



EASTWICK COLLEGE DISTANCE EDUCATION FACULTY HANDBOOK

2026



Table of Contents

Section I. Distance Education Policies	4
1.1 Eastwick College Distance Education Definitions	4
1.2 Credit Hour Calculations	4
1.3 Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI)	5
1.4 Accommodations for Students with Disabilities	8
1.5 Academic Integrity for Distance Education Courses	9
1.6 Student Attendance Policies	10
1.7 Copyright Policy and Fair Use	12
1.8 Course Revisions and Approval Process.....	14
1.9 FERPA and Student Privacy in Online Settings.....	14
Section II. Faculty Roles and Responsibilities for Instructional Delivery	15
2.1 Communication with Administration.....	15
2.2 Accountability	15
Section III. Faculty Roles & Responsibilities	15
3.1 Weekly Requirements for Hybrid and Online Course Delivery.....	16
3.2 Instructor Time-on-Task Expectations	16
3.3 Communication and Response Time Expectations.....	17
3.4 Providing Timely Feedback and Grading.....	17
3.5 Using Lockdown Browsers (Respondus & Proctorio).....	18
Section IV. Faculty Evaluation and Support.....	19
4.1 Eastwick Canvas Support	19
4.2 The Eastwick Teaching Online Course (ETOC).....	19
4.3 Faculty Evaluation and Canvas Course Reviews.....	19
Section V. Technology & Other Resources.....	21
5.1 Minimum Technical Requirements for Canvas	21
5.2 The Eastwick Online Education Resources Hub	21
5.3 Canvas Resources and Training	21
Section V. Online Education Department – Support	22
Section VI. Appendices.....	23
6.1 Distance Ed Faculty Course Delivery Checklist.....	23
6.2 Eastwick AI Policy	24



Welcome Message

Welcome to Eastwick College's Faculty Handbook for Distance Education. This handbook serves as the official reference for the policies, procedures, and standards that guide online instruction at Eastwick College. It outlines expectations for course design, faculty responsibilities, communication, and compliance with institutional and accrediting requirements. Our goal is to ensure consistency, quality, and integrity across all Distance Education courses while providing the information and resources you need to support your and your students' success in the online environment.

Preface

This handbook is intended to be a living document that reflects the evolving policies and practices of Distance Education at Eastwick College. Faculty are encouraged to review it regularly, as updates may occur to align with changes in institutional policy, accreditation standards, or federal and state regulations. The most current version of this handbook, along with related resources and best practices, is available through the [Eastwick Online Education Resources Hub](#) in Canvas. If you do not have access to the website, please email a Distance Education Staff Member below.

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Section I. Distance Education Policies

1.1 Eastwick College Distance Education Definitions

Eastwick College defines Distance Education in accordance with 34 CFR §600.2 and applicable accrediting standards. Distance education is instruction delivered through approved technologies to students who are separated from the instructor and that includes regular and substantive interaction between students and the instructor, conducted either synchronously or asynchronously. Approved technologies include the Internet; broadcast, cable, fiber optic, satellite, or wireless transmissions; audio conferencing; and other related media used in conjunction with these technologies.

Hybrid (In-Person + Online Asynchronous): A Distance Education course that combines scheduled, in-person class sessions with online learning activities delivered asynchronously through the Canvas LMS. Students meet face-to-face with instructors weekly while also completing assignments, discussions, and other learning activities online.

Hybrid – Zoom (Synchronous Zoom + Online Asynchronous): A course that combines scheduled live class sessions delivered via Zoom with online learning activities delivered asynchronously in the Canvas LMS. Students are required to attend real-time virtual meetings while also completing coursework, discussions, and assessments on their own schedule.

Fully Online (100% Asynchronous): A course in which all instruction, interaction, and assessments are delivered asynchronously through the Canvas LMS, with no required in-person or live Zoom sessions. Students interact weekly with course content (e.g., lecture materials, texts, videos, published documents, etc...), assignments, and discussions independently, with regular instructor engagement and feedback.

1.2 Credit Hour Calculations

The College applies a uniform institutional credit hour policy to all courses, regardless of instructional modality, including in-person, hybrid, and fully online formats. Consistent with federal regulation and Middle States Commission on Higher Education expectations, one quarter credit hour is defined as an amount of work represented by reasonably equivalent learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that approximates:

- One hour of direct instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for twelve weeks.
- An equivalent amount of work over a different academic period; or
- An equivalent amount of work for other instructional activities, including distance education.

In distance education courses, the required instructional time and student workload are achieved through a structured combination of faculty-directed instructional activities (such as lectures, discussions, and course materials delivered through the Canvas Learning Management System) and independent student learning activities (including readings, assignments, projects, discussions, and assessments).

All distance education courses are designed to ensure equivalency in academic rigor, learning outcomes, faculty engagement, and total student workload when compared to in-person courses carrying the same number of credit hours. Courses are reviewed and approved through the institution's established curriculum and academic oversight processes to ensure alignment with institutional credit hour policy and compliance with federal and accrediting standards.



1.3 Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI)

In September 2020, the U.S. Department of Education introduced Final Rules on Distance Learning and Innovation, effective from July 1, 2021. These updated regulations mandate that online courses eligible for Title IV funds (federal financial aid) ensure regular and substantive interaction between students and instructors. This requirement is crucial as it distinguishes distance education from correspondence education and determines students' eligibility to receive Title IV funds. As such, the language of *Regular Substantive Interaction (RSI)* is also included in accrediting bodies' standard language.

It is also important to note that the U.S. Department of Education mandates RSI regardless of the Distance Education delivery mode, whether asynchronous, synchronous, or blended/hybrid. Per the U.S. Department of Education Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations, education that uses technology to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor either synchronously or asynchronously ((34 C.F.R. § 600.2(1) must comply with RSI as follows:

Substantive interaction is engaging students in teaching, learning, and assessment, consistent with the content under discussion, and also includes at least two of the following: (i) Providing direct instruction; (ii) Assessing or providing feedback on a student's coursework; (iii) Providing information or responding to questions about the content of a course or competency; (iv) Facilitating a group discussion regarding the content of a course or competency; or (v) Other instructional activities approved by the institution's or program's accrediting agency (34 C.F.R. § 600.2(4)). An institution ensures regular interaction between a student and an instructor or instructors by, prior to the student's completion of a course or competency: (i) Providing the opportunity for substantive interactions with the student on a predictable and scheduled basis commensurate with the length of time and the amount of content in the course or competency; and (ii) Monitoring the student's academic engagement and success and ensuring that an instructor is responsible for promptly and proactively engaging in substantive interaction with the student when needed on the basis of such monitoring, or upon request by the student (34 C.F.R. § 600.2(5)). (Source: Electronic Code of Federal Regulations (eCFR), Title 34: Education, Subtitle IV, Chapter VI, Part 600, §600.2 Distance Education)

How is RSI measured?

In short, RSI is observed as intentional and effective engagement between instructors and students. It is the hallmark of effective teaching and an essential constituent for learning. And therefore, all faculty teaching hybrid or online courses at Eastwick College must ensure each component of RSI is met in all hybrid and online courses:

- **Instructor-initiated:** Faculty are responsible for starting and guiding communication.
- **Regular, Scheduled, and Predictable:** Interactions between instructors and students should occur consistently, and with clearly stated expectations.
- **Substantive:** Faculty engagement must focus on course content and support learning outcomes. It must be academic in nature.

This section provides examples and strategies to help you deliver your courses in ways that clearly meet RSI standards. In many cases, you may already be practicing RSI, and these examples can help you refine your approach and explore additional strategies.

1st Characteristic: **Regular** Interaction

What Constitutes Regular Interaction? Instructor interactions that are routine, scheduled, and predictable meet the "Regular." These Interactions should be frequent and consistent and should include various modes of interactions. Examples may include:



- Including specific virtual or on-campus meetings with students, scheduled in advance, with academic focus and intent. These meetings must be instructor-initiated.
- Posting weekly announcements consistently throughout the course (This does not include Welcome announcements, class cancellations, or course closing messages)
- Summarizing course content in weekly modules or via weekly announcements.
- Facilitating required online review sessions that are scheduled on various days/times to allow for student flexibility. Optional review sessions would not be considered RSI.

Interactions not considered Regular:

- Sending only a welcome message at the start and a farewell note at the end.
- Offering a single optional review session before the final exam.
- Hosting scheduled meetings where students can drop by.

2nd Characteristic: **Substantive** Interaction

What constitutes Substantive Interaction? Instructor interactions that illustrate subject matter expertise. These Interactions relate to course subject matter and contribute towards student performance in meeting course outcomes. Examples may include:

- Posting announcements that contribute to the understanding of course materials or contain scaffolding-type questions to assist students with upcoming reading and assignments. Announcements as “reminders” for exams, policies, or other requirements are not considered RSI.
- Instructor ad-hoc facilitated discussions, where instructors create and engage in a spontaneous discussion post related to a relevant current world event.
- Individualized Feedback on assignments that offer subject matter perspective.
- Instructor developed videos that elaborate on content or introduce complex assignments while tying the instructions and requirements to course readings and other content.

Not considered Substantive:

- General policy reminders.
- Posting due date announcements for assignments.
- Sharing unrelated commentary not connected to the course subject.

3rd Characteristic: **Instructor Initiated** Interaction

What constitutes Instructor Initiated Interactions? The instructor ACTIVELY engages with students (individual or whole group), not relying on students to initiate engagement. Examples may include:

- Instructor facilitated discussions, where instructors are active in discussion boards by contributing to the subject matter and sharing perspectives.
- Individualized emails to students or student groups related to subject matter content.
- Scheduled meetings where instructors require students to sign-up to participate in feedback sessions, content reviews, or workshops. This does not include student-initiated events or open-on-campus visits where students have the option to participate.
- Personalized feedback on assignments.

Interactions that do not qualify include:

- Students dropping in unexpectedly to meet with faculty on campus.



- Recording grades (numeric value only) without providing individualized feedback.
- Auto-graded quizzes with no instructor input.
- Publishing modules in Canvas.

Measuring RSI

At Eastwick College, a faculty member has met RSI requirements when all three of these elements are met (this applies to hybrid and online courses):

1. **All (3) RSI characteristics are evident in Canvas throughout the term.** And at least one qualifying RSI interaction is evident per week. Note: Hybrid teaching faculty are also required to illustrate RSI through the Canvas LMS.

and...

2. **Instructors provide timely feedback on student assignments:** Assignments should be **graded no later than two weeks** after student submissions unless under extenuating circumstances.

and...

3. **Instructors provide individualized feedback** that supports student learning, improvement, and academic progress. **This must be evident at multiple points during the course;** isolated or one-time instances of feedback do not, on their own, constitute sufficient evidence of RSI.

Additional Strategies for Incorporating RSI

There are multiple ways to integrate RSI into your online teaching practice. The following recommendations can be adapted to your instructional strategies and are good practices in any class setting.

- **Clarify expectations in your syllabus.** Outline communication frequency, office hours, response times, and feedback policies.
- **Use announcements intentionally.** Go beyond reminders by highlighting key concepts, addressing common questions, or connecting past and upcoming material.
- **Provide timely, detailed feedback.** Written, audio, or video comments should help students understand strengths, areas for improvement, and next steps.
- **Reach out to inactive students.** Monitor student participation and engage with students who are falling behind or disengaging.
- **Actively facilitate discussions.** Pose guiding questions, provide counterpoints, and make connections across student responses.
- **Offer live opportunities for engagement.** Schedule regular office hours, live tutorials/workshops, or live review sessions as part of the course plan.
- **Choose tools that track interactions.** Use platforms that automatically record communication (e.g., Canvas Inbox, discussion boards, gradebook feedback).
- **Collect mid-semester feedback.** Ask students about the effectiveness of your communication and adjust accordingly.

By embedding these practices into online teaching, instructors not only comply with federal guidelines but also strengthen the quality of student learning experiences. RSI ensures that online courses are engaging, academically rigorous, and aligned with the mission of our college.



Additional RSI Resources

Background: Definitions of distance education and correspondence courses. (2021). SUNY Empire State College. [https://www.esc.edu/dlis/design-your-course/regular-and-substantive-interaction/Links to an external site.](https://www.esc.edu/dlis/design-your-course/regular-and-substantive-interaction/Links%20to%20an%20external%20site)

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Negotiated rulemaking for higher education 2018-19. (2020, November 6). U.S. Department of Education. <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/highered/reg/hearulemaking/2018/index.html> [Links to an external site.](#)

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Regular and substantive Interaction: An overview for instructors of online courses at Everett Community College. (n.d.). Everett Community College. [https://www.everettcc.edu/files/programs/elearning/Regular and Substantive Interaction Primer .pdf](https://www.everettcc.edu/files/programs/elearning/Regular%20and%20Substantive%20Interaction%20Primer.pdf) [Links to an external site.](#)

Regular and Substantive Interaction: Background, concerns, and guiding principle. (2018, November 30). <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED593878> [Links to an external site.](#)

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1.4 Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

At Eastwick College, all student Accommodations are determined by the Dean's office. Students who need accommodations, or who already have an Educational Accommodations plan, must meet with the Dean within the first week of their program. Instructors are not permitted to approve or arrange accommodations.

If a student is identified as requiring accommodations, someone from the Online Education Department will assist in meeting the accommodation requirements in your Canvas course.

Canvas Instructure’s Statement on Accessibility

Canvas has been evaluated by Instructure and WebAIM according to WCAG 2.1 standards. The Canvas LMS strives for WCAG 2.1 Level A/AA and Section 508 conformance. Regular testing (both internal and by a third party) is conducted to identify conformance issues, with processes in place for timely remediation of accessibility issues that are identified. Canvas is a complex and broad system. For more information about accessibility standards in Canvas, view [Instructure's Full Accessibility Statement](#) on their website.

Microsoft Immersive Reader

Microsoft Immersive Reader is built into Eastwick’s Canvas courses to support student learning and accessibility. This tool allows students to customize how course content is displayed and read, with features such as text-to-speech, adjustable font size and spacing, translation into multiple languages, and grammar assistance. Immersive Reader helps remove barriers to learning by making course



materials more engaging and easier to understand for all students.

Video: [What is the Immersive Reader?](#)

Canvas Instructor Guide: [How to use Microsoft Immersive Reader](#)

1.5 Academic Integrity for Distance Education Courses

Policy Statement

Academic integrity is the foundation of a fair and credible learning environment. It reflects the honesty, trust, and personal responsibility expected of every student and instructor at Eastwick College. In Distance Education courses, maintaining academic integrity requires thoughtful safeguards during testing and assessment. To support this, Eastwick employs secure tools such as **Respondus** and **Proctorio Lockdown Browsers** to help ensure that all students complete exams under the same standards of honesty and accountability.

Additionally, all examinations must be conducted in-person and on campus, unless an exception has been formally granted by the Academic Leadership Team in accordance with Eastwick Executive Team approvals. Second, exams are required to be delivered using one of the approved Lockdown browsers and in a proctored environment. To ensure academic integrity and compliance with institutional standards, all exam settings in Canvas must be configured as established by the Distance Education Department. These security settings, including IP address restrictions, must not be altered or removed without prior approval from the Campus Dean, the Campus Director, and Executive Team leadership.

Implementation by the Distance Education Department

The Distance Education Department will create and maintain exam templates within all Canvas blueprint courses. Exams will be pre-configured to run through an approved LockDown browser, and the Canvas quiz / test settings will include IP address restrictions to ensure that exams may only be accessed and completed on campus. This process helps safeguard the exam environment and provides consistent standards across all online and hybrid courses. Faculty should not modify or disable these configurations; any necessary changes must follow the formal approval process outlined above.

Lockdown Browsers & the Physical Proctor

While a Lockdown Browser provides important safeguards during online testing, **it does not replace the need for in-person proctoring**. The software restricts a student's ability to navigate away from the exam, open other applications, or access unauthorized materials on their device, but it cannot verify the student's identity, monitor physical surroundings, or ensure testing integrity beyond the screen.

Therefore, physical proctoring remains an essential component of Eastwick College's testing protocols. Faculty and designated proctors are expected to actively monitor the testing environment and confirm completion of each exam session in accordance with the procedures below.

Responsibilities of the Physical Proctor

- **Verify student identity.** Before the exam begins using an approved photo ID if someone other than the faculty is proctoring.
- **Ensure cell phones and all devices are not in the student's possession.** Ensure no unauthorized materials or technologies are near workstations.
- **Monitor students continuously** throughout the exam for use of unauthorized devices, notes,



or collaboration.

- **Verify submission before dismissal.** Each student must show the proctor the Canvas submission confirmation screen before leaving the computer station. This prohibits students from leaving the exam open and finishing it after leaving the exam environment.
- **Maintain a sign-in and sign-out sheet** to confirm attendance and ensure that all students taking the exam are physically present in the assigned testing area. **Campus IP restrictions explained:** Canvas exams include pre-set IP Address restrictions that limit exam access from students at home, but this does not prevent attempts from other campus computers; the sign-in sheet helps maintain accurate location records.
- **Document irregularities.** Note any technical issues, suspected misconduct, or exam interruptions and report them promptly to the Academic Dean. Exam monitoring reports can be pulled for questionable situations.

1.6 Student Attendance Policies

Like in-person instruction, Eastwick faculty are equally REQUIRED to take attendance in the Distance Education environment and report students who either never attended or stopped attending by notifying their Academic Dean. Registrars will identify any student who stops or never attends your Canvas course by notating them as "Drop" status in the User profile in Canvas. These students should not be visible in your Gradebook, but they are visible in your class roster, or "People" menu item as "Drop" or "inactive." All faculty members, including those teaching in distance education formats, are required to record student attendance on a weekly basis in the Diamond Student Information System (SIS).

Federal Financial Aid Regulations (Related to Student Attendance)

Accurate attendance tracking in distance education is required for Title IV federal financial aid eligibility under 34 C.F.R. § 600.2, which distinguishes distance education from correspondence education. For financial aid purposes, a student is considered in attendance only when actively engaged in academically related activities, such as submitting assignments, completing quizzes, or participating in discussions; merely logging into the learning management system or viewing course content does not constitute attendance. Students who fail to engage in required academic activity may be reported as not in attendance, which can impact their eligibility for federal financial aid.

Monitoring Student Attendance

In both hybrid and fully online courses, simply logging into Canvas, viewing content, or clicking through pages does not count as student attendance. To be considered present, students must engage in academically related activities, such as submitting assignments, participating in discussions, or completing quizzes. Failure to submit assigned work for a given week will be recorded as an absence.

Students who do not participate regularly risk being administratively withdrawn or receiving a failing grade, in accordance with institutional policies. Per Eastwick College Attendance Policy and catalogue, any student who does not attend class for two consecutive weeks (in-person or online) will be dropped from the program, and depending on withdrawal dates, may receive a failing grade for the course.

What does attendance mean in a **HYBRID** course?

An academic week for hybrid courses follows the published schedule per the course schedule/syllabus. As a hybrid student, weekly attendance is required for both on-campus meetings and the online portion of the course in Canvas. To be counted present for the week, students must attend class AND complete required Canvas assignments. Depending



on the program and college guidance, in-person classes may be delivered via Zoom. In this case, Zoom participation is mandatory and may count as attendance. Logging into Canvas or viewing content does not count as attendance.

- Class + Canvas work → Present
- Class only → 1 Absence
- Canvas only → 1 Absence
- Neither → 2 Absences

Note: Attendance is reviewed weekly for academic and financial aid compliance.

Absence Limits are as follows:

- No more than 2 weeks missed in class
- No more than 2 weeks missed in Canvas
- 50% or more absences = course failure
- Missing 2 consecutive weeks (in person or online) may result in being dropped, per college policy

Assignments & Deadlines:

- Canvas assignments must be submitted by the posted due date
- Work may be completed anytime during the instructional week
- Late work is not accepted
- Missing assignments receive a zero, unless approved in writing by the instructor

Attendance Grade & Conduct

- Attendance is a % of the final course grade per course syllabus
- Attendance drops % per hour missed per course syllabus
- Late arrivals and early departures count toward absences
- Students may sign in only for themselves

Student Responsibility. Students are responsible for explaining absences, obtaining missed work, and contacting the instructor about approved make-up work.

Bottom Line. Students must Attend weekly • Submit Canvas work weekly • Meet deadlines

What does attendance mean in a fully asynchronous **ONLINE course?**

An online learning course is delivered entirely through Canvas and other approved digital learning technologies. These courses offer students flexibility in accessing instructional materials and completing required activities remotely while maintaining the same academic standards, rigor, and learning outcomes as traditional on-campus courses. Students enrolled in online courses are expected to demonstrate consistent participation, self-discipline, and effective time management. Active engagement in discussions, timely completion of assignments, and regular communication with instructors and classmates are essential components of successful online learning.

Students enrolled in fully online courses are expected to dedicate approximately three hours per week for each credit hour of coursework. For a 5-quarter credit course, this equals



approximately 15 hours per week spent on reading, studying, completing assignments, participating in discussions, and preparing for assessments. Actual time may vary depending on the course requirements and individual learning pace.

An academic week for online courses runs from Monday at 12:00 a.m. EST to Sunday at 11:59 p.m. EST, except for Week 12, which begins on Monday at 12:00 a.m. EST and ends on Thursday at 12:00 p.m. EST.

To meet official weekly attendance requirements, online students must complete a minimum of two academic-related activities or assignments each week as directed by the instructor, who will clearly outline the required weekly course activities, assignments, and due dates in the course syllabus and Canvas site. Academic-related activities may include, but are not limited to, submitting an academic assignment, completing a quiz or exam, or participating in a posted online academic discussion. Simply logging into Canvas without completing an academic-related activity does not constitute official weekly attendance.

Regular and consistent participation is essential to success in online courses. Students are expected to manage their time effectively, adhere to weekly deadlines, and remain actively engaged throughout the term.

How Does this Influence Course Design?

Because institutions are required to track the last date of meaningful student participation, Eastwick Distance Education courses include weekly assignment(s) requiring student participation. Building these opportunities into course design not only supports compliance but also strengthens the overall quality of the online learning experience.

These student policies and others are available to students in the “**Student Support & Policies**” link located in every Canvas course through navigation menu. All faculty should open this document to reference the student policies and support practices.

1.7 Copyright Policy and Fair Use

Copyright and Fair Use Regulations Overview

Eastwick College prohibits the unauthorized copying, distribution, or use of copyrighted materials in any form, including, but not limited to, printed publications, software, videos, music, digital media, and online course content. All faculty, staff, and students are responsible for adhering to this policy and applicable copyright laws.

So, it's important to keep in mind that most works are automatically protected by copyright, regardless of whether a notice is present. Unless you have clear evidence that a work is not protected, you should assume it is copyrighted. This raises an important question: how do you know whether you can legally use a document, image, video, or audio clip in your course?

If you embed media (such as inserting a YouTube video) or link directly to an outside source, copyright law generally does not apply because you are directing students to the original content rather than reproducing it. When you aren't embedding or linking, there are **three main categories** that allow use without seeking permission from the copyright holder: the Public Domain, Creative Commons licensing, and Fair Use.

A. Public Domain

Materials in the public domain are not subject to copyright. These include facts, short phrases (that aren't trademarked slogans), methods, works produced by the U.S. government, and content for



which copyright has expired. Columbia University provides additional details on what qualifies as public domain. For more information on Copyright basics, to include useful checklists, visit the [Columbia University Copyright Site](#).

B. Creative Commons

Some creators choose to license their work under Creative Commons (CC). This allows others to reuse their work under specific terms set by the creator while still retaining certain rights. Creative Commons and other open access licenses give educators more flexibility in using materials legally. A short video overview of Creative Commons licensing is available for those who would like to learn more.

[Creative Commons Kiwi](#) by [Creative Commons Aotearoa New Zealand](#) is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 New Zealand](#) (CC BY) license.

C. Fair Use

One of the most important aspects of copyright for educators is the principle of fair use, outlined in Section 107 of U.S. copyright law. Fair use provides limited rights to use copyrighted works without permission when the purpose supports teaching, research, scholarship, or commentary. Without this protection, activities such as sharing short readings with students, placing materials on reserve in the library, or creating new work that incorporates existing ideas would all be considered violations.

For purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research, is not an infringement of copyright. In determining whether the use made of a work in any particular case is a fair use the factors to be considered shall include—the purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes; the nature of the copyrighted work; the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole; and the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work. (Source: [17 USC Section 107](#))

It's important to note that fair use is not a strict set of rules, it's more of a balancing test. What may qualify as fair use in one situation could be challenged as infringement in another, often depending on interpretation. Still, by understanding the fair use factors and applying them thoughtfully, educators can make responsible choices that support both teaching and legal compliance.

The Four Factors of Fair Use

When deciding if your use of copyrighted material qualifies as fair use, consider these four factors:

- **Purpose of Use**
 - Educational, nonprofit, or transformative uses (such as adding commentary, analysis, or critique) weigh in favor of fair use.
 - Commercial uses or simply copying without changing against fair use.
- **Nature of the Work**
 - Factual or published works are more likely to fall under fair use.
 - Highly creative works (like films, novels, music, or art) receive stronger protection.
- **Amount Used**
 - Using only what is necessary (short excerpts, small portions, or non-central parts of the work) supports fair use.
 - Copying large sections or the “heart” of a work weighs against it.



- **Effect on the Market**

- If your use doesn't harm the original creator's market or replace the need to purchase the work, it leans toward fair use.
- If it competes with or reduces sales of the original, it weighs against fair use.

A good rule of thumb: the more your use is educational, limited, and transformative, the stronger your fair use case will be.

1.8 Course Revisions and Approval Process

Canvas BluePrint Course Integrity and Faculty Use Policy

All Canvas courses at Eastwick College are deployed from a Master “BluePrint” course. Each BluePrint course has been formally reviewed and approved to ensure compliance with federal, state, and accrediting body standards. The BluePrint structure reflects full alignment between course objectives, instructional materials, weekly learning activities, and assessments. This alignment safeguards academic integrity, consistency across campuses, and regulatory compliance in all courses delivered through Canvas.

To preserve this instructional and compliance alignment, faculty may not delete, replace, or materially alter required course content within the Canvas course shell. This includes graded assignments, examinations, assessment instruments, required instructional materials, grading structures, or any component institutionally approved as part of the BluePrint design. Even minor structural modifications may disrupt objective alignment, assessment integrity, and accreditation compliance.

Faculty maintain academic freedom within the parameters of the approved BluePrint structure and are encouraged to enhance the student learning experience in ways that strengthen engagement and mastery. Within these approved boundaries, faculty may:

- Add supplemental resources such as readings, professional articles, videos, or web links that enhance understanding of established course topics.
- Adjust the sequencing or visibility of content within Canvas to align with instructional strategy and teaching flow.
- Post announcements, discussion prompts, or reflections that connect course content to current events, industry practice, or professional standards.
- Provide individualized feedback, enrichment activities, and study guidance that promote student engagement and achievement.
- Offer optional review sessions, live meetings, or supplemental instructional opportunities aligned with course objectives.

Curriculum is subject to continuous institutional review and improvement. Any proposed structural or curricular revision to a BluePrint course, including changes to required assignments, learning objectives, grading methodology, assessment design, or core instructional materials, must be submitted to the Program Director and Campus Dean for formal review and written approval prior to implementation. No structural changes may be implemented without documented authorization.

This policy ensures institutional consistency, academic integrity, regulatory compliance, and meaningful faculty engagement in the delivery of high-quality instruction.

1.9 FERPA and Student Privacy in Online Settings

FERPA The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records and gives students certain rights regarding their personal



academic information. At Eastwick College, we are committed to protecting the privacy of all students through the strict adherence to the rules and regulations of FERPA. This commitment applies to all students enrolled in any course regardless of the mode of instruction (fully online, hybrid, or fully in-person). Eastwick College personnel are required to uphold these policies and follow these procedures to protect student privacy in distance education. Additional FERPA policies are found in the online College Catalogue.

Section II. Faculty Roles and Responsibilities for Instructional Delivery

2.1 Communication with Administration

Timely and professional communication with administration is a mandatory component of online and hybrid instruction at Eastwick College. Because distance education requires coordination across Academic Leadership, the Registrar, Financial Aid, Compliance, and the Online Education Department, faculty responsiveness directly affects institutional operations, regulatory compliance, and student support. All faculty teaching online or hybrid courses are required to monitor their official Eastwick College email account during scheduled work periods and respond to administrative communication within one (1) business day while scheduled to work. Faculty must prioritize communications related to attendance verification, academic integrity, accreditation requirements, compliance reporting, student conduct matters, and institutional deadlines. Responsiveness during scheduled work periods is a required professional obligation and does not create an expectation of availability outside scheduled work periods.

2.2 Accountability

Faculty assigned to hybrid or online instruction are required to maintain the same level of accessibility, accountability, and professional engagement as if physically present on campus. Remote instruction is a work location and does not reduce professional responsibilities. Faculty must remain accessible during scheduled instructional and work periods, maintain timely communication with Program Directors, Academic Deans, and the Online Education Department, and fulfill all grading, attendance reporting, student engagement, and compliance obligations within established timelines.

Certifying a timesheet constitutes a formal attestation that scheduled work hours were actively performed. Faculty who certifies hours worked while failing to be accessible, responsive, or engaged in assigned instructional or administrative duties are in direct violation of institutional policy. Misrepresentation or falsification of hours worked is considered serious misconduct and may result in immediate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Failure to remain responsive during scheduled work periods may result in immediate review of the teaching assignment, revocation of remote or online teaching privileges, reassignment of modality, non-renewal of adjunct appointment, or termination. Hybrid and online teaching assignments are granted solely at the discretion of the institution and may be modified or revoked at any time based on performance, operational needs, or compliance requirements.

Section III. Faculty Roles & Responsibilities

Effective instruction in hybrid and online learning environments requires consistent, documented weekly engagement. Faculty teaching in Distance Education modalities are responsible for maintaining active instructional presence, fostering meaningful student interaction, and adhering to institutional, federal, state, and accrediting body requirements governing Distance Education.



3.1 Weekly Requirements for Hybrid and Online Course Delivery

All faculty teaching hybrid or fully online courses are required to follow the Distance Education Weekly Course Delivery Checklist (Appendix A). This checklist establishes the minimum instructional standards that must be completed each week to ensure consistency, regulatory compliance, and high-quality instruction across all Eastwick College Distance Education offerings.

The Weekly Course Delivery Checklist outlines faculty responsibilities for Weeks 1 through 12 and includes required activities designed to:

- Maintain regular and substantive interaction between faculty and students
- Support student engagement and academic progress
- Ensure attendance verification and academic participation documentation
- Uphold federal and accreditation compliance standards
- Promote consistent instructional quality across campuses and modalities

The expectations identified in the checklist represent minimum instructional requirements. Faculty may exceed these standards but may not fall below them.

The Distance Education Weekly Course Delivery Checklist is available for download in the [Eastwick Online Education Resources Hub](#) in Canvas. Faculty are responsible for reviewing the checklist prior to the start of each term and incorporating these requirements into their weekly teaching practice throughout the course. This structured approach ensures instructional consistency, documented engagement, and compliance with applicable Distance Education regulations.

3.2 Instructor Time-on-Task Expectations

The centrality of the student experience, as emphasized by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), underscores that instruction should intentionally support student learning, engagement, and success. In online courses, this expectation is demonstrated through an instructor's active and visible presence, including consistent communication, timely and substantive feedback, and purposeful engagement throughout the course.

Course facilitation includes the instructional activities through which faculty guide learning, support achievement of course objectives, monitor academic progress, and foster meaningful interaction in both hybrid and fully online modalities.

In hybrid courses, facilitation occurs during scheduled in-person meetings and through Canvas across the instructional week. Faculty engagement extends beyond classroom meetings and includes ongoing communication, evaluation of student work, and monitoring of participation and performance.

In fully online courses, Canvas serves as the primary instructional environment. Faculty engagement is expected to be comparable in instructional scope and academic intent to on-ground teaching, though distributed differently across tasks such as communication, assessment, and feedback.

National research provides context for how faculty allocate time across course facilitation activities. The Time for Class – 2025 report (Shaw et al., 2025) presents aggregated data on faculty workload patterns across instructional responsibilities in higher education. Drawing from this research, Eastwick College has identified facilitation activities most aligned with its online instructional model, including communication with students, grading and feedback, analysis of student performance data, and delivery of instructional guidance.

When considering these selected instructional tasks, the estimated time commitment for a fully online course is approximately 8–9 hours per week per course. Other research, including a 2021 national study, reflects slightly lower averages (approximately 7 hours per week), reinforcing that



faculty time-on-task varies based on course design, enrollment, discipline, and instructional approach.

Fully Online Courses – Estimated Weekly Course Facilitation Time

Fully Online Courses – Course Facilitation Time per Week	
Meeting / Communicating with Students	2.4 hours
Analyzing Student Performance Data	1.9 hours
Grading Student Work	4.3 hours
Total Weekly Instructional Engagement	8.6 hours
Source: Shaw, C., Dorn, H., Martin, S., Hay, L., Janson, N., & Bryant, G. (2025, June). Time for Class - 2025. Tyton Partners	

These estimates are provided for contextual guidance and benchmarking purposes only. They do not establish fixed workload thresholds. Instructional effectiveness in online education is demonstrated through the quality, consistency, and impact of faculty engagement on student learning, rather than adherence to a specific hourly requirement. Bottom of Form

3.3 Communication and Response Time Expectations

Consistent and timely communication is essential to supporting student success in the online environment. Faculty are expected to check both their Canvas Inbox and Eastwick College email account regularly for student messages and course-related communication. During the regular academic week, instructors should make every effort to respond to student emails or messages within a reasonable period, typically this is within 48 hours). This expectation helps maintain engagement, reduces student anxiety, and promotes a supportive learning experience. Faculty should also post a brief Communication Policy in their Canvas course that outlines expected response times, preferred methods of contact, and when students can anticipate updates, announcements, or grading feedback. Any communication received outside normal business hours can wait until the next academic day.

3.4 Providing Timely Feedback and Grading

At Eastwick College, we believe that timely, meaningful feedback is one of the most important ways to keep students engaged and learning, especially in an online environment. Instructors are expected to provide individualized feedback throughout the term that helps students understand their progress, strengthen their skills, and stay motivated.

To support consistency and maintain active instructional engagement, grades should be entered in Canvas within two weeks of student assignment submission, allowing students the opportunity to stay on track with course expectations. In cases where grading may take longer due to workload or extenuating circumstances, instructors should communicate reasonable expectations to students in a timely manner.

Faculty are encouraged to use Canvas tools, such as SpeedGrader comments, in-line assignment feedback, and rubrics, to provide individualized feedback and make their instructional presence visible throughout the course.



3.5 Using Lockdown Browsers (Respondus & Proctorio)

Lockdown Browser Overview. A lockdown browser is a specialized web browser used to secure online testing environments. It restricts a student's ability to access external resources or applications during an exam and helps maintain assessment integrity.

When a lockdown browser is enabled for an exam, students are prevented from opening new tabs, accessing other websites or applications, printing, copying and pasting, or navigating away from the exam window until the test is submitted.

Key Features of a Lockdown Browser

- Disables standard browser navigation functions (e.g., back, forward, refresh, search)
- Blocks access to external websites and applications (e.g., Google, messaging apps)
- Disables clipboard functions (copy, paste, cut)
- Blocks downloads, extensions, and unauthorized applications
- Prevents screen captures and printing
- Restricts right-click functionality
- Prevents use of multiple monitors or virtual machines

At Eastwick College, two tools are used to support secure online testing: Respondus LockDown Browser and Proctorio.

User instructions for students are located in the “**Student Support & Policies**” link located in every Canvas course through navigation menu. All faculty should be familiar with this document and the download and troubleshooting procedures for using these Lockdown browser tools.

Respondus LockDown Browser

Respondus LockDown Browser is a custom browser that secures exams deployed directly through Canvas. When students use LockDown Browser to access a quiz, they cannot print, copy, access other websites, open additional applications, or exit the quiz until it is submitted for grading. Exams configured for Respondus cannot be accessed using a standard web browser.

Overview of Respondus Features

- **Modified Toolbar** – Includes only Forward, Back, Refresh, and Stop functions.
- **Assessment Mode** – Exams display in full screen and cannot be minimized, resized, or exited until submission.
- **Disabled Controls** – Printing, keystroke combinations, screen capture, function keys, and right-click menus are disabled.
- **Secure Linking** – Links to other approved web servers do not compromise the secure testing environment.
- **Blocked Applications** – The system tray, Start button (Windows), and menu bars are restricted. Numerous screen capture, messaging, screen-sharing, and monitoring applications are blocked.

For general guidance, faculty may refer to the [Respondus Quick Start User Guides](#).

Proctorio (BIO Courses Only)

BIO course exams are deployed through McGraw Hill's Connect®, not Canvas. Because Respondus integrates only with Canvas-based exams, BIO faculty must use Proctorio within Connect® to enable browser-locking functionality.



Proctorio is McGraw Hill Connect's assessment integrity tool that enables instructors to apply browser restrictions to designated assessments. When enabled, it restricts a student's ability to navigate away from the exam, access other applications, copy or paste content, take screenshots, or open additional browser tabs.

At Eastwick College, BIO faculty will enable only the "Browser Locking" restrictions included in the Base package. Additional features such as remote proctoring, identity verification, and tamper-proofing, are part of an upgraded package that incurs additional costs and are not required.

For general information about Proctorio and McGraw Hill Connect®, faculty may visit: McGraw Hill Connect®: <https://www.mheducation.com/highered/connect.html> and Proctorio: <https://proctorio.com>

For step-by-step setup instructions specific to Eastwick College courses, faculty should visit the the [Eastwick Online Education Resources Hub](#) in Canvas.

Section IV. Faculty Evaluation and Support

4.1 Eastwick Canvas Support

When teaching in Canvas, faculty are part of the Eastwick Distance Education community and are supported by the Online Education Department. This support is intended to assist with technical or platform-related questions so faculty can focus on delivering high-quality instruction.

Faculty may contact the Eastwick Canvas Support Team for assistance with Canvas tools, course functionality, or troubleshooting. Because faculty report to their Program Director and Campus Dean, any request for Canvas support should include their Program Director and Campus Dean in the communication to ensure appropriate academic oversight and coordination.

- Hours of Operation: Support is available during regular business hours, with responses typically provided the same business day.
- Email Support: Onlineed@eastwick.edu or Canvas@eastwick.edu

4.2 The Eastwick Teaching Online Course (ETOC)

The Eastwick Teaching Online Course (ETOC) 2.0 is the College's required certification for all faculty assigned to teach fully online or hybrid courses. Developed by the Distance Education Department, this certification establishes a consistent foundation for high-quality distance education instruction and prepares faculty to effectively manage Canvas courses, implement sound online teaching practices, and meet institutional expectations for online instruction. The course is designed to be completed within approximately 12 hours over a four-week period.

Completion of ETOC 2.0 is required prior to, or concurrent with, an online or hybrid teaching assignment. The course is evaluated on a pass/fail basis. Through applied, Canvas-based activities, ETOC addresses core instructional competencies, including online pedagogy, instructor presence, student communication and feedback, distance education policies, accessibility, and integrated instructional technologies.

For questions about this course, please contact the Program Director of Online Education, Ms. Stefania Stolaj at sstloj@eastwick.edu.

4.3 Faculty Evaluation and Canvas Course Reviews

Each term, online courses undergo a structured review process with multiple checkpoints to ensure faculty meet Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) expectations and maintain high-quality



instruction. Reviews are conducted by the Distance Education Department, which evaluates instructor engagement, feedback practices, student participation, and overall course activity.

Canvas Engagement Analytics reports are shared with Academic Deans, Program Directors, and Campus Directors to promote transparency, collaboration, and instructional support. These evaluations are formative in nature and are intended to encourage professional growth and continuous improvement in online teaching. If performance trends or concerns persist across multiple terms, Academic Leadership may implement a more formal review process to ensure consistency, accountability, and student success. The review process evaluates the following areas:

A. Instructor Engagement

- **Instructor Login Activity.** Instructors are expected to log into Canvas regularly (at minimum once per week) to demonstrate active engagement and ensure accurate weekly attendance reporting.
- **Module Publication.** Course modules should be published in alignment with the approved course schedule and weekly syllabus flow. Publishing all modules at once to allow unrestricted student pacing is not permitted.
- **Timely Grading.** Assignments must be graded within two weeks of submission to ensure meaningful and timely feedback.
- **Accountability for Non-Participatory Students.** Entering a zero (0) for missing assignments maintains accurate grade calculations and provides students with clear indicators of incomplete work.
- **Exam Security Settings.** For courses using Respondus or Canvas IP restrictions, faculty may not modify or remove these settings without prior written approval from the Distance Education Department, Program Director, and Academic Dean.
- **Regular and Substantive Interaction.** Canvas activity must demonstrate that faculty initiate meaningful academic engagement through direct communication, individualized feedback, or facilitated discussions connected to course concepts.

B. Student Engagement Monitoring

In addition to reviewing instructor engagement, the Distance Education review process includes monitoring student participation and academic activity. This monitoring involves coordination between faculty and the Office of the Registrar to ensure accurate attendance reporting, documentation, and appropriate student follow-up.

- **Attendance Verification.** Faculty are responsible for documenting academic activity and identifying students who fail to meet minimum participation standards, including no documented academic activity within a 14-day period. These students must be reported in accordance with institutional procedures so that the Registrar can process required attendance actions and notifications.
- **Assignment Activity Monitoring.** Faculty monitor repeated missed assessments, unsubmitted coursework, or consistently low performance indicators to identify students who may require academic outreach. When appropriate, concerns should be escalated through established academic support channels.

This coordinated process promotes instructional consistency, accurate academic reporting, and proactive support of student success in the online learning environment.



Section V. Technology & Other Resources

5.1 Minimum Technical Requirements for Canvas

To ensure full functionality and a smooth online learning experience, all students and faculty must verify that their computer and internet setup meet Canvas minimum technical requirements. This includes using supported browsers, maintaining updated operating systems, and securing reliable internet access. For the most current list of supported technologies and system configurations, please visit the official Canvas Browser and Computer Requirements page:

<https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Canvas-Basics-Guide/What-are-the-browser-and-computer-requirements-for-Canvas/ta-p/66>

Canvas Teacher App

The Canvas Teacher App is a mobile extension of the Canvas Learning Management System designed specifically for instructors. It enables faculty to manage courses and interact with students from a smartphone or tablet. Through the app, faculty can grade assignments, provide feedback, send and respond to messages, post announcements, and moderate discussions. The Canvas Teacher App is available for free download through the Apple App Store and Google Play Store, and it syncs automatically with the instructor's Canvas account.

For additional information, visit: <https://www.instructure.com/canvas/mobile/teacher>

5.2 The Eastwick Online Education Resources Hub

In addition to the policies and guidance outlined in this handbook, Eastwick College provides faculty with access to the [Eastwick Online Education Resources Hub](#) in Canvas, a central space designed to support teaching and learning in the digital environment. The Hub includes a wide range of tools, tutorials, and templates to help instructors enhance their courses, streamline communication, and stay current with best practices in online instruction. You are encouraged to explore the Hub regularly and take advantage of the resources available to strengthen both their teaching and their students' learning experience. Topics include, but are not limited to:

- Tutorials for implementing accessibility-enabled assignments for students with approved accommodations
- Advanced Canvas features
- Respondus Lockdown browser video tutorials
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) – Practical strategies for the classroom
- RSI examples
- Tutorials for Pairing Canvas courses with Publisher Apps (e.g., Cengage MindTap, WebAssign, and Owl; and McGraw Hill Connect)

5.3 Canvas Resources and Training

Canvas Guides

The Canvas Guides are a valuable resource for learning Canvas and exploring its features and tools to support student-centered learning experiences. The Instructure Resource Hub provides quick start guides, step-by-step tutorials, and video demonstrations maintained by Canvas. These materials offer clear instructions, best practices, and updates on Canvas functionality.

The Resource Hub includes tutorials covering course setup, content organization, grading, assessments, communication tools, analytics, and advanced integrations.



Canvas Guides and Resources are available at: <https://community.canvaslms.com>

Eastwick Tutorials

In addition to the official Canvas Guides, the Online Education Department has developed internal video tutorials addressing both foundational and advanced Canvas features. These tutorials provide guidance specific to Eastwick College course design, instructional expectations, and institutional practices. Faculty may access these tutorials through the [Eastwick Online Education Resources Hub](#) in Canvas.

Canvas Training

To help every instructor feel confident teaching online, Eastwick College provides training and support designed to strengthen digital skills and enhance course delivery. Certain training programs are required based on teaching assignment and modality, while additional training opportunities are offered to support the effective implementation of Canvas features and instructional technologies.

Section V. Online Education Department – Support

Faculty teaching in online or hybrid modalities are encouraged to utilize the support services provided by the Eastwick Online Education Department. The department offers instructional, technical, and compliance-related guidance to ensure high-quality course delivery and alignment with institutional expectations. Support services include consultation and assistance in the following areas:

- Training on Canvas, instructional technology, and best practices for online and hybrid instruction
- Technical support for Canvas tools, integrations, and course troubleshooting
- Course design guidance, module organization, and BluePrint course structure
- Support with Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) expectations
- Strategies to strengthen student engagement and participation
- Development of accessible course content and use of accessibility tools
- Exam setup, including LockDown Browser and IP restriction settings
- Assessment design, grading practices, and effective feedback strategies
- Alignment of course activities with learning outcomes and accreditation standards
- Ongoing professional development and individualized instructional consultations

The Online Education Department reports to the Vice President of Operations and works collaboratively with Information Technology, Academic Leadership (including Program Directors and Academic Deans), and the Office of the Registrar to ensure coordinated support for faculty, accurate course implementation, proper attendance reporting, and alignment with institutional standards.

Faculty may contact the Online Education Department at OnlineEd@eastwick.edu for technical assistance.



Section VI Appendices

6.1.1

Distance Ed Faculty Course Delivery Checklist Hybrid & Fully Online

Before Day 1

- Complete the required information on the Canvas Home Page. Do NOT create a new Home Page.
- Attach your syllabus in the Home Page as a file attachment, not copy & paste, to allow students to download.
- Adjust assignment due dates as needed.
- Post a Welcome Announcement to introduce yourself and the course.
- Publish Your Course (from the "settings" menu item).
- Click the "LockDown Browser" Navigation Menu button to activate Respondus for exams.
- If using a Publisher App (i.e., WebAssign, Connect, MindTap, Owl), pair the App with Canvas per instructions in the "Instructor Only" Module in Canvas.

Weeks 1-2

- By the end of Week 1 – engage with students who have not logged into Canvas by the end of Week 1.
- Have students complete the "Syllabus Attestation" and "Course Policy Attestation" assignments in "Start Here."
- By the end of Week 2 – report any students to the Academic Dean and Registrar who have not logged into Canvas or participated in any required activities in Canvas.

All Weeks 1-12

- Log into Canvas twice per week at a minimum to engage with students.
- Publish weekly modules in a timely manner. NEVER publish the entire course at once.
- Do NOT delete assignments copied into your course from the Master BluePrint.
- If you add an assignment, ensure the Canvas Gradebook and weighted Grades remain intact. See the Eastwick Online Education Resources Hub for a tutorial).
- Before your first Respondus exam, communicate with students to take the "Respondus Practice Quiz" in the "Start Here" Module prior to test day. It's better to find learn of issues prior to exam day.
- Provide at least one RSI qualifying Interaction per week. (See RSI examples in the Eastwick Online Education Resources Hub in Canvas).
- Monitor missed assignments. Enter a zero in the Canvas Gradebook for students who have not submitted an assignment in accordance with due dates and late assignment policies.
- Maintain consistent communication with students to set clear expectations and hold them accountable for staying engaged.
- Respond to Questions in the "Ask Your Professor" Discussion forum in a timely manner. A good practice is within 24-48 hours during the work week.
- Check your Canvas Inbox multiple times each week for student emails. Respond in a timely manner.
- Grade Assignments in a timely manner. This should be done within two weeks of student submission unless there is an extenuating circumstance.

Weeks 12 Close-Out

- Schedule any make-up exams in accordance with campus policies.
- Comply with timely end-of-term grade submissions.



6.2 Eastwick AI Policy



Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy

This policy establishes uniform standards for the responsible use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) across all Eastwick College programs, courses, and instructional formats. It ensures academic integrity, protects student learning outcomes, maintains compliance with clinical, technical, and regulatory requirements, and upholds the College's commitment to valid and fair assessment of student work.

Academic Integrity – Generative AI Use

For Students:

Generative AI tools may be used to support learning, including brainstorming, outlining, proofreading, or clarifying course material. AI may not replace student effort, independent thinking, or judgment, and all submitted work must reflect the student's own learning. Any permitted AI use must be disclosed and cited.

Example citation: OpenAI ChatGPT. (2026). Response generated to assist with outlining an essay on supply chain management [Large language model]. Retrieved January 11, 2026, from <https://chat.openai.com/>

For Faculty and Staff:

Faculty and staff are responsible for ensuring that AI use supports learning without replacing student effort, thinking, or judgment. AI may assist with grading workflows, such as summarizing discussion posts or checking technical syntax, but may not solely determine grades. Faculty must ensure that students' work reflects independent learning and that any permitted AI use is properly disclosed and cited. AI detection tools may be used as indicators but are not definitive proof of misconduct, and all academic integrity determinations must be based on faculty review and evaluation of student work.

Protection of Confidential and Sensitive Information

Students, faculty, and staff must not upload or share confidential, proprietary, or protected information when using AI tools. This includes, but is not limited to, Patient Health Information (PHI) protected under HIPAA, student Personally Identifiable Information (PII) protected under FERPA, and proprietary Eastwick College data. Any AI-assisted work must ensure that sensitive information is handled in accordance with institutional, legal, and regulatory requirements. Unauthorized disclosure of protected information may result in disciplinary action in accordance with College policies.

Roles and Responsibilities

All students, faculty, and staff are expected to adhere to this policy. Students are responsible for using AI tools appropriately and maintaining academic integrity. Faculty and staff are responsible for guiding AI use in learning and assessment, ensuring proper disclosure and citation, and maintaining the integrity of student work.

Issued By:

Bhavna Tailor, Executive Vice President of Operations

Joseph Neyman, Corporate Director of IT

Effective Date: January 1, 2026