

# INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

## General Information

The academic program at Benedictine College puts special demands on the members of the faculty. Its implementation requires instructors to possess an understanding of the values of a liberal arts education and a devotion to that ideal. It presupposes a mastery of one's own academic discipline with appreciation of its relationship to other areas of learning and to higher wisdom. Above all, the program requires careful and expert teaching.

The College policy is to leave classroom methods largely to department and individual ingenuity; however, the following are principles of instructional practice that all faculty should observe. Faculty members at Benedictine College are expected to:

1. Regularly examine their teaching techniques and professional attitude and to seek ways of improving and developing both.
2. Each semester to file a syllabus for each course taught with the Office of the Provost and their department chair.
3. Demand a reasonable number of written assignments from students in every course.
4. Utilize the appropriate library resources and technology in their area and see that students do the same.
5. Give more than one examination in a course.
6. Base the student's grade in a course on more than one measure of achievement.
7. Help students to see the interrelationship of knowledge and to develop a respect for the various ways of achieving it.
8. Grade all assignments and examinations carefully and return them promptly.
9. Use some form of student evaluation of their teaching. Non-tenured faculty must be evaluated each semester using the forms provided by the Provost's office. Tenured faculty are required to use this form at least one semester of each year. Faculty members are expected to use information gained from the evaluation forms to improve their teaching skills.
10. Maintain professional dignity in speech, dress, and manner of dealing with students.
11. Comply with College regulations and policies.
12. Exhibit a professional respect for faculty colleagues, students, and administrators.
13. Show sensitivity for the students' dignity as persons and look for ways to help them grow in self-respect and self-confidence.
14. Publicize, post on faculty member's office door, and adhere to office hours as required.

## Examinations

A program of examinations is essential to every form of educational procedure. Final examinations are listed on the academic calendar for the final week of each semester and must be given at the assigned times.

A student has the right to see any test, quiz, examination, or other paper that he or she presents in connection with the work of a course and to see the faculty member's evaluation of the paper. Because students' papers, evaluated by the instructor, have significant teaching value, they should be returned to the student as soon as possible. Although the student has the right to review all papers evaluated by the faculty

member and to discuss its evaluation in a private conference, the faculty member may retain possession of such papers. An obvious exception is presented by nationally standardized tests, the contents of which are strictly confidential. While final examinations are included within the intent of this resolution, it will be understood that an instructor cannot ordinarily discuss the final examination with any student until he or she has evaluated all his or her final examination papers and completed other procedures incident to the end of the semester.

The last date during the semester to give an exam (not including the final exam) is the last Friday of classes of the semester. The last date to have a major project or paper due during the semester is the last day of classes before Study Day.

## Information to be Included on Every Course Syllabus

Each faculty member is expected to give at least the following information to each of his or her classes on the first class meeting day of each semester in the course syllabus:

1. a. the instructor's name (first and last),  
b. the course number and section,  
c. official name of the course,  
d. official course description as given in the current College Catalog,  
e. semester,  
f. office location, and  
g. office hours.
2. The general education requirements this course satisfies (if appropriate).
3. The student learning goals and learning objectives, including (if appropriate) the specific general education learning goal(s) of each of the Core, Foundations, and/or Skills & Perspectives that are met by the course.
4. The teaching method(s) to be used (lecture, lecture-discussion, dialogue, lecture-small group discussion, student centered, mixed, etc.).
5. Attendance requirement. (See the most recent edition of the Benedictine College Catalog.) Be specific and not just say, "See the College Catalog."
6. The basic text or texts and other course materials that will be used.
7. The percentage basis on which grades will be determined including any requirement of oral or written work (oral reports, book reviews, homework assignments, term paper topics, etc.) and the number of examinations during the semester (including the *required final examination*). Note that instructors are to give more than one exam.
8. The following statement: *Benedictine College complies with federal law requiring reasonable accommodations for individuals with documented disabilities that may affect their performance in a class or otherwise affect the individual's ability to enjoy the programs and services offered by the College. If a student requests an accommodation from a faculty member, the faculty member should direct the student to contact the Director of Disability Services at 913-360-7517.*
9. Outline of the material to be covered in the course (day-by-day or, at minimum, week-by-week). This course outline needs to be specific enough to verify that credit hour compliance is met. Refer to your department's Credit Hour Compliance document when completing your syllabus. Note that this is available online.

Every semester each class syllabus must be submitted digitally as either a .doc, .docx, or a .pdf file to both your department chair and to the

Faculty Senior Administrative Assistant by no later than the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the semester (or 2nd Quarter for second quarter classes). The file name is as follows: your file with the subject-number and your last name as follows: **CSCI-1000 Ravenberg**. Please do not include a section or any titles. If you teach multiple sections of the same course, only one syllabus needs to be submitted.

Syllabi will be randomly reviewed each semester to ensure compliance with the department's Credit Hour Verification policy.

## Grading

For the grading system to employ see the proper section of the Course Catalog.

- Undergraduate courses (see "Grading for Undergraduates")
- Graduate courses (see "Grading")

At the end of the first four weeks of a semester, early warning Progress Reports are to be issued in Navigate. These are particularly important for freshmen who seem unlikely to pass the course satisfactorily without some notable improvement. Comments on Progress Report go to the student, advisor, and, if applicable, to the coach. It is helpful to issue Progress Reports to all students who are struggling in the class even if they are not a freshmen and for those who have excessive absences. There are guides that explain how to create Progress Reports and to use Navigate at <https://www.benedictine.edu/resources/navigate/faculty-staff> (see later for more information, too). These are not used for graduate students.

Midterm grades are to be posted on RavenZone Self-Service for all undergraduate students. All final grades are posted on RavenZone Self-Service at the end of each semester and at the end of each summer term. The final grade is the only grade recorded on the student's permanent transcript of credits.

## Semester Grades (Final)

**ALL Final Semester Grades MUST BE RECORDED ON TIME BY THE DEADLINE SET BY THE REGISTRAR.** It is important that the time schedule is observed in order that students can be notified of their academic standing before they return for the next term, take summer classes, and, if appropriate, to post degrees for students graduating in May.

Final grades may be submitted online in one of two ways:

- Through Canvas (see guidelines, as appropriate)
- Through RavenZone > Student Self-Service.

Once the semester grades have been processed, an instructor may not change a grade. She or he must use a grade change form (available on Canvas > Faculty Forum > Academic Forms). This form must be signed by the instructor, department chair, and the Senior Vice Provost authorizing the change.

## Summer Courses

Reviewers from accrediting agencies like to review syllabi from courses that are not standard, such as summer courses, courses that are study abroad, more than four credit hour courses, etc. For this reason, it is particularly important that the following guidelines are followed when creating the syllabus for a summer or "non-standard" class.

1. The syllabus must be submitted to the Faculty's Senior Administrative Assistant at the beginning of the course.

2. The course must meet the credit hour compliance requirements as set up by the department. It must be obvious that this is fulfilled by the course schedule as given in the syllabus.
3. The course must meet the same student learning goals as the course does when it is offered during the fall or spring term.
4. It is recommended that the course have the same number of exams as during the traditional semester (but not necessarily the same number of quizzes or assignments).
5. These requirements are the same for courses taught in person, online, as part of a trip, or as a study-abroad program.

## Navigate Alerts and Cases

The Navigate system enables faculty to issue alerts in a timely manner, so that interventions can be made to help students get back on track. Additionally, outstanding student achievement can be noted to provide students feedback when they are performing exceptionally well. The chart below indicates how and when alerts should be issued, and what follow up actions you can expect.

### Which Alert Reason(s) Should I Choose?

**Reason or Concern:** Student has missed 3 classes at least 2 being "unexcused."\*\* OR student has nearly maxed out absences for the semester and will be dropped with one more absence.

**Alert to Submit:** Attendance Concerns

**Who receives this alert:** *Director of Student Success Center*, Academic advisor, coach, athletic director, Accessibility Services Director, residence hall director, student

**Outcome:** Case is opened. Triggers communication plan. Outcome will be noted in case file. Email is sent to the student.

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**Reason or Concern:** Student is not submitting assignments, is doing poorly on assignments, quizzes, exams; is not attentive during class

**Alert to Submit:** Academic Performance Concerns

**Who receives this alert:** Academic advisor, coach, athletic director, Disability Services Director, student

**Outcome:** Student will receive email stating the concern and offering appropriate campus resources; recommended that advisor and coach follow up.

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**Reason or Concern:** In faculty member's opinion, the student could benefit from tutoring or assistance at the writing center

**Alert to Submit:** Suggested Academic Support

**Who receives this alert:** Student, coach, athletic, director, academic advisor

**Outcome:** Student will receive email reminding him/her of the resources available through the Student Success Center and the Writing Center. Faculty member may want to follow up.

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**Reason or Concern:** A student did very well on an exam or paper, has raised his/her grade since some reporting period, or done something worth noting.

**Alert to Submit:** Outstanding Performance in Class

**Who receives this alert:** Student, academic advisor, coach

**Outcome:** Student receives an email congratulating him/her for his/her outstanding work in this specific class. Advisors are notified so they can congratulate student next time they see student.

**Reason or Concern:** Student mentions that finances are a concern

**Alert to Submit:** Referral to Financial Aid

**Who receives this alert:** Financial Aid Office

**Outcome: Case is opened.** Financial Aid Office will follow up with student. No response expected due to confidentiality. Office closes case after follow-up.

**Reason or Concern:** Student reports roommate, dorm life, family concerns, mental health issues, etc. (all but Title IX concerns: Title IX concerns should be reported directly to the Title IX Coordinator)

**Alert to Submit:** Non-academic or Personal Concerns

**Who receives this alert:** Student Success Center

**Outcome:** Case is opened. This is routed through Student Success Center Office to the appropriate office. Need to include enough detail to indicate what the observed problem is so it can be sent to the appropriate follow-up staff. Student Success Center closes after follow-up.

*\*The list of recipients of Alerts indicates all the potential recipients. Each student's situation will vary, so not all reports will go to all offices listed—e.g., coaches will receive Alerts only for their student-athletes, students who do not receive accommodations will not be reported to the Accessibility Services Office, residence hall staff only receive Alerts for students who live in their halls, etc.*

*\*\*The College does not differentiate between "excused" and "unexcused" absences. These Alerts are intended for a situation in which there are no clear established or explained reasons for the absences. (e.g., No Alert is needed if the absence is for an extended absence due to documented medical issue, etc.)*

## The Incomplete Grade

Instructors may request that a student be assigned an "I" (Incomplete) grade at the end of the semester **only if the student's record in a given course is otherwise satisfactory but for some reason, satisfactory to the instructor, is unable to complete the work of the course on time.** This request needs to happen on or before Study Day (or the date set) except for extenuating circumstances, such as a serious illness, death in the family, etc. If the instructor supports this request, then the instructor is responsible for obtaining a contract form from Canvas > Faculty Forum > Academic Forms. The "I" grade must be removed by the end of **the following semester (the last day of final exams)**. An "I" grade for a class that

has not been completed and recorded will be converted to an "F" on the day after final exams of the following semester.

Students receiving an Incomplete in a summer class must complete the missing work by the last day of final exams of the fall semester or the grade will roll to an "F" the day after final exams are completed.

Note that only the Registrar's Office is able to enter a grade of "I" in Colleague and is the only one who can change the final grade from the "I" grade. Faculty need to submit the form available on Faculty Forum > Academic Forms > "Incomplete Grade Submittal Form" to have the Registrar change the grade from an "I" to the proper grade. Out of courtesy, the instructor should notify the student when the final grade has been sent to the Registrar.

## Class Rosters

Official class rosters are available on RavenZone (not Canvas). The final class lists are the official records of student registration in the class. No further *adds* may be made after the 6<sup>th</sup> class day of the semester without permission of the Senior Vice Provost.

If a student does not appear on the class roster, please make inquire at the Office of Academic Records and Registration. If a student has never attended a class after a reasonable amount of time, s/he will be dropped from the roster after the instructor notifies the Registrar of this situation. It is critical that students who never attend class are dropped from the roster in a timely fashion. Failure to drop a student from class who has never attended a class may have serious ramifications for financial aid and, if appropriate, athletic eligibility. If there are any questions regarding your class roster, please contact the Registrar.

## Changes in Enrollment

Students (except for first-semester freshmen) may register themselves and make changes to their schedule on RavenZone up until midnight on the third day of classes. Advisors may also make these same changes for their advisees. Note that instructors do not have the capability to add students to their classes via RavenZone.

After the first Friday of the semester, students may drop classes prior to the add deadline (end of the sixth day of the semester for full-semester classes or end of the fourth day of the appropriate quarter for quarter classes) WITHOUT the instructor signature on the online Drop form HOWEVER, an advisor's signature is still required to drop classes.

If a student attends a section of a class different from the one for which he or she is registered, the instructor must require that the student go through the proper Add and Drop procedure to change classes. If an instructor initiates a change for a student to move into another section, the student must still follow the drop/add procedure. These changes must be done within the first six class days!

For withdrawals made through the first 26 days of class, the course does not appear on the transcript except for students who have withdrawn completely from Benedictine College. Those students who withdraw from the College will have all W's on their transcript. This serves as a record of their attendance at the College. From the 27<sup>th</sup> through the 54<sup>th</sup> day of class, *a student's name is not deleted from the roster* and the student is assigned a non-punitive grade of "W." A faculty-initiated withdrawal, initiated by an instructor after warning the student, or an administrative withdrawal initiated by the Provost or Senior Vice Provost, will be recorded as a "W" if it is done on or before the 54<sup>th</sup> day of class. For a withdrawal after the 54<sup>th</sup> day of class, a course grade of "F" is

recorded. Withdrawals not officially registered in the Office of Academic Records and Registration will be given a grade of "F" for the course.

## **International Programs**

Benedictine College has a campus in Florence, Italy. Faculty may apply to teach in this program. Details are available in the Office of the Provost.

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