

## **UHD Faculty Requirements for Engaging Students Updated August 14, 2023**

- *Response Times:* To maximize best practice, faculty are generally expected to respond to student questions or issues within 48 hours (excluding weekends), if only to acknowledge the question/issue. Please address communication strategies and expectations on your syllabus where relevant. [NOTE: this expectation does not apply to grading processes, though certainly timely feedback is best practice.]
- *Required Class Meetings and Modalities:* If there are required class meeting times on the schedule, faculty should remind students of the commitment, and students are expected to attend classes. Faculty must deliver courses in the modality and at the times posted on the class schedule unless otherwise approved by the Department Chair in consultation with the Provost's Office. Faculty should not require students to attend class meetings during times that have not been advertised to students on the schedule. E.g., if you have an asynchronous online class, you should not require students to attend any specific time-bound events, though such events can be optional; you can schedule synchronous meetings and encourage participation, allowing some flexibility, but there should not be a specific penalty for non-participation.
- *Required Exam Formats and Costs:* Please be sure that your plans for final exam offerings are consistent with the expectations for class modality and are stated on the syllabus. If there is an expectation of paid proctoring services, you must indicate that as well as the estimated cost in the class schedule notes and on the syllabus.

When planning your finals, we also ask you to consider the following:

- a. For any courses with scheduled virtual or in-person meeting times, any required finals activity should include the two-hour final exam window that is scheduled for that course period but could certainly be longer.
  - b. If the final will be the first time that students are asked to engage in a virtual assessment, please consider providing an opportunity for them to practice with the technology to minimize problems during the actual exam period and allow students to understand how to be successful in a different assessment environment.
- *Availability and Activity During Final Exams:* Our final exam period is considered to be part of our semester. As such, you should be available for students during the finals periods. While exams are not required for classes unless faculty identify them as part of their class structure, you should consider how best to engage students during this part of the semester (e.g., submission of other assignments during the finals window, in-person presentations of final projects, availability of faculty to discuss grades, etc.)
  - *Open Your LMS course shells by First Class Day:* All faculty must open their course Learning Management shell for every scheduled class (even independent study or practicum) on or before the first day of classes this semester (the day all classes start). We strongly encourage all faculty to open the shell during the week before classes start,

with some information to support students in setting up required technology, getting textbooks, etc. Also, faculty should ensure that they include any university-wide components recommended in their course shells.

- *Zoom Video Presence:* Faculty may require students to participate via live video in any class meeting in order to fulfill specific assignments or requirements related to a course learning outcome, assignment, or test, or when the participation supports the attainment of course outcome. Faculty should notify students of potential for requirements for video presence on the syllabus; as with any significant changes in course policy, faculty should provide advance notice to students. Students with concerns regarding any requirement to participate in live video for specific course learning outcomes and/or assignments should consult their instructor.
- *Accessibility and Ally:* The Office of Disability Services (ODS) will contact faculty as usual (via email) for any accommodations needed by students. Faculty should work with ODS and department chairs to identify any issues in meeting ADA requirements. For testing in cases in which in-person testing is not viable, the ODS may identify options for proctored online testing.

Also, we maintain our commitment to accessibility in general—please use the Ally tool to guide updates and changes to make materials more accessible. For information on how to use the tool, see [this Ally resource](#). Direct any questions or concerns about challenges to our Provost Office Ally hotline: [allygator@uhd.edu](mailto:allygator@uhd.edu) or 713-221-8003.

- *Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI):* For online courses, UHD requires “regular and substantive interaction” with students throughout the course as a best practice as well as to comply with Department of Education financial aid eligibility requirements. Minimum RSI requirements can be met by ensuring that you post and be available for scheduled office hours and by providing regular and individualized feedback on key student assignments throughout the semester. However, there are many ways to comply—please see our [RSI website](#) .