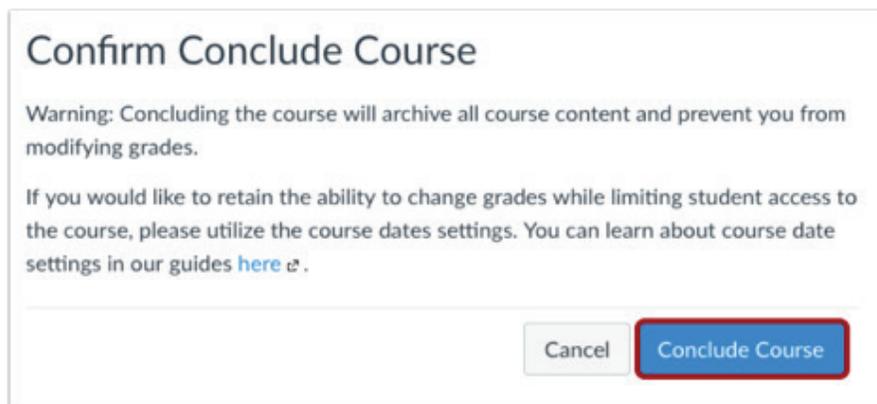
If a student grade needs to be changed after courses are finalized in Populi, faculty must submit a Grade Change Form to [registrar@arizonachristian.edu](mailto:registrar@arizonachristian.edu)

## Concluding a Course in Canvas

Once grades have been finalized in both Canvas and Populi, the instructor is required to conclude the course within Canvas.

Concluding a course within Canvas is achieved by:

1. Go to the Canvas Classroom
2. Go to Settings on the left hand side ribbon
3. Select "Conclude Course" on the right hand side bar
4. Select "Confirm Concluded Course"



## FACULTY EVALUATIONS

The university reserves the right to conduct faculty evaluations on new and existing online faculty. As a standard operating procedure, ACU conducts online faculty evaluations regularly.

ACU does acknowledge and understand that unexpected life circumstances can occur and can potentially interfere with faculty expectations. If unexpected life circumstances arise, please contact the ACU Online department at [onlinestudies@arizonachristian.edu](mailto:onlinestudies@arizonachristian.edu) for further instruction and support during this time.

**Purpose of Online Evaluation:** To provide useful data that encourages faculty improvement and effective outcomes that drive and replicate successful online programs.

As with the face-to-face evaluation, the Department of Online Studies conducts online course observations of all full-time & part-time faculty. Each faculty member teaching online sections will be evaluated using the Online Course Observation Rubric at least once during the academic year (see Appendix 2). Additional observations can be requested by the Department Chair and/or faculty member for a written evaluation and/or reference.

- The Department of Online Studies will share the results of the observation with the faculty member and Department Chair within 5 business days of the observation. Next steps will be provided to faculty along with links to teaching resources.
- Please reference the Online Faculty Manual for explanation of each criteria item outlined in the Online Course Observation Rubric.
- Faculty evaluations are one of the assessment tools used to determine future course assignments at ACU.
- Faculty evaluations are a collaborative effort. If you would like to discuss or provide feedback on your evaluation, please contact your department chair.

## Online Conduct

Arizona Christian University requires all students to be respectful of the instructor and the classroom at all times. When student conduct issues within the classroom arise, the learning environment will decrease, and the outcomes will be challenged. If there are any possible student conduct concerns, please reach out to the ACU Online Department at [onlinestudies@arizonachristian.edu](mailto:onlinestudies@arizonachristian.edu).

## Textbooks and Other Classroom Resources

Textbooks are part of the online learning environment. Only the department chairs are allowed to select textbooks for a class. All selected textbook information will be uploaded to both Canvas and Populi before the start of a live course.

Resources outside of the required text are considered optional, and the faculty and/or course designer is responsible for adding these items into the classroom for student access. The department chairs must approve all optional materials before it is implemented within the live course. For best results in your teaching, you will need to embed all materials within the Canvas classroom. Also, be sure that you have the approval to utilize outside resources if they are copyrighted.

Additional resources may include the following:

1. **Weekly Mini Video Lecture:** This video will be about 5-10 minutes of you providing the lecture you would offer in a traditional setting. Be sure to include visual aids or discuss the expectations of the module week. This video would be best if it were included every week. If you decide on the video lecture, you may record from any form of technology and save it on YouTube for embedding purposes.
  - Video lectures can also be audible; this will entail the same lecture, but without seeing “you” in the lecture. It will be saved in the same format as a YouTube link.
2. **Videos:** The videos that increase student clarity are strongly encouraged. These can be serious, funny, or even moving. No matter what, we aim to reach the student at our best.
3. **Articles:** An article can be obtained from the internet or a library. It is best to provide outside reading sources on the topics because our students can dig deeper and gain more views outside of the text.
4. **Visual Aids:** This could be anything that has a picture, graph, table, chart, etc.
5. **PowerPoint:** This practice is one of many professors use within the traditional setting to increase student comprehension or ensure faculty remain on task. You may certainly include a PowerPoint at any time, for any week for the online classroom.

## Classroom Instruction and Surveys

Classroom instruction will take place continually throughout the eight (8) weeks the course is offered. ACU expects faculty to apply their content knowledge and instructional expertise to increase student outcomes. At the end of each course, the students are allowed to share their views about the curriculum, instruction, and teaching style. The survey can benefit faculty if they take a moment to review the information shared by the students. Faculty may utilize it to create a better outcome in future courses, evaluate particular practices that were successful, or even take a personal inventory of positive and negative items.

ACU will depend on the evaluations for future reference to course developing and/or teaching. Our goal is to reach the students and ensure they have the blessings from the courses to take into the real world. If there are concerns in regards to survey results, please discuss them with your department chair.

## QUICK LINK TOOLS FOR ONLINE LEARNING

As part of the learning process, a few tools will be necessary for success. Below are quick clickable links that will assist you in navigating and answering some of the fundamental questions regarding the online learning system.

- BIGBLUEBUTTON (Canvas Conferencing):
  - Canvas Conferencing Instructor Overview: [Click Here](#)
- Zoom Conferencing:
  - Sign up for Zoom: [Click Here](#)
  - Schedule a Zoom Meeting: [Click Here](#)
- E-Textbooks:
  - Cengage e-Textbooks: [Click Here](#)
  - VitalSource: [Click Here](#) & [Click Here](#)
- Canvas Instructor Guide:
  - Canvas Instructor Overview: [Click Here](#)
    - [Announcements Overview \(Instructors\)](#)
    - [Assignments Overview \(Instructors\)](#)
    - [Calendar Overview \(Instructors\)](#)
    - [Chat Overview \(Instructors\)](#)
    - [Collaborations Overview \(Instructors\)](#)
    - [Course and Student Analytics Overview \(Instructors\)](#)
    - [Course Settings \(Instructors\)](#)
    - [Discussions Overview \(Instructors\)](#)
    - [Files Overview \(Instructors\)](#)
    - [Gradebook Overview \(Instructors\)](#)
    - [Groups Overview \(Instructors\)](#)
    - [Modules Overview \(Instructors\)](#)
    - [New Analytics Overview \(Instructors\)](#)
    - [Outcomes Overview \(Instructors\)](#)
    - [Pages Overview \(Instructors\)](#)
    - [People Overview \(Instructors\)](#)
    - [Quizzes Overview \(Instructors\)](#)
    - [New Quizzes Overview \(Instructors\)](#)
    - [Rubrics Overview \(Instructors\)](#)
    - [SpeedGrader Overview \(Instructors\)](#)
- Supported Browsers for Canvas: [Click Here](#)

# ONLINE CLASSROOM POLICIES

## ONLINE CLASS TERM DATES

An online week for undergraduate students is Monday through Sunday. Each Module will begin on a Monday and end on Sunday at midnight. Arizona Christian University (ACU) requires all students enrolled in an online course to attend every week. Classroom room attendance is marked by activity in the online classroom.

## CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

Student participation in the online classroom is paramount to the online learning experience and accounts for a large part of the student's final grade. Participating in the weekly discussion forum allows students and faculty to share experiences, examine the relevant subject matter, share expertise, and study the content from new perspectives.

ACU requires online students to post within the online classroom at least three times per week. Additionally, students must post to the discussion thread a minimum of five times per week.

NUMBER OF REQUIRED PARTICIPATION DAYS PER WEEK	NUMBER OF WEEKLY POSTS WITHIN THE DISCUSSION FORUM
3	5

Participation points are earned by posting substantive, quality messages to fellow ACU classmates and faculty within the weekly discussion forum. Specific courses may have alternative participation requirements. Students are encouraged to consult with the faculty member before the course start.

### Initial Discussion Post Requirements:

1. Discussion question (DQ) #1 is due on Day 3 (Wednesday) of the week.
2. Discussion question (DQ) #2 is due on Day 5 (Friday) of the week.
3. Student initial posts to the DQ should be a minimum of 150 words. Each initial post must include a minimum of one scholarly citation that supports your views/ideas being presented. References must be in APA format.

### Follow-up Discussion Post Requirements:

Students are required to respond to three classmates within the weekly discussion forum for full participation points. No minimum word count required. However, the following must be achieved:

- Demonstrate deeper or broader thoughts about a topic, rather than just rephrasing what the textbook has to say on the topic.
- Response encourages further discussion and ongoing dialogue with other students in the class.
- Communicate in a professional and supportive manner, and with a respectful tone.
- Include proper scholarly citations to support the idea being presented.

## LATE POLICY

All weekly assignments are due on Sunday by 11:59 PM Arizona time. Assignments submitted after the **"due by"** dates will be subject to a 10% penalty for each day the assignment is late, for a maximum of five (5) days.

No assignment can be accepted for grading after midnight on the final day of class unless prior arrangements for the grade of an Incomplete have been granted due to extenuating circumstances. You must contact your instructor through email to maintain accurate records for assignment extensions.

## GRADING SYSTEM

The University grading system can be found by referencing Arizona Christian University's Academic Catalog.

### What to Expect from Faculty

1. Students can expect a seven day grading turnaround time frame from when assignments are due. If a student submits an assignment before the due date and wishes to receive quicker feedback, please reach out to your instructor with your request as faculty are only required to return assignment feedback and grades within the seven-day timeframe of when an assignment is due.
2. Faculty are required to provide constructive feedback for all weekly assignments. The feedback for the assignments will be in addition to the rubric included in the classroom (if assignment has rubric).
3. ACU policy requires adjunct faculty to respond to student inquiries within 24-48 hours.

If you experience difficulty receiving turnaround times described above, please reach out to your EMS for assistance.

## PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is the act of claiming credit for another's work, accomplishments, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment of the source by including in-text citations and references. Whether this happens deliberately or inadvertently, whenever plagiarism has occurred, you have committed a Code of Conduct violation.

Plagiarism includes:

- Representing the ideas, expressions, or materials of another without due credit.
- Paraphrasing or condensing ideas from another person's work without proper citation and referencing.
- Failing to document direct quotations without proper citation and referencing.

Depending on the amount, severity, and frequency of the plagiarism committed, students may receive in-class penalties that range from coaching (for a minor omission) to zero credit for a specific assignment. In addition, University-level penalties may also occur, including suspension or even expulsion from the University. ACU uses Turnitin as its plagiarism checking software.

## TURNITIN:

Turnitin (TII) is hosted in Canvas and is the licensed plagiarism monitor by ACU. Turnitin provides instructors and students originality reports of submitted, text-based work. Only assignments that are "Online/digital" submission types and have "Text entry" and/or "File Uploads" entry options selected can use Turnitin.

Each paper and presentation will automatically be placed into the TurnItIn (TII) dropbox upon submission in the online classroom (unless the instructor disables this feature). An originality score above 25% is unacceptable and will be returned to you for editing. If the final work is submitted after the due date, you will be docked credit for submitting late. Please allow yourself sufficient time for the TII scoring and submission due dates to avoid losing credit.

If you are at all uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism, please access the Student Tool Box (also known as "**orientation**"). Also, student orientation highlights the ACU's academic integrity policies and standards.

**Note:** Not all instructors require students to submit their papers and presentations to TII.

## GRADE OF INCOMPLETE

A final grade of Incomplete may be granted at the discretion of your professor; however, students must meet

certain specific criteria before this grade accommodation is even possible to consider. The grade of Incomplete is reserved for times when students experience a severe extenuating circumstance or a crisis during the last week or two of class, which prevents the completion of course requirements before the close of the grading period. Students also must be passing the course at the time the request is made.

- Please contact your professor by email if you are having difficulties in meeting course requirements or class deadlines. In addition, if you are experiencing personal challenges or difficulties, it is best to contact your Enrollment Management Specialist to discuss the options that might be available to you, as well as academic and financial repercussions.

## **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

In accordance with ACU's policy as stated in the Catalog and Student Handbook, it is the expectation that all communication that takes place in the classroom will be presented professionally, using appropriate language and a collaborative tone, while demonstrating respect for the viewpoints and values of all class members, even if they do not coincide with your viewpoints and values.

All procedures regarding conduct, including computer conduct, will be followed as outlined in the ACU Student Handbook. Cheating, fabrication (making up information or sources), and plagiarism (copying) will be subject to strict disciplinary action. A student found cheating, fabricating, or plagiarizing may receive a 0 for that activity and may be referred to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action; this may result in class withdrawal. Since this rule is strictly enforced, please avoid all appearance of academic dishonesty.

Professionalism online is required. Professionalism includes behavior that others find unwelcome or offensive within the discussion threads. Students who cannot meet these expectations may be pulled from a course, which causes a loss of financial aid funding.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Attendance is mandatory. Student attendance is tracked through discussion posts and assignment submissions throughout the week. Please refer to "Classroom Participation Requirements" on page 1 of this document to explain the posting/attendance requirements.

## **ACCOMMODATION AND SPECIAL NEEDS**

Your instructor is willing to make any reasonable adaptations for limitations due to any disability, including a learning disability, in keeping with ACU policies and the Student Handbook. Any student with documented certifiable special needs should contact the office of the Director of Academic Services on campus, and they will inform your instructor of the proper accommodations you are eligible for. If you have a special need, even on a temporary basis, it is your responsibility to contact this office as soon as possible to disclose your disability information and discuss your accommodation needs. Students are required to make their requests in writing using the *Accommodation Request and Documentation Form* and document their disability in accordance with ACU policies and procedures. Documentation of the disability must be current (*not older than 1 year*) and provided by a qualified healthcare professional such as a diagnosing or current physician, psychiatrist or psychologist. It must comply with the requirements for documentation outlined on the *Accommodation Request and Documentation Form*. Accommodations are not retroactive. ACU reserves the right to verify all professional documentation and determine reasonable accommodation for any disability, including learning disability. Please see the Student Handbook for current detailed information regarding accommodation and special needs.

## **RETENTION OF EXAMINATIONS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

Instructors will retain copies of student examinations and assignments not returned to students for one semester in case of a dispute between a faculty member and a student in assigning or recording a grade. After that time, instructors may discard course materials in a manner that preserves student confidentiality.

## **DROPPING A CLASS**

Please refer to the Arizona Christian University Academic Catalog for the add/drop policy.

## **TUITION REFUND POLICY**

Please refer to the Arizona Christian University Academic Catalog for the tuition refund policy.

# FACULTY EVALUATION PROCEDURES FOR ONLINE CLASSES

**Purpose of Online Evaluation:** To provide useful data that encourages faculty improvement and effective outcomes that drive and replicate successful online programs.

As with the face-to-face evaluation, the Department of Online Studies conducts online course observations of all full-time & part-time faculty. Each faculty member teaching online sections will be evaluated using the Online Course Observation Rubric at least once during the academic year (see Rubric on following page). Additional observations can be requested by the Department Chair and/or faculty member for a written evaluation and/or reference.

- The Department of Online Studies will share the results of the observation with the faculty member and Department Chair within 5 business days of the observation. Next steps will be provided to faculty along with links to teaching resources.
- Please reference the Online Faculty Manual for explanation of each criteria item outlined in the Online Course Observation Rubric.
- Faculty evaluations are one of the assessment tools used to determine future course assignments at ACU.
- Faculty evaluations are a collaborative effort. If you would like to discuss or provide feedback on your evaluation, please contact your department chair.

**ARIZONA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY ONLINE OBSERVATION RUBRIC**

Faculty Member: \_\_\_\_\_

Department Teaching for: \_\_\_\_\_

Observation Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Course: \_\_\_\_\_ Term: \_\_\_\_\_

Key: Strengths Identified / Areas for Improvement

	<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b> What went well and suggestions.
<b>1. COURSE SET-UP</b>	Welcome Video Posted	
	Faculty Contact Information (including Zoom link) Posted within LMS	
	Classroom Due Dates Updated	
	Course Modules Follow provided Template for Student Consistency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Module sequence</li> </ul>	
<b>2. FACULTY PRESENCE</b>	Instructor consistently provides timely and rich feedback related to classroom activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weekly Announcements</li> <li>Discussion Posts</li> <li>Assignment Feedback</li> <li>Instructor QuestionThread</li> </ul>	
	Weekly Video Announcements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Present in the Classroom</li> <li>Weekly video explains connections between learning objectives and activities</li> </ul>	
<b>3. GRADING</b>	Instructor provides grades within 7 days of assignment due date <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assignments</li> <li>Discussion Questions</li> </ul>	

Faculty Next Steps:

1. Review the feedback provided and consider the areas of improvement.
2. Information on each criteria can be found in the [Online Faculty Manual](#).
3. After reviewing this evaluation, if you have questions or concerns, please contact your department chair.
4. Please make the adjustments to your course.
5. We look forward to following up with your next course evaluation on: