



WESTCLIFF
U N I V E R S I T Y
Educate. Inspire. Empower.

Westcliff University Faculty Handbook

2026-2027

Table of Contents

Section 1 Overview of Westcliff University	7
1.1 History	7
1.2 Vision, Mission, Values	8
Vision	8
Mission	8
Core Competencies	8
1.3 Organizational Structure	9
Board of Trustees	9
Academic Administration	9
Academic Administration Roles	10
Vice President of Academic Affairs	10
College Dean	10
Senior Director of Academic Initiatives and Institutional Effectiveness	10
Senior Director of Doctoral Affairs and Academic Resources	11
Program Chair	11
Faculty Senate	11
Faculty	12
Students	12
Section 2 Faculty Roles and Responsibilities	13
2.1 Faculty Role	13
Part-Time Faculty	13
Core Faculty	14
2.2 Faculty Responsibilities	14
General Responsibilities	14
Teaching a Course	16
Course Assignments	16
Reassignment of Course	17
Presentation of Material	18
Textbooks and Library Resources	19
Classroom GAP and Syllabus	20
Assignment Types	20
Comprehensive Learning Assessments	20
Professional Assignments	21
Discussion Questions	21
Presentations	22
	2

Professionalism and Classroom Etiquette	23
Grading	23
Faculty Attendance	24
Teaching in Fully Asynchronous Courses	24
Academic Support Assistant Responsibilities (where applicable)	26
Teaching Assistant Responsibilities (where applicable)	26
Office Hours	27
Email	27
Professional Development	27
Online Peer Faculty Mentorship	29
Peer Observations	29
Timekeeping and Pay (Part-Time Faculty in the United States & Canada)	31
Allocations	32
Non-Teaching Hours	33
Faculty Meetings and Professional Development	33
Special Projects	33
Faculty Expectations for Scholarship	34
2.3 Faculty Academic Qualifications and Faculty Rank	34
Instructor	36
Assistant Professor	37
Associate Professor	37
Professor	38
Faculty Promotion in Rank	38
Contributions of Service to Faculty Rank	39
2.4 Evaluation of Faculty	39
Faculty Performance Evaluations	40
Open Door and Grievance Policy	43
2.5 Resources for Faculty	43
Publication in WIJAR	43
Section 3 Academic Policies and Procedures	44
3.1 Attendance Policy	44
Tracking Attendance	45
Missed Class Sessions and VCSA Requirements	45
Early Dismissal of Classes	46
Class Breaks	46
3.2 Grading Policy	47

Deadlines for Grades	47
Change of Assignment Deadline	47
Change-of-Grade Process	47
Late Work	47
3.3 Academic Integrity Policy	48
Cheating	48
Fabrication	48
Plagiarism & Artificial Intelligence	48
Self-Plagiarism	49
Process for Student Appeals	50
3.4 Room and Space Use	50
3.5 Zoom Use	50
3.6 University Supplies and Equipment for Onsite Courses	51
Section 4 Ethical Responsibilities of Faculty	52
4.1 Statement of Academic Integrity	52
Practice of Academic Integrity	52
4.2 Notice of Non-Discrimination	54
4.3 Conflicts of Interest	54
4.4 Faculty Personnel Record Policy	55
4.5 Whistleblower Policy	55
4.6 Confidentiality Policy	56
4.7 Copyright Policy	56
4.8 Intellectual Property	57
Course Materials	57
Scholarly and Non-Course Work	57
University Use of Faculty-Created Materials	57
4.9 University Statements	57
Academic Freedom	57
Inclusion	58
Free Speech	58
Intellectual Diversity	59
No Commitments on the University's Behalf	59
Appendices, Addenda & Links	60
Handbook Acknowledgment Form	61

Welcome to Westcliff University, from the Interim CAO, Dr. William Lightfoot

Dear Faculty Member,

As the interim Chief Academic Officer of Westcliff University, it is my sincere pleasure to welcome you to our vibrant and ever-growing Westcliff family. We are truly excited to have you join us on this dynamic journey of academic discovery and global impact.

At Westcliff University, we are deeply committed to providing an enriching, innovative, and internationally-minded educational experience that not only engages but also empowers our students to thrive in a rapidly evolving world. As a global community, we celebrate international education and value the strength it brings to our communities. We encourage collaboration across disciplines, borders, and ideas, believing that real-world challenges are best addressed through integrated and inclusive approaches.

Our faculty are at the heart of this mission. It is your passion, expertise, and creativity that help shape an environment where lifelong learning, academic excellence, and meaningful connection flourish. We are here to support you as you inspire the next generation of thinkers, leaders, and innovators.

We developed this handbook to provide you with a clear and helpful overview of Westcliff University's policies, procedures, and organizational structure. We hope it serves as a valuable guide as you navigate your experience with us.

If there is anything we can do to better support you, please do not hesitate to reach out. We are committed to maintaining a collaborative and inclusive environment where your voice is always welcome, and your contributions are truly valued.

Once again, welcome to Westcliff University. We are thrilled to have you with us and look forward to the many ways you will help shape our shared future.

William Lightfoot, Ph.D.
Interim Chief Academic Officer

Introduction

The Faculty Handbook describes the policies, procedures, and organizational structure of Westcliff University as they pertain to faculty within the College of Business, the College of Technology & Engineering, and the College of Education. **Faculty within the College of Nursing follow the College of Nursing Faculty Handbook, as nursing-specific policies and procedures differ from those outlined here.** General Education faculty and College of Education faculty teaching at the Corona Campus remain governed by this Faculty Handbook unless otherwise specifically stated by the university. As such, the Faculty Handbook serves as a supplement to the Employee Handbook.

The Faculty Handbook is jointly maintained by a committee made up of representatives from academic leadership, the LITE Center, and the Faculty Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate in collaboration with Human Resources. The Office of Faculty Affairs oversees the annual review and updating of the handbook, and the final yearly version is reviewed and approved by the Faculty Senate.

Westcliff University reserves the right to interpret, revise, and update policies published in this handbook at any time without advance notice. When necessary, addendums or interim updates issued during the academic year may be authorized and approved by the Chief Academic Officer and/or the President of the University.

This Faculty Handbook is intended to serve as a companion to the Westcliff University Employee Handbook. Faculty members are expected to comply with the policies and procedures in both handbooks. When there is a conflict between the two, the Faculty Handbook governs matters specific to faculty roles and responsibilities, while the Employee Handbook applies to general employment terms and university-wide policies. Together, these handbooks provide a comprehensive framework for professional conduct, institutional expectations, and employment practices at Westcliff University.

Section 1 | Overview of Westcliff University

Westcliff University is a private university with its main campus in Irvine, California, dedicated to educating, inspiring, and empowering students from around the world. Founded in 1993, this globally recognized and accredited, private institution provides practical business, STEM, and education bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree programs, as well as certificate programs. Westcliff is a California Benefit Corporation committed to the public good and society by dedicating itself, first and foremost, to serving the interests and welfare of its students, staff, faculty, and the greater community. Westcliff's affordable, innovative programs are offered live, online, and in-classroom across the globe.

1.1 History

Westcliff provides quality education for students wishing to enter the expanding fields of business, STEM, and education. Westcliff received its initial approval in 1993 from the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education (www.bppe.ca.gov) and is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) Senior College and the University Commission (WSCUC) (www.wscuc.org). Westcliff comprises the College of Business, the College of Education, the College of Technology & Engineering, the College of Nursing, and Western State College of Law. The College of Business is globally accredited by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP) (<https://acbsp.org/>). Western State College of Law is accredited by the American Bar Association (ABA) (<https://www.americanbar.org/>).

Westcliff's graduate and undergraduate certificates and degree programs prepare students for immediate entry into and advancement in their fields. While some schools teach only theoretical concepts, Westcliff programs prepare students for the practical and theoretical requirements of today's job market.

The university offers full-time working students the flexibility to enroll in 100% online courses or take courses onsite at one of its beautiful California, Florida, or Texas campuses. All programs at Westcliff are convenient, flexible, and affordable.

Westcliff's innovative, up-to-date, and high-quality programs prepare students for personal, professional, and academic success. Programs are developed and enriched with the guidance and expertise of faculty, Program Advisory Councils, and the Board of Trustees, members of which include leaders from local and national businesses and organizations and from academia.

1.2 Vision, Mission, Values

Westcliff's goals and objectives are dynamic; they change as the university grows. Annually, all faculty are requested to review the university's goals and objectives and ratify them or make suggestions for potential changes.

Vision

Westcliff University strives to become the most innovative global educational institution, respected for its transformative, technologically advanced programs and initiatives with a focus on excellence, social responsibility, and diversity.

Mission

Westcliff University's mission is to educate, inspire, and empower students from around the world to achieve personal and professional success by providing practical, innovative, high-quality campus and online programs.

Values

Here are the core values that guide the actions of everyone associated with the university. Together, they embody the system of ethics guiding all university activities.

- Integrity
- Accountability
- Social Responsibility
- Global Citizenship
- Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion
- Collaboration
- Compassion

Core Competencies

Core competencies, to which all other outcomes at all levels (institutional, program, course) and of all programs (integrative studies, undergraduate, and graduate) are mapped, include:

- Critical Thinking
- Effective Communication
- Professional Integrity
- Global Citizenship
- Innovation

1.3 Organizational Structure

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees bears ultimate responsibility for the university, its policies, organization, financing, and governance. Two direct responsibilities are supervision of the university's finances and the appointment of the chief executive officer/president. Ordinarily, the Board of Trustees does not involve itself in everyday university affairs. Operating responsibilities and authority are delegated to the chief executive officer/president, and it is primarily through the president that the Board of Trustees monitors university activities.

The Board of Trustees has a particular responsibility to mediate between the university community and the larger society that the university serves. Thus, the Board of Trustees must be alert to the university needs and willing and able to explain, defend, and, if necessary, adjust, the university's values, goals, and procedures. The board is responsible for governing and maintaining its own effectiveness and continuity. In selecting new members, the trustees select leaders with a sincere interest in the university and its mission and whose talents and backgrounds contribute to the board's strength.

Academic Administration

Academic administration is formally responsible for supervising university programs, enforcing its policies, measuring policy effectiveness, and recommending improvements. The chief executive officer/president delegates operating responsibilities to the Chief Academic Officer, deans, and other members of academic administration and to councils and committees that may include faculty, students, and staff. Responsibilities may be reassigned periodically.

The academic administration is charged with maintaining a campus climate that enhances the freedom of the faculty to teach, engage in research, and participate in other scholarly and innovative initiatives, and to encourage student learning and growth inside and outside the classroom. This means that all university policies must be administered effectively, in accord with the university's purposes and standards, and must respect the rights and privileges of all members of the university community. In establishing and carrying out university policies, it is important for academic administration to consider the opinions and experience of faculty and students, both individually and through their involvement in university committees and their academic departments.

Academic administration is responsible for interpreting university policies and actions for the community at large. This responsibility requires that academic administration, in collaboration with the wider university leadership, interacts with representatives of local, state, and federal governments, industry leaders, foundations, and other community groups, formally and informally,

on matters important to the university.

Academic Administration Roles

Vice President of Academic Affairs

The vice president of academic affairs is the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) of Westcliff University, providing leadership, vision, and direction for all academic activities and faculty affairs, and ensuring quality of curriculum and instruction across all programs to serve students' needs.

College Dean

An academic dean is the highest-ranking academic leader for each college. Deans are responsible for managing college resources, ensuring qualified personnel are assigned to deliver or support academic programs, and measuring performance. Academic deans lead colleges' efforts to contribute to the university mission and support the vision of the vice president of academic affairs/CAO.

Senior Director of Academic Initiatives and Institutional Effectiveness

The senior director of academic initiatives and institutional effectiveness plays a vital role in providing strategic leadership and vision for Westcliff's institutional effectiveness, academic initiatives, assessment, and course development. The senior director is responsible for leading the development, implementation, and maintenance of successful academic initiatives, course development and assessment processes, and fostering a data-informed culture of continuous improvement throughout the institution.

Senior Director of Faculty Affairs

The senior director of faculty affairs provides strategic leadership and operational oversight for all faculty-related matters across the university. This role serves as a bridge between academic leadership and instructional faculty, ensuring alignment with institutional mission, accreditation standards, and best practices in teaching and faculty development.

Director of Academic Operations

The director of academic operations is the primary supervisor of the teaching faculty. This individual oversees instructional quality, teaching performance, and adequacy and appropriateness of the resources available to faculty. The director of academic operations coordinates all efforts related to faculty performance evaluation with support from other academic leadership and the faculty.

Senior Director of Doctoral Affairs and Academic Resources

The senior director of doctoral affairs and academic resources provides strategic leadership and oversight for a portfolio of departments that advance student and faculty success through academic support, writing, and research best practices. This role oversees the Academic Resource Center, Dissertation Department, Library and Digital Resource Center, Writing Center, and Institutional Review Board (IRB), ensuring integrated, high-quality services that promote scholarly excellence. The senior director also collaborates closely with academic and administrative partners across the university to align support services with institutional goals and enhance the overall educational experience. Learn more about the services and resources offered by the department of [Doctoral Affairs and Academic Resources](#).

Program Chair

Program chairs directly oversee the curricula of the programs to which they are assigned. They manage course design, course deliverables, and outcomes, and address all matters related to grades, grading, and assessment. They contribute to faculty oversight.

Faculty Senate

The Westcliff University Faculty Senate is responsible for leading faculty not only in fulfilling their responsibilities in shared governance, but also as an advocate for the enhancement of scholarship, learning, teaching, research, service, and respect for diversity, equity, and inclusion. It acts as a collective, independent voice and a liaison between faculty and other university stakeholders.

The Faculty Senate includes three officers and five standing committees. Officers are a president, vice president, and secretary. Each serves a two-year term and is eligible to serve two terms. Standing committee terms are for one year.

Standing committees include:

- Academic Standards, Policies and Procedures Committee
- Curriculum Committee
- Faculty Affairs Committee
- Performance Assessment Committee
- Community Committee

Comprehensive information about the Faculty Senate structure, purpose, constitution, and bylaws is published in the [Faculty Senate Handbook](#).

Faculty

Westcliff faculty have primary responsibility for executing the university's educational and scholarly programs. Each faculty member has a duty to reflect the highest professional standards in conducting courses and in continuously enhancing their skills in the art of teaching. One primary goal is to inspire students' desire to learn and enthusiasm for a subject. Faculty must develop and maintain curricula which meet the university's standards and fulfill its educational goals.

Faculty also have an important role in the interaction between the university and the community. In addition to conducting research and other professional activities, faculty are encouraged to participate in community affairs. When engaged in non-university activities, faculty must make clear that they act as individuals and not as university spokespersons.

Students

Westcliff University, as a private university, selects and admits students who have demonstrated capability for achieving professional competence in a field in which the university offers instruction.

Students are encouraged to take advantage of university resources to further their academic and personal development. Each student is expected to meet the academic requirements of the university, of the college, and of the departments in which they study and seek to receive a degree. Each is also expected to adhere to the university code of conduct. Students have the right to expect that the educational resources made available to them are of high quality. They are encouraged to provide constructive feedback through evaluations and surveys to aid the university in maintaining the excellence of its curricula and instruction and the vitality of its educational programs.

The university sponsors extracurricular programs and makes provisions for student governing bodies and other groups to sponsor a variety of lectures, social events, and other activities.

Section 2 | Faculty Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Faculty Role

Faculty are expected to diligently perform their professional duties and obligations. Their responsibility to their subject is to advance knowledge by verifying and clearly representing the truth, and practicing intellectual honesty. Faculty are to encourage the free pursuit of student learning, foster honest academic conduct, and ensure that their grading and feedback reflect each student's true merit. Faculty must acknowledge significant or scholarly assistance from students on any collaborative project, such as publications, presentations, or research. Faculty must avoid any exploitation, harassment, or discriminatory treatment of students.

Faculty must not discriminate against or harass their peers, and must respect and defend their colleagues' right to free inquiry. Faculty must show due respect for others, even when disagreeing with or criticizing others' opinions.

In making public statements, including dissent on matters of institutional policy or educational philosophy, faculty must be accurate, act in a professional manner, show respect for others' opinions, and indicate clearly that they are not speaking for the university.

Faculty must accept their role in academic governance of the university. They are scholar-practitioners whose duties include teaching, engagement in applied research, and participation in university governance.

Full-Time Faculty

Under the direction of their dean, full-time faculty provide high-quality instruction and support to Westcliff students. They are to devote their time, attention, and energies to their Westcliff duties. Full-time faculty are assigned a full-time load each semester and are expected to excel in all aspects of teaching and serve as role models and mentors for other instructors. Additional responsibilities for full-time faculty are presented throughout this handbook and outlined in individual letters of appointment.

Part-Time Faculty

Under the direction of program chairs, part-time faculty are to provide high-quality instruction and support to Westcliff students. They are assigned classes for which their degrees qualify them. Class assignments are not guaranteed from term-to-term, but Westcliff aims to provide consistent

instructor opportunities for part-time faculty. They may also be invited to participate in special projects upon approval of the Chief Academic Officer.

Core Faculty

Westcliff University values faculty development and recognizes that faculty may contribute to the university in different ways over time. Opportunities for expanded involvement may include participation in CORE roles, mentorship, peer review, faculty leadership, committee service, academic support initiatives, curriculum-related work, and other institutional contributions beyond assigned teaching responsibilities. Selection for these opportunities is based on institutional need, faculty performance, experience, and the faculty member's demonstrated ability to meet the expectations of the role.

The CORE Faculty designation recognizes part-time faculty members who have demonstrated strong instructional performance and meaningful contributions to the university beyond their assigned teaching responsibilities. The designation recognizes a faculty member's demonstrated excellence and continued eligibility to support the university in expanded faculty leadership capacities. Faculty may apply or self-nominate for the CORE Faculty designation, and selections are made by academic leadership based on institutional need, faculty performance, experience, and the faculty member's demonstrated ability to meet the expectations of the designation. Faculty holding the CORE designation may be invited or assigned to serve in one or more CORE roles based on institutional need, university priorities, faculty qualifications, availability, and the needs of the university. These roles may include mentorship, peer review, team leadership, faculty development, academic operations support, curriculum-related initiatives, committee service, and other institutional responsibilities. CORE assignments may be adjusted, rotated, or discontinued based on university need, faculty performance, the faculty member's availability, or the university's desire to provide leadership opportunities to additional qualified CORE Faculty. Faculty may also voluntarily step down from assigned CORE responsibilities or from the CORE designation when they are no longer able or wish to serve in those capacities.

2.2 Faculty Responsibilities

General Responsibilities

Faculty responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- maintaining a visible and distributed instructional presence across the week, at least three to five different days per week, as appropriate to the assigned course modality. This includes timely communication, meaningful engagement in course activities and discussions, monitoring student participation, and proactive outreach to students who appear disengaged or at risk.

- attending every all-faculty meeting held by their assigned colleges or the university
- providing regular and timely grading and feedback on student participation and performance and submitting final grades by the deadline established for each session
- monitoring student performance and providing additional support to students who appear to be having difficulty, such as those struggling with content or failing to meet course requirements for participation
- administering, evaluating, analyzing, and grading examinations and assignments
- responding to all emails and questions within 48 hours when classes are in session
- advising students on curricula
- maintaining up-to-date industry knowledge
- acting as adviser to student organizations, if assigned to do so
- serving on the Faculty Senate, if eligible and elected to do so
- serving as subject matter expert (SME) to support course development and revision, if assigned to do so
- engaging in scholarship and research that contributes to the advancement of their fields of study and practice (required for full-time faculty; encouraged for part-time faculty)

These responsibilities apply across all instructional modalities, including onsite, live virtual, and fully asynchronous courses, and faculty are expected to fulfill them in ways appropriate to the assigned course format. For a detailed breakdown of many of these policies, please visit the [Faculty FAQ document](#).

Faculty may occasionally receive notice that a student has been approved for temporary academic support due to a short-term crisis-related circumstance. In such situations, faculty are expected to respond in a timely, supportive, and professional manner; consider reasonable short-term flexibility consistent with course learning outcomes and university guidance; clearly communicate any revised expectations or deadlines; and document agreed-upon arrangements through appropriate university communication channels. Faculty should avoid requiring unnecessary personal disclosure and should refer students to the appropriate university support offices when requests extend beyond short-term academic flexibility or raise concerns that cannot be reasonably addressed within the course. Information related to a student's crisis-related circumstances should be treated as confidential and shared only on a need-to-know basis in accordance with university policy.

Faculty play an important role in supporting student well-being. If a faculty member becomes aware of a student who may be experiencing a significant health, safety, behavioral, or personal concern, they are expected to promptly notify the appropriate university office in accordance with university policy rather than attempting to manage the situation independently. This includes concerns related to student welfare, threats of harm to self or others, discrimination or harassment, sexual misconduct, or other situations requiring institutional support. Faculty should respond with care and professionalism, avoid promising confidentiality when reporting obligations may apply, and connect students with appropriate university resources, including Student Services, the Title IX Office, or

other designated support services as appropriate.

Teaching a Course

Course Assignments

Course assignments may include onsite, live virtual, hybrid, or fully asynchronous courses, depending on institutional need, faculty qualifications, program requirements, and operational considerations. Faculty assigned to a particular modality are expected to meet the instructional, communication, and compliance expectations associated with that format.

Course assignments are distributed to faculty members roughly seven weeks prior to the start of the next term. Faculty are assigned to courses based on full-time faculty teaching requirements, new faculty hires, course/faculty gap areas, and prior faculty performance. Once a course invitation has been sent, faculty have three business days to accept or decline the offering. If the faculty member does not reply by the deadline, as stated in the course offer letter, the offer expires and the university may engage a different faculty member. While the university believes the course will begin and go forward as scheduled, the offer and the faculty member acceptance are conditional upon the university's final decision to proceed with or cancel it based on enrollment or other operational concerns.

By accepting the course offer, the faculty member agrees to adhere to the expectations addressed in the employment offer letter, the Faculty Handbook, the Employee Handbook, and official communications from the university.

Professional Weekend Teaching Assignments

Pro-Weekend assignments are optional paid assignments for eligible adjunct faculty. No adjunct is required to sign up. All time worked must be accurately recorded and will be paid in accordance with applicable wage-and-hour laws, including overtime, meal and rest period requirements.

Participants must record all time spent performing Pro-Weekend duties, including required check-in, setup, event duties, required meetings or training, required travel between event locations, and required post-event duties. Pre-approval is required for overtime and travel except in unusual circumstances. All hours worked must be reported and will be paid.

Ordinary commuting between an employee's home and the first and last assigned work location of the day is generally not reimbursable. Westcliff will reimburse necessary business expenses incurred in direct consequence of Pro-Weekend duties, including approved or required travel between campuses or event sites, required transport of University materials or equipment, and required

parking or tolls. Employees must submit mileage and expense records in accordance with University procedures. Nothing in this policy waives any employee rights under applicable wage-and-hour or expense-reimbursement laws.

Reassignment of Course

Should the faculty member no longer wish to teach a current or a future course assignment, for any reason, they must email the Academic Operations Team at faculty-operations@westcliff.edu to inform them of their inability to successfully fulfill their responsibilities for the specified course.

If the faculty member fails to meet the expectations set forth within the course offer letter, employment offer letter, the Faculty Handbook, the Employee Handbook, the Faculty FAQ document, and/or official communications from the university, University Administration may move to replace the faculty member in a course. The university may reassign or replace a faculty member in any assigned course modality, including onsite, live virtual, and fully asynchronous courses, when necessary to support academic quality, student success, operational continuity, policy compliance, or other institutional needs. Faculty are expected to maintain all instructional and administrative standards applicable to their assigned modality.

University Administration will attempt to communicate with the faculty member regarding their performance and provide them opportunities to improve their performance by meeting with their program chair, campus dean (in selected locations), the director of academic operations, faculty trainers, and the LITE Center prior to removal. If performance does not improve or the violations are egregious in nature, the faculty member will be removed from the classroom and placed on an improvement plan.

Faculty Activity, Course Reduction, & Inactive Status

Faculty members at Westcliff University are expected to maintain active engagement in the academic community through teaching assignments or participation in compensated special projects. To remain in active status, faculty must either teach at least one course or engage in a compensated special project, and report it within Paylocity, within a six-month period. The Office of Faculty Affairs will attempt to contact faculty prior to being placed in an Inactive status. Contacted faculty have one term to be assigned work. Failure to meet this requirement may result in the faculty member being placed into an Inactive status. Faculty in this status will not be eligible for teaching assignments or special project opportunities until their active status is reinstated. Faculty can remain in an Inactive status for up to an additional six months. If the faculty member wishes to return after being placed in an Inactive status, and the additional six months has yet to pass, the Office of Faculty Affairs, in conjunction with college leaders and Human Resources will determine if there is a need for reinstatement by reviewing prior performance, faculty communication, and program needs.

If the Inactive status remains for over six months, the faculty member will be considered Terminated, and must reapply for hire as a new faculty member.

The scheduling of courses and special projects is determined by several factors, including but not limited to student demand, the needs of full-time faculty, faculty qualifications for specific courses, prior teaching and administrative performance, and the requirements of onsite class offerings. Faculty members are encouraged to communicate regularly with their program chairs and the Office of Faculty Affairs to stay informed about available opportunities and ensure they meet the criteria to remain active. Maintaining active status is critical to continuing a successful relationship with Westcliff University and supporting the institution's commitment to excellence in education.

Faculty may review the [Faculty Engagement, Performance, Scheduling Policy](#) for detailed specifics regarding the process for scheduling future teaching assignments.

Presentation of Material

At Westcliff we picture great teaching as a lively conversation among students, content, and instructors. For every course, on campus, on Zoom, or in GAP, we follow the flipped classroom model and CAPRI approach: students explore readings and short videos first, then class time moves into activities that are Contextualized, Applied, Practical, Relevant, and Inclusive, CAPRI for short. This rhythm keeps learning active and career focused, and it sits at the center of our shared teaching expectations. Regardless of the modality they are teaching, faculty are expected to follow the [LITE Center's Teaching Effectiveness Guidelines](#).

Most courses include live class sessions. Online classes, referred to as virtual class sessions (VCS), are facilitated through online video conferences (Zoom). Onsite class sessions (OCS) are conducted in campus classrooms. In either modality, faculty should be prepared for each session with a lesson plan and relevant presentation slides.

While many of the practices below apply most directly to live class sessions, faculty teaching fully asynchronous courses are expected to present and facilitate course material in ways appropriate to that modality. This includes providing clear instructional guidance, maintaining a visible instructional presence in the course environment, supporting student understanding through announcements and course communications, and offering timely and meaningful feedback throughout the term. Fully asynchronous teaching is a distinct facilitation practice that relies on intentional course presence, clear written communication, proactive support, and structured engagement rather than scheduled live instruction.

Faculty are expected to communicate clearly with students regarding permitted and prohibited uses

of artificial intelligence (AI) in their courses and to apply academic integrity expectations consistently in accordance with university policy.

Faculty should consider the following as standard practice for live class sessions:

- ensuring students are on camera during live sessions, except for break and extenuating circumstances.
- creating an introductory slide with class learning outcomes for the day including visuals (PPT, Google Slides, Prezi presentation, videos, articles, talking points, images, etc.) in class materials
- using an icebreaker or opening discussion to start each class, such as reference to a current event that is related to the material to be covered in class
- submitting an [IT Ticket](#) if any technical problems are experienced
- obtaining authorization from the program chair (faculty should inform the director of academic operations and the program chair in advance of any classes that will be missed in order to have sufficient time to assign a substitute for that class) before canceling or rescheduling a class
- encouraging interaction through active learning and use of the flipped-classroom model
- facilitating discussions with the goal of students providing significant contributions to the class session
- eliciting responses from students frequently throughout the lesson, regardless of how they are attending class, and focusing on discussion/interaction rather than lecture
- covering information during the class that supports the materials students are required to read, watch, or listen to, etc.
- providing time for student questions and comments at the end of each class

Textbooks and Library Resources

Unless the textbook is an open educational resource (OER) linked in the course syllabus, faculty will use the university's digital textbook platform, Perlego. Faculty should sign up for a Perlego account using their Westcliff University email through OKTA. Students are to acquire textbooks through Perlego. If electronic copies are unavailable, such as for faculty based internationally, faculty are to contact the program chair to arrange another method for accessing the textbook. If a faculty member would prefer to use a different text than the one(s) designated in the course syllabus, they should provide a list of requested textbooks to the program chair for review and approval. The program chair will be responsible for reviewing the request, seeking the appropriate approvals, and notifying the faculty member of the outcome of the request.

The Library & Digital Resources Center provides faculty and students access to an online database collection of more than 80 million scholarly journals, articles, periodicals, books, encyclopedias,

newspapers, magazines, and audio and video clips through GAP. The Library GAP page includes links to the database collection, library guides for researching, and access to the Westcliff Student Dissertation Repository. Faculty and students can also [schedule an appointment](#) with the librarian for assistance.

Classroom GAP and Syllabus

All courses, including onsite, live virtual, and fully asynchronous courses, are facilitated through the Westcliff University Global Academic Portal (GAP). GAP serves as the primary course environment and houses the syllabus, classroom resources, discussion forums, announcements, assignment submissions, and other instructional tools. Faculty are expected to review course materials in GAP prior to the start of each term and notify their program chair of any major issues requiring attention.

Faculty should review the following for inaccuracies prior to the start of each term:

- course title and textbook information
- instructor name, bio, and contact information
- course meeting dates
- course description
- course outcomes
- grading criteria and grading scale
- Westcliff policies and procedures
- course summary with reading assignments and exam schedule

Once a course syllabus has been distributed to students, faculty should not make substantive changes or add additional readings or assignments without approval. If minor adjustments are necessary, faculty should communicate them clearly to students through university-approved course communication channels. If a faculty member believes there are major issues with their course, syllabus, assignments, or readings, they should contact their program chair.

Assignment Types

Common assignment types used in Westcliff courses, including fully asynchronous courses where applicable, may include the following:

Comprehensive Learning Assessments

Students may complete at least one comprehensive learning assessment (CLA). CLAs are critical assignments covering multiple or all course learning outcomes (CLOs) and can include case study analyses, research papers, and/or student presentations. CLAs focus on assessing course foundations and the student's competency and mastery of the course concepts, particularly the

application of those concepts.

Professional Assignments

In select EDU courses, a professional assignment (PA) might be assigned. PAs enable students to demonstrate mastery of the content and cover two to three CLOs. For PAs, students connect research to practice within their field. Professional assignments can include case studies, research papers, reflection papers, instructional materials design, and presentations.

Papers (Case Studies, short essays, Reflections, Research-Based)

Written papers (typically 2–7 pages long depending on the topic and course level) allow students to explore and address a course-specific topic(s) specified by instructions in the course syllabus.

Discussion Questions

Discussion questions (DQs) are designed to support academic inquiry, engagement, and collaboration. In live courses, DQs may supplement class sessions; in fully asynchronous courses, they may also serve as a primary space for guided academic interaction. Faculty are expected to facilitate discussion-based learning in alignment with course expectations and provide oversight, feedback, and support as appropriate to the assignment and modality. In some courses, structured discussion, reflection, or engagement activities may also be facilitated through university-approved tools such as Socratic Metric, as determined by course design and institutional practice.

Faculty must start each discussion thread by “[posting first](#).” This means that faculty must create a discussion board thread prior to students being able to respond. *Students will be unable to post to the thread until the faculty member creates a thread first.* After the initial thread has been created, faculty must post responses to students, at a minimum, every 48 hours (3 times per week), after the first student response. Faculty must post to a minimum of one student on each of these three days and respond to all students equally over the course of the eight or sixteen weeks. Posts must be substantive, forward-thinking, and reflective; they should encourage deeper thought and promote critical thinking.

Faculty participation in discussion-based assignments is intended to support academic engagement, guide inquiry, and sustain meaningful interaction throughout the discussion period. Faculty are expected to engage in discussions in accordance with university expectations, which may include initiating or framing the discussion, responding to students in a timely and substantive manner, and ensuring that engagement is distributed thoughtfully across the discussion period rather than concentrated at one time. Discussion engagement expectations are distinct from grading and evaluative feedback. While faculty may provide instructional guidance and interaction within the

discussion itself, formal grading feedback may follow the conclusion of the discussion period in accordance with university grading timelines and practices.

Socratic Metric

Some courses may include the use of Socratic Metric as part of the instructional and assessment experience. Socratic Metric is designed to support student engagement, critical thinking, reflection, and application of course concepts through structured academic interaction. Faculty assigned to courses utilizing Socratic Metric are expected to implement it in accordance with university guidelines, course design expectations, and any modality-specific requirements.

Faculty are responsible for facilitating student understanding of the purpose and expectations of Socratic Metric activities, monitoring participation and engagement as appropriate, and incorporating the tool into the course in a manner that supports learning outcomes and academic quality. As with all instructional tools and assignments, faculty should apply grading, feedback, and participation expectations consistently and in alignment with university policy.

Projects

Projects offer students hands-on experience incorporating current practices. Projects should be thoroughly explained at the start of the course so that students know what is expected. All pertinent details, expectations, standards, and grading criteria are available in the course syllabus.

Presentations

Presentations allow students to visually represent their research and share it with classmates, either live or through a recorded format. Specific instructions for each presentation are provided in the course syllabus. Visual presentations may include infographics, mind maps, or other forms of visual illustration. Oral presentations may include video discussions, recorded presentations, podcasts, or other oral communication formats.

In-Class Assignments

In-class assignments may encompass students being required to be online in “real-time” (aka: synchronous learning) to complete a designated in-class activity. Activities may include, but not be limited to, in-class writing, group and/or team collaborations, debate, live presentations, and/or in-class discussion.

In-class assignments are most commonly used in onsite or live virtual instructional settings. In fully asynchronous courses, equivalent learning activities may be assigned through structured weekly coursework, guided engagement tasks, applied exercises, or other course-based activities aligned

with the course learning outcomes.

Team Projects

Team projects may encompass any type of assignment addressed above. Oftentimes, team projects are CLAs, PAs, and written papers and involve a team presentation as the culminating artifact of team collaboration.

Exams

In graduate and doctoral courses, and in some undergraduate courses, there are often proctored and timed midterm and/or final exams. These exams typically consist of multiple-choice questions and must be administered through the university's approved proctoring and recording process within GAP, as applicable. Proctored exams may not be administered by the instructor during a live class session. Students may be required to be on camera to verify identity and support academic integrity. Faculty should consult their program chair or the Office of Faculty Affairs if they have questions regarding modality-specific expectations for assessments.

Professionalism and Classroom Etiquette

Faculty must demonstrate professionalism, civility, equal treatment, and human concern for each student across all instructional environments, including onsite classes, live virtual sessions, written course communications, discussion forums, and fully asynchronous courses. Faculty are expected to use equitable, inclusive, and accessible language appropriate to the academic setting and student population.

Grading

Assignments must be reviewed and graded within five calendar days following the due date. If a holiday falls on one of these days, one extra day is given. Faculty must use grading rubrics for all assignments. Grades cannot be manually altered, except in cases of late submission or clerical errors (See [Section 3.2 Grading Policy](#)). Faculty must provide positive and constructive in-paper feedback tied to specific issues as well as summary feedback to explain the grade given. These grading expectations apply equally to faculty teaching fully asynchronous courses. Faculty in this modality are expected to provide timely, substantive, and supportive feedback that helps students understand their performance, improve their work, and remain engaged in the course.

Final grades are due the Wednesday following the end of the session by 11:59 pm PST. Assignments submitted after this deadline will not be accepted unless a documented exception has been approved through the appropriate university process. Incomplete grades are not intended as an extension of the course and may only be granted in exceptional circumstances with approval from

the program chair and/or dean, in accordance with university policy. Approved special circumstances may also result in an Incomplete or grade change, as appropriate. Absolutely no assignments should be submitted or graded after the three-day grading window closes and instead a [Change-in-Grade form](#) must be submitted.

If a faculty member has any difficulty submitting their grades, they are responsible for contacting the registrar's office, their program chair, and the director of academic operations. Any changes to the gradebook after the deadline, including missed attendance and participation, will require program chair approval and the submission of the [Change-in-Grade form](#).

Faculty Attendance

Faculty are expected to conduct classes at the scheduled time and date. Class cancellation is to be avoided. When it is necessary to be absent because of illness or other justifiable cause, the faculty member is responsible for notifying the director of academic operations in advance whenever possible by completing the [Substitute Request Form](#). The director of academic operations will arrange for an approved substitute instructor. Once a substitute instructor is found, the director of academic operations will connect the substitute, the original instructor, Tech Group, and the program chair. In addition, the [Substitute Quick Guide](#) will be provided for additional information. An outline of the topics to be covered during the class must be submitted by the faculty member in advance. Faculty who routinely require substitutes or whose absences otherwise disrupt university operations may be required to meet with their program chair to determine the best course of action for future course assignments. For additional information about being a Substitute or the specific policies around it, please view the [Faculty Substitute Policy](#).

Faculty teaching fully asynchronous courses generally do not require a substitute in the traditional sense because there are no scheduled live class sessions to cover. Faculty are expected to plan ahead and manage short-term absences in a manner that maintains instructional continuity, including meeting university expectations for communication, instructional presence, grading, and student support. If a faculty member anticipates being unable to reasonably maintain these responsibilities for an extended period or due to unforeseen circumstances, they must notify the Office of Faculty Affairs as soon as reasonably possible. The Office of Faculty Affairs will determine whether temporary course coverage or other support measures are necessary to maintain instructional quality and student success.

Teaching in Fully Asynchronous Courses

Westcliff University's fully asynchronous courses are designed to provide students with a clear, engaging, and flexible learning experience regardless of the locations and time zones. In the absence of scheduled live class meetings, faculty are expected to maintain a strong instructional presence, provide timely and meaningful feedback, communicate consistently, and support student success through effective course management.

Faculty in asynchronous courses serve as both subject matter experts and learning facilitators who guide, monitor, motivate, and support students throughout the term. This includes maintaining visible course room presence through regular announcements, timely responses to student questions, growth-oriented feedback, and proactive outreach to students showing signs of disengagement or academic difficulty. Faculty must meet all university expectations for communication, grading, and feedback turnaround times.

Asynchronous faculty should establish a consistent weekly rhythm to create a predictable and supportive learning environment. This may include welcome messages, weekly announcements, assignment guidance, discussion facilitation where applicable, and outreach to inactive or at-risk students. Faculty are responsible for reinforcing expectations, clarifying deadlines, and using course tools to monitor progress so students remain oriented and supported each week.

To support student learning and instructional consistency, faculty should use institutionally supported technologies and course resources appropriately. This includes using LMS tools, shared templates, grading tools, communication resources, and other approved instructional technologies to improve efficiency and enhance the student experience. Technology, including AI-supported tools where approved by the university, may assist with tasks such as feedback drafting, communication support, and instructional efficiency; however, faculty remain responsible for the accuracy, quality, tone, and academic judgment associated with all course communication, grading, and student support.

Faculty teaching asynchronous courses are also expected to contribute to a well-organized and sustainable course experience by maintaining clear, reusable, and instructionally relevant materials where appropriate. This may include evergreen announcements, assignment guidance, outreach templates, instructional videos, discussion supports, and curated course resources that can be updated and reused across terms while preserving course quality and consistency.

In courses that use a team-based or scaled asynchronous teaching model, additional coordination and oversight may apply. Faculty may be expected to work from shared grading guides, communication plans, calibration practices, and escalation pathways established by the university or program leadership. In such cases, faculty must follow the assigned instructional structure to ensure consistency, quality, and a cohesive student experience across the course.

Faculty assigned to fully asynchronous courses must complete any required university training related to asynchronous teaching practices, instructional presence, student engagement, educational technology, and course quality expectations prior to independently teaching in this modality, unless

otherwise approved by academic leadership. Faculty teaching in the asynchronous format may also receive structured first-term mentoring, coaching, or other support designed to reinforce expectations and promote successful implementation in the live course environment. Where provided, asynchronous mentoring, coaching, or launch support is intended to help faculty successfully implement university expectations in practice and does not replace formal supervisory, observational, or evaluation processes. Participation in asynchronous launch support, mentoring, or coaching does not automatically place a faculty member into a formal evaluation cycle unless concerns arise or the faculty member is selected for evaluation under the university's faculty evaluation process.

When temporary course coverage is necessary in a fully asynchronous course, the assigned coverage faculty member serves to support instructional continuity rather than replace the assigned instructor. Temporary coverage may include facilitating discussion activities, posting course announcements, responding to course-based communications, monitoring student engagement, or performing other responsibilities assigned by the Office of Faculty Affairs. Whenever reasonably practical, grading, substantive evaluative feedback, and other academic judgments remain the responsibility of the assigned instructor. The Office of Faculty Affairs may adjust these responsibilities when necessary to support students or ensure continuity of instruction.

All other institutional expectations, faculty responsibilities, and university policies outlined in this Handbook and related university policies and procedures also apply to faculty teaching fully asynchronous courses unless otherwise stated. Faculty should consult their program chair and/or the Office of Faculty Affairs if they have questions regarding the interpretation or application of any policy, procedure, or instructional expectation.

Academic Support Assistant Responsibilities (where applicable)

The academic support assistant (ASA) is assigned to classes where the professor is remote and at least one student is on campus. The primary responsibilities for the ASA include:

- preparing the classroom so the remote professor can interact with the on campus students
- facilitating classroom conversations and activities according to the professor's instruction
- assisting communication between students, professors, and the administration

ASAs are not necessarily educationally prepared for the classes they are assigned. As such, professors should not ask an ASA to grade papers, deliver lessons, lead activities, or assign tasks outside of the classroom.

Teaching Assistant Responsibilities (where applicable)

If a teaching assistant (TA) is assigned to give feedback to students on the weekly DQs; grade the weekly DQs, peer responses, or activities; and/or grade and provide feedback on the assignments (e.g., PAs/CLAs), the TA is responsible for:

- giving quality and timely feedback to the students in the weekly DQ forum and in the

- gradebook,
- using the Weekly DQs/Activity, assignments, and projects Grading Rubrics provided in the syllabus and WU Policies,
- using the Assignment (e.g., PAs and CLAs) Grading Rubrics as provided in the WU Policies, and
- giving quality feedback on assignments (e.g., PAs and CLAs).

The TA should not replace the faculty for teaching the class for any reason.

Office Hours

Faculty are expected to maintain consistent office hours or other university-approved student support availability as required by their assignment and allocation. This time may be used to support students, address course-related questions, and complete instructional responsibilities such as grading or lesson preparation when students do not attend. Faculty must clearly communicate to students how and when they may access office hours or academic support.

For live virtual and fully asynchronous courses, office hours may be held through Zoom or another approved university platform. Faculty should ensure that access information is clearly posted in the course environment and communicated to students in a timely manner.

Email

Each faculty member is issued a Westcliff email account to be used for university and academic correspondence purposes. Faculty are expected to check their Westcliff University email address daily during the week and once on the weekend when actively teaching and weekly when not actively teaching. Faculty must use their Westcliff email address when corresponding with administration, academic personnel, students, or university stakeholders. Email accounts are set up by the technology department.

Faculty should access their Westcliff University email by logging on to <https://mail.google.com> and logging in with their user ID and password provided by the new faculty orientation coordinator.

For assistance with managing the Westcliff email account, faculty should notify the technology department by [submitting a ticket](#); alternatively, faculty may notify the director of academic operations or the new faculty orientation coordinator who can contact the director of technology on their behalf for assistance.

Professional Development

An important responsibility of each faculty member is to engage in continuing education, scholarship, and professional development in support of instructional excellence and student success. While the particular areas of the university or the personal commitment of the faculty may

change, continuing professional development should always remain a distinguishing characteristic of the university and its faculty.

Part-time faculty are expected to complete all training required by the university and are encouraged to seek out and participate in additional professional development relevant to their field of teaching. Faculty who fail to complete any required training may not be scheduled for any future courses, dissertations, or special projects and may be terminated after six months of inactivity. Part-time faculty are offered classes to teach only after successfully completing new-faculty training requirements. All new faculty are limited to taking the New Faculty Orientation course no more than three (3) times. If, after the third attempt, the course has not been completed successfully, the university will remove the faculty from the active roster.

Faculty assigned to teach fully asynchronous courses must complete any required modality-specific training related to asynchronous instruction, instructional presence, student engagement, educational technology, and course quality expectations prior to independently teaching in this modality, unless otherwise approved by academic leadership.

Additional professional development should support excellence and best practices in the classroom and may include updating industry knowledge, advancing skills with educational technology, or improving classroom instruction and facilitation skills. Two hours of paid professional development are available to all active Westcliff University faculty members per year. You may mix and match your training between TALKs in Faculty Lounge, webinars or self-paced courses. Once completed, please submit your time through Paylocity utilizing the appropriate job costing category.

Faculty supervisors may assign additional training based on perceived opportunities for professional growth. Funding for additional costs (e.g., conference registration fees) may be available for certain development opportunities.

Full-time faculty are required to dedicate at least four hours per semester to management-approved professional development programs. Full-time faculty are encouraged to use the LITE Center for professional development. All part-time Florida campus faculty are required to complete at least eight hours of professional development per year. College leadership may assign additional training, as deemed appropriate.

The LITE Center offers mandatory professional development (PD) initiatives that are compensated as well as optional PD sessions that are not remunerated. Part-time and full-time faculty are encouraged to participate to further enhance professional practice, thus improving students' learning experiences.

For additional information please contact the LITE Center staff at lite-pd@westcliff.edu.

All faculty are to keep a record of and report all engagement in professional development activities through this link: [Professional Development Form](#).

Online Peer Faculty Mentorship

Westcliff University believes that education is an art and a craft. That is why the university strives to create a climate of lifelong learning to ensure the finest quality educational experience for students, provide instructional support for educators, and gauge the strengths and needs of instruction delivery methods.

The LITE Center offers the CORE Peer Mentorship program, an online, peer-to-peer initiative designed to foster continuous faculty development. Experienced faculty members, designated as CORE Peer Mentors, collaborate with their colleagues to enhance teaching practices. This collaboration includes sharing resources, conducting classroom observations, providing constructive feedback, and offering online teaching support on GAP. For faculty at international locations, equivalent onsite classroom observations are conducted by campus deans or program chairs.

All discussions and interactions between CORE Peer Mentors and faculty members are confidential. In instances where an observation forms part of a formal administrative development plan, mentors are obligated to report only specific circumstances: non-response from the faculty member, instances of egregious conduct, or actions that are inconsistent with Westcliff University's core values of compassion and collaboration.

Peer Observations

Additionally, faculty can take part in peer observations. The focus for peer observations, which must be requested through the Director of LITE Center or campus dean, is on instructional practices that promote effective classroom management, maintain high expectations, and develop engaging lessons. Peer observations are highly encouraged in a culture of lifelong learning and may be requested by a faculty member or recommended by a faculty supervisor.

For peer observations, a faculty member is paired with another faculty member for a single observation. During the observation, 30 minutes to 1 hour of the class is observed and a form is completed. It is recommended that faculty do one peer observation for every three sessions taught.

Peer observations are eligible for inclusion as a professional development item on the PD form: [Professional Development Form](#).

New Faculty Orientation (NFO)

The New Faculty Orientation (NFO) course at Westcliff University is a foundational training program designed to equip newly hired faculty with the essential knowledge, tools, and resources needed to succeed in their teaching roles. This course introduces faculty to Westcliff's academic policies, instructional expectations, online learning platforms, and student-centered teaching philosophy. Completion of the NFO course ensures that faculty are well-prepared to deliver high-quality instruction aligned with the university's mission and standards. Participation is crucial, as it fosters consistency across programs and supports a strong, informed academic community. Faculty who do not successfully complete the course after three attempts will be removed from the university's active teaching rosters, as successful completion is required to ensure instructional readiness and uphold academic excellence.

Monthly Live Webinars

At Westcliff University, the LITE Center is committed to maintaining the highest standards in teaching methodologies. To support this commitment, instructors can attend monthly, one-hour, unpaid, live webinars tailored for both new and returning faculty members. Each webinar is designed to enhance teaching strategies that improve lesson design, deepen student understanding, and foster critical thinking skills. By participating in these webinars, faculty members will gain valuable insights and tools to enrich their instructional practices, ensuring a high-quality educational experience for all students.

Self-Paced Courses

Self-paced courses offer a practical way for faculty to learn new skills on their own schedule. These unpaid courses are available through the LITE Center. Tailored to adhere to the CAPRI (contextualized, applied, practical, relevant, and inclusive) framework, these self-paced modules combine theory with practical application.

Reading Club

This monthly reading club for faculty offers a chance to explore and discuss contemporary articles on a wide range of higher education topics. Each session not only covers the theoretical aspects of current articles but also introduces a relevant application or technological tool. This unpaid initiative aims to merge theoretical knowledge with practical technology applications, enhancing teaching and professional practices. Outcomes include enriching knowledge with up-to-date insights, increasing technological integration in teaching, and building a community through collaborative learning and knowledge sharing.

Professional Learning Communities

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) from the LITE Center are structured, ongoing gatherings designed to foster collaboration, innovation, and reflective teaching practices among faculty members. These communities serve as a dedicated space where educators can actively exchange ideas, explore emerging educational trends, and enhance their instructional strategies in

alignment with best practices.

In addition, faculty also have the opportunity to engage in learning communities that are hosted by each college, academic program teams, or faculty affairs. These learning communities are faculty-driven discussions and activities related to specific academic disciplines, curriculum, and teaching and learning practices. These learning communities provide the ability to connect with college leaders, full time faculty, and other adjunct faculty to share best practices for the benefit of all.

Microcredential Programs: Digital Badges

Faculty are encouraged to engage with the LITE Center's micro-credential programs. This professional development opportunity delivers concentrated learning experiences designed to cultivate specialized skills and competencies directly relevant to both pedagogical and research environments. Successful completion results in the issuance of digital badges, which serve as secure, verifiable, and readily shareable evidence of earned expertise. These badges can be seamlessly integrated into online professional profiles, providing comprehensive details regarding mastered competencies and the issuing institution, thereby affirming continuous professional growth.

Timekeeping and Pay (Part-Time Faculty in the United States & Canada)

Part-time faculty are hourly, non-exempt employees. Part-time faculty must accurately and diligently track all hours worked daily and report them promptly, submitting their timecard via Paylocity. Hours recorded on the timecard determine a part-time faculty member's pay before normal withholdings and deductions. Faculty are assigned their hourly rate at the time of hire.

For jurisdiction-specific rules regarding overtime rates, meal and rest periods, and state or provincial disclosures, employees must refer to the Westcliff University Employee Handbook and its corresponding State Appendix.

Part-time faculty must always obtain the approval of their program chair and the director of academic operations before doing any of the following:

- working more than 8 hours in one day
- working 5 consecutive hours without taking and recording a minimum 30-minute, uninterrupted, duty-free meal break
- working more than 40 hours in one week
- working for any amount of time for more than 6 consecutive days

While all hours worked must be accurately recorded and will be compensated in accordance with applicable law, failure to obtain prior authorization for overtime or altered break schedules is a violation of university policy and may result in corrective action, up to and including termination.

As non-exempt employees, part-time faculty are generally scheduled to work in accordance with

federal, state, and provincial meal and rest break requirements. Unless local jurisdiction rules outlined in the Employee Handbook Appendix dictate a different standard, the university follows California compliance standards as its baseline:

- Faculty scheduled to work more than 5 hours in a workday must take a 30-minute unpaid meal period no later than the end of their fifth hour of work.
- Faculty who work more than 10 hours in a workday are required to take a second unpaid meal period of 30 minutes no later than the end of their 10th hour of work.

During these unpaid meal periods, employees must be completely relieved of all duty. The university relinquishes all control over their activities and permits them a reasonable opportunity to take an uninterrupted break.

- All part-time faculty are provided with an hourly rate of pay, which is applied to all hours worked under their current appointment. Overtime premium pay (such as 1.5 times or 2 times the regular hourly rate) will be paid for hours worked beyond daily or weekly thresholds in strict accordance with applicable federal, state, or provincial laws.

Allocations

Part-time faculty are allocated a specific number of hours per each course assignment based on class size, credit allotment, and modality. Allocated hours may be adjusted prior to and during the add/drop period. At the end of the add/drop period, faculty will receive an updated allocation for each assigned course.

These hours are intended to support all instructional and administrative responsibilities associated with course teaching, including course preparation, student engagement, attendance or participation tracking, grading and feedback, student communication, and other duties required by the assigned modality. In fully asynchronous courses, these responsibilities may include a greater emphasis on written communication, discussion facilitation, monitoring student progress, proactive outreach, grading, and feedback rather than live class-session delivery.

Faculty are expected to manage allocated time in the best interest of student success while remaining mindful of timekeeping expectations. Because instructional work may vary by modality and course pacing, some weeks may require more time than others. Faculty who have questions regarding allocation usage should consult the director of academic operations. If course enrollment changes significantly prior to or during the term, part-time faculty may be expected to adjust their hours accordingly.

Unless otherwise approved in advance by the Office of Faculty Affairs and the Chief Academic

Officer (or designee), travel expenses associated with Professional Weekend assignments are generally not reimbursed for part-time faculty beyond approved required parking expenses. Full-time faculty assigned to travel for university business remain eligible for reimbursement in accordance with university travel policies.

Non-Teaching Hours

Faculty may have opportunities to work on tasks or projects that are separate from or in addition to the responsibilities of course teaching.

Faculty Meetings and Professional Development

Faculty meetings and professional development opportunities are held regularly. All faculty meetings (called by the dean or program chair) are mandatory. These meetings present important information or training. Part-time faculty are compensated for such meetings, and must enter the meeting time on their timecards. These hours are not part of teaching allocations. Faculty must label these hours appropriately in Paylocity to ensure the correct labor distribution and job costing labels are applied.

The LITE Center holds regular professional development sessions. These sessions are considered optional and unpaid unless otherwise communicated.

Additionally, a program chair or dean may ask a faculty member to attend a specific LITE Center session. In these instances, the professional development sessions will be compensated. Hours must be entered on timecards to reflect attendance and trigger compensation.

The Faculty Lounge is a bi-weekly virtual congregation of faculty intended for peer socializing with each other, program chairs, the director of academic operations, instructional technologists and designers, and LITE Center staff. Part-time faculty members can ask questions and get to know their colleagues. After obtaining prior manager approval, a part-time faculty may include time spent in the Faculty Lounge dedicated to dealing with specific questions or conferring with a colleague about a university-specific project. If a part-time faculty member attends simply for social reasons, the act is voluntary and not compensated.

Faculty Senate quarterly meetings are mandatory (and compensated) for officers, committee chairs, and committee members. All faculty are welcome and encouraged to attend, but attendance is voluntary for part-time faculty members not holding officer positions or serving on committees, and are not compensable.

Special Projects

The university provides opportunities for part-time faculty members to work on new initiatives and

other projects that support the university's strategic plan. Examples include curriculum design, project support, accreditation work, and learning outcomes assessment. Projects must be pre-approved by the Chief Academic Officer (or a designee) and are assigned a set number of hours for completion. These hours are not part of teaching allocations for part-time faculty and must be tracked in addition to teaching hours to ensure all timekeeping and pay rules are being followed. This letter informs faculty of the project, supervisor, total allocated hours, rate of pay, and job costing/labor distribution labels for Paylocity.

It is important for part-time faculty to distinguish, on time cards, between teaching hours and special project/miscellaneous project hours. Part-time faculty can do this by entering the correct [labor distribution](#) and [job costing labels](#) within Paylocity. For general "Teaching" purposes, the Labor Distribution and Job Costing labels would both be "Teaching." Please direct any questions to the director of academic operations.

Faculty Expectations for Scholarship

Westcliff University values the contributions of faculty to the collective knowledge of their fields of study and practice. Examples of faculty scholarship include:

- publications
- conference presentations
- blog articles
- development of new or enhanced curriculum
- joint faculty-student research endeavors
- research partnerships in the field

Evidence of consistent engagement in scholarly activities is required for rank promotion. Westcliff offers a variety of opportunities for faculty to engage in scholarship, including publishing or peer-reviewing for the [Westcliff International Journal of Applied Research \(WIJAR\)](#), presenting at the [Symposium on Applied Research \(SOAR\)](#), presenting at the [Research Colloquium](#), and participating in the [Faculty Fellows](#) program.

2.3 Faculty Academic Qualifications and Faculty Rank

Westcliff University faculty support the university's mission to "educate, inspire, and empower students from around the world to achieve personal and professional success by providing practical, innovative, high-quality campus and online programs." The university enlists and retains distinguished faculty with outstanding qualifications, providing faculty the opportunity for rank promotion.

Westcliff University establishes a set of academic and teaching qualifications for faculty hiring. These qualifications may differ depending on the level of the course being taught.

The minimum qualifications required to be hired as a faculty member within the Reimagining English as a Second Language (REAL) program include:

- a bachelor's degree or higher, from a regionally or internationally accredited institution (National Association of Credential Evaluation Services [NACES] evaluation required) in the appropriate discipline; master's strongly preferred
- demonstrated knowledge and commitment to teaching students from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds
- demonstrated proficiency in teaching for active learning

The minimum qualifications required to be hired as a faculty member to teach within the bachelor's programs include:

- a master's degree or higher, from a regionally or internationally accredited institution (NACES evaluation required) in the appropriate discipline
- demonstrated knowledge and commitment to teaching students from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds
- demonstrated knowledge and commitment in making scholarly contributions to the development of the field
- demonstrated proficiency in teaching for active learning

The minimum qualifications required to be hired as a faculty member to teach within the master's programs include:

- a doctoral degree, from a regionally or internationally accredited institution (NACES evaluation required) in the appropriate discipline
 - If the candidate has only a conferred master's degree, and they are working towards a doctorate, they must provide evidence of appropriate post-graduate training, professional license or certification, or clinical residency within that specialization. For example, they may have at least 15 earned credit hours in the specialization they wish to teach at the doctoral level based on program accreditation requirements.
 - These exceptions would limit the faculty to teach only at the 500-level within that specialization until a doctoral degree is conferred.
- demonstrated knowledge and commitment to teaching students from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds
- demonstrated experience in their profession and in making scholarly contributions to the development of the field

- demonstrated proficiency in teaching for active learning

The minimum qualifications required to be hired as a faculty member to teach within the doctoral programs include:

- a doctoral degree, from a regionally or internationally accredited institution (NACES evaluation required) in the appropriate discipline
- demonstrated knowledge and commitment to teaching students from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds
- demonstrated experience in their profession and ongoing scholarly activities that contribute to the development of the field
- demonstrated proficiency in teaching for active learning

All new part-time faculty are assigned the rank of instructor or assistant professor upon initial qualification of courses. Westcliff University may consider prior teaching experience, professional development achievements, and advancements in scholarship when assigning an initial rank or rank advancement. Faculty are eligible to be considered for promotion in rank during the faculty evaluation process or upon faculty request when they believe they meet the applicable qualifications. During the evaluation, the instructor may be awarded a promotion in rank or may retain their current status, depending on the evaluation.

To move up in rank, the faculty member must show clear and demonstrable evidence as stated in the faculty evaluation form. The rank of professor is only assigned to those faculty who have been assigned a full-time position and have met the criteria.

The various titles and ranks that may be assigned to faculty are:

Instructor

The rank of instructor is assigned to new faculty (full- and part-time) at the university for whom a master's is the highest degree attained. During the initial years of instruction, faculty work with their program chair(s) and the LITE Center to continue to develop their teaching skills.

The minimum qualifications to be appointed to the rank of instructor include:

- a master's degree or higher in the appropriate discipline
- demonstrated knowledge and commitment, and proficiency for teaching and student success
- demonstrated professionalism and collaborative behavior

Assistant Professor

The rank of assistant professor is awarded to those faculty (full- and part-time) who, at the time of initial appointment, have an earned doctorate and/or have demonstrated knowledge and proficiency for student success by having teaching experience at other universities. Current faculty, already teaching at Westcliff University, must demonstrate increasing knowledge, commitment, and proficiency for student success. Assistant professorship may be awarded to an instructor who has satisfied the following criteria:

- Initial Appointment
 - The faculty has a conferred doctoral degree, demonstrated knowledge and commitment, and proficiency for teaching and student success, and exhibits professionalism and collaborative behavior.
 - Has taught at a similar, relevant university for a minimum of 3 years and a minimum of 15 courses
- Current Faculty Member at the “Instructor” rank:
 - has taught at Westcliff University for a minimum of 3 years and a minimum of 15 courses
 - meets and/or exceeds expectations in all areas on the most recent faculty evaluation
 - regularly participates in Westcliff University professional development workshops offered by the LITE Center
 - has demonstrated commitment to supporting students through attendance at university activities, such as SOAR, WIJAR, the Research Colloquium, special projects, graduation, and athletic events

Associate Professor

The rank of associate professor is earned and awarded to those faculty (full- and part-time) who have demonstrated advanced achievement in teaching, and commitment to professional development and scholarship as a member of the Westcliff faculty. Associate professorship may be awarded to a faculty member who has satisfied the following criteria:

- has taught at Westcliff University for a minimum of 6 years and a minimum of 25 courses
- meets and/or exceeds expectations in all areas of their most recent faculty evaluation
- regularly participates in and/or facilitates Westcliff University professional development workshops offered by the LITE Center
- has demonstrated commitment to supporting students through attendance at activities such as SOAR, the Research Colloquium, special projects, graduation, and athletic events

Professor

The rank of professor is earned and awarded to full-time faculty who have demonstrated extraordinary and prolonged achievement in teaching, professional development, and scholarship as a member of the Westcliff faculty. Only full-time faculty are eligible to attain the rank of professor after satisfying the following criteria. The minimum criteria for the rank of professor include:

- has taught at Westcliff University for a minimum of 9 years
- is a full-time faculty member with Westcliff University
- meets or exceeds expectations in all areas of their most recent faculty evaluation
- regularly participates in and/or facilitates Westcliff University professional development workshops offered by the LITE Center
- demonstrated commitment to supporting students through attendance at university activities such as SOAR, WIJAR, the Research Colloquium, special projects, graduation, and athletic events

Faculty Promotion in Rank

Faculty are promoted to recognize significant contributions to the university and its students. Promotion is based upon meritorious achievement beyond the competency expected of all faculty. To move up in rank, the faculty member must show clear and demonstrable evidence as stated in their most recent faculty evaluation. Faculty may be considered for promotion in rank as part of the faculty evaluation process, following review of their most recent faculty evaluation, or upon faculty request if they believe they meet the applicable qualifications. During the evaluation, the instructor may be awarded a promotion in rank or may retain their current status, depending on the evaluation. To begin this process, faculty should have a conversation with their program chair to determine eligibility. Once the program chair confirms eligibility, they will contact the Office of Faculty Affairs.

Satisfactory compliance with faculty responsibilities does not, in itself, lead to promotion of rank. Meritorious performance in teaching, training, and scholarship activities serves as the basis for promotion. All academic appointments are subject to full review and approval as indicated in these guidelines. Special promises or agreements cannot be made outside this structure and the processes that are formally accepted by the university (through the Board of Trustees) and the faculty (through the Faculty Senate).

Advancement in rank and consideration for promotion reflect more than length of service alone. These decisions are based on sustained instructional effectiveness, professionalism, contribution to student success, adherence to university expectations, and, where applicable, meaningful contributions to the university beyond classroom teaching. Faculty interested in growth opportunities or future promotion are encouraged to maintain strong performance, remain engaged in professional development, and consult with academic leadership regarding pathways for

continued advancement. The university seeks to support faculty in their professional growth and leadership development as needs and opportunities arise.

Contributions of Service to Faculty Rank

Contributions that may support consideration for rank advancement include meaningful service to students, scholarship, and the broader university community beyond baseline faculty responsibilities. Examples may include, but are not limited to, the following:

Contributions to student success

- mentoring students outside the classroom
- engaging in substantive scholarly or developmental interaction with students
- supplementing instruction with additional academic resources, such as guest speakers, videos, or digital learning tools
- reviewing and applying insights from peer evaluations, classroom observations, and student surveys to strengthen teaching practice
- piloting innovative instructional strategies or methods and evaluating their impact on student success

Scholarship contributions

- publishing research in university, peer-reviewed, or trade journals
- presenting with a faculty colleague or student at internal or external conferences
- presenting at professional or trade conferences

Service contributions to the university

- active membership and participation in standing committees or the Faculty Senate
- regular involvement in university initiatives
- regular attendance and participation in university events, such as convocation and commencement

2.4 Evaluation of Faculty

The philosophy for faculty evaluation at Westcliff University encourages academic growth and excellence. It includes regular assessment of teaching or student services performance, college service, follow-through on all duties and responsibilities listed in the letter of appointment, professional development, and adherence to university expectations. Faculty evaluation at Westcliff stresses flexibility, adaptation to individual needs, and continuous

improvement. The purpose of the evaluation process is:

- to recognize outstanding performance
- to improve satisfactory performance and further professional growth
- to identify and document unsatisfactory performance and assist individuals in achieving required improvement

Faculty evaluation applies across all instructional modalities. For faculty assigned to fully asynchronous courses, evaluation may include review of instructional presence, course communications, responsiveness to students, grading and feedback practices, discussion facilitation, student support efforts, and effective use of university-approved instructional tools and systems.

Westcliff University uses a differentiated faculty evaluation process that allows evaluation resources to be focused where they are most needed while maintaining regular oversight of faculty performance. Faculty may be evaluated through formal written performance evaluations, administrative observations, documented performance indicators, student feedback, academic or operational referrals, and other relevant evidence of instructional quality and faculty responsibilities.

Faculty Performance Evaluations

Faculty performance evaluations are formal written reviews of a faculty member's instructional quality, professional responsibilities, adherence to university expectations, and contribution to student success. Evaluations are informed by observations, documented performance indicators, professional development records, student feedback where applicable, and other information related to instructional quality and faculty responsibilities. Feedback may include input from academic operations, CORE Faculty, program chairs, deans, the LITE Center, and other appropriate university personnel.

Faculty whose most recent formal evaluation is rated Meets Expectations or higher, and who have no active concerns, may be placed into a differentiated evaluation cycle. Under this cycle, these faculty remain eligible for evaluation each term but may not receive a full formal written evaluation every year. Instead, they will receive at least one formal written evaluation within a rolling 24-month period.

Each 8-week term, the Office of Faculty Affairs, specifically the Director of Academic Operations and the CORE Faculty Manager, will generally select approximately 10% of the eligible faculty pool whose most recent formal evaluation was Meets Expectations or higher for formal evaluation. Selection may be based on rolling-cycle tracking, random selection, strategic sampling, program or modality needs, institutional priorities, or other relevant factors. Faculty in this group may also be

selected for evaluation earlier than the 24-month period when concerns arise or when an evaluation is otherwise needed.

Faculty who do not meet the criteria for the differentiated evaluation cycle may be evaluated more frequently. This may include, but is not limited to, new faculty, faculty new to a course or modality, faculty with documented concerns, faculty with prior evaluations below Meets Expectations, faculty returning from inactive status, faculty assigned to high-priority instructional initiatives, or faculty referred for review by a program chair, dean, the Office of Faculty Affairs, the LITE Center, CORE Faculty, Student Affairs, the registrar, or another appropriate university office.

For purposes of evaluation cycle placement, active concerns may include, but are not limited to, concerns related to instructional presence, communication, responsiveness, grading timeliness, quality of feedback, student engagement, student outreach, attendance, participation tracking, professionalism, classroom etiquette, academic integrity processes, course management, modality-specific expectations, required training completion, adherence to university policy, or failure to follow official university processes or communications.

The evaluation is reviewed and approved by the program chair and/or dean, as applicable, before being shared with the faculty member. The faculty member is invited to discuss observed strengths, areas for improvement, and opportunities for continued growth, and may also provide a written response. The evaluation and any response are maintained in the faculty member's personnel file. Each faculty member must update professional development activities regularly to ensure their inclusion in the evaluation process. Please see the [Faculty Evaluation Process](#) document for a detailed description of the evaluation process and rubric of the evaluated components.

Participation in Assigned Performance Support

Westcliff University is committed to supporting faculty through a developmental, evidence-based evaluation process. Faculty who receive developmental recommendations, are referred for additional support, or are assigned mentoring, coaching, or other performance-support activities as part of a formal evaluation, documented performance concern, or administrative improvement plan are expected to participate in good faith throughout the assigned process.

Performance-support activities may be facilitated by the Office of Faculty Affairs, Program Chairs, the LITE Center, CORE Faculty, or other designated university representatives. While CORE Faculty serve as peer educators, mentors, and developmental partners rather than supervisors, they may also serve in an official university capacity when conducting

assigned observations, evaluations, mentoring, or coaching activities on behalf of the Office of Faculty Affairs.

Good-faith participation includes responding to university communications, attending scheduled meetings, engaging professionally and respectfully, and making reasonable efforts to participate in assigned developmental activities. Faculty are not required to agree with evaluation findings or recommendations; however, participation in assigned performance-support activities is considered an expectation of employment and an important component of the university's commitment to instructional quality and continuous improvement.

Failure to participate in assigned performance-support activities or to engage in the process in good faith may be considered when evaluating continued teaching assignments, future evaluations, or other personnel decisions, in accordance with university policy. Specifically, faculty members who decline to participate in assigned performance support following an unsatisfactory evaluation will be placed on a temporary no-schedule list until the remediation process is successfully completed.

Administrative Observations

A critical component of faculty evaluation and instructional quality assurance is direct observation of the faculty member's teaching. In live instructional settings, observations may include attendance in class sessions or review of session recordings. For fully asynchronous courses, observations may include review of the course environment, announcements, course communications, responsiveness to student questions, grading practices, quality of feedback, discussion facilitation, student outreach, and other modality-appropriate indicators of instructional effectiveness.

Faculty may undergo periodic administrative observations performed by the Office of Faculty Affairs, a CORE Faculty member, program chair, associate dean, college dean, or other appropriate academic personnel. Administrative observations may occur as part of a formal performance evaluation, as part of routine instructional quality review, or in response to documented concerns, referrals, modality changes, institutional priorities, or support needs.

The observer may review compliance with attendance, participation, and grading entries; review a recording; attend a live session; or review course activity within GAP, as appropriate to the assigned modality. Administrative observations may be used to assess strengths and areas of opportunity, inform faculty support or professional development, document instructional patterns, or determine whether additional evaluation, mentoring, coaching, or performance support is needed.

Open Door and Grievance Policy

Each faculty member is encouraged to bring work-related questions or concerns to management's attention. Such discussions promote a productive and harmonious work atmosphere. Faculty are not subject to adverse employment actions for raising good-faith concerns in a professional manner.

Although any manager may be contacted to discuss a problem or concern, Westcliff recommends that resolution first be sought with one's immediate supervisor, as that person is generally in the best position to evaluate the situation and provide an appropriate solution.

However, if you are not satisfied with your supervisor's decision or are uncomfortable discussing the issue with your supervisor, you may contact the Human Resources Department. All grievances are investigated promptly, fairly, and thoroughly by impartial, qualified personnel. To the extent possible, complaints will be treated as confidential. The complaint process will be documented and tracked and will be completed in a timely manner. Options for remedial action and resolution will be considered. If misconduct is found, remedial measures will be taken.

To ensure grievances are properly addressed, you are encouraged to submit complaints or concerns in writing. Although the university will strive to reach a result satisfactory to all parties concerned, it reserves the right to make decisions it deems are in the best interest of the university as a whole.

2.5 Resources for Faculty

The following item is meant to serve as a resource for faculty teaching domestic courses. Please consult the [Faculty FAQs](#) for answers to questions not covered or for additional detail. Should the information being sought not be found here, faculty should contact their program chair.

Depending on the nature of the issue, faculty teaching asynchronous courses may also be directed to institutionally designated training, mentoring, instructional support, GAP or technology support, or other university resources intended to promote course quality and faculty success in the modality.

Publication in WIJAR

Westcliff International Journal of Applied Research (WIJAR) is a multidisciplinary, double-blind peer-reviewed, open access journal. Distinguishing this journal from others is the strong support offered to faculty, especially first-time authors, who may need additional writing or structural assistance. All potential authors have access to the Westcliff University Online Writing Center, where dedicated research/writing specialists are able to offer support and suggestions. See the [WIJAR](#) website for guidelines.

Section 3 | Academic Policies and Procedures

3.1 Attendance Policy

Attendance and participation expectations may differ by course modality. In courses with scheduled live sessions, attendance is measured through participation in those sessions. In fully asynchronous courses, participation and academic engagement may be measured through timely and substantive involvement in required course activities, discussions, assignments, and other academically relevant interactions, in accordance with university policy and course expectations.

Students may be dropped from a course by the registrar's office for lack of participation. Faculty are not to drop or to unenroll students themselves. Instruction is defined as academic engagement between a faculty member and students. Engagement may be synchronous or asynchronous and may include:

- reinforcement by the faculty member of information covered in the classroom resources or sharing new information relevant to the course outcomes
- review or group activity involving the faculty member and students to enhance students' understanding of course information for the purposes of students gaining a better understanding
- presentation by students of learned information, with feedback and critique by the faculty member and other students (additional to faculty evaluation and feedback provided as part of grading the assignment)

Students are expected to attend all class meetings, as the meetings are considered essential to the educational experience. Students must report, to the faculty member, the reason for an absence.

Following an absence, students may be allowed to submit make-up work. Absences are considered unexcused unless notice has been submitted to and approved by the professor (for the first two) or academic administration (for more than two). All students can miss up to two live classes and complete a VCS Assignment or Alternative assignment in lieu of participation/attendance. After the second one, they must petition the program chair/dean to be allowed to continue using the alternative to the live class - special circumstances only and subject to verification/documentation.

If a student misses a class due to a schedule adjustment during the first week of instruction, the absence is excused if the adjustment was made by the registrar's office for a reason other than the student simply wanting to change classes or instructors.

Students are considered to be tardy if they arrive at class between 10 and 40 minutes late. A student arriving after 40 minutes, or leaving more than 40 minutes early, is considered absent. Early departure occurs if a student leaves class between 10 and 40 minutes early.

If a teaching day falls on a holiday, there will be no class sessions conducted. Faculty must create and post a holiday DQ in place of an OCS or a VCS, upon review and approval of their program chair. Students must post one response to the holiday DQ by the due date to receive participation credit. The holiday DQ itself is not graded but does count for the participation grade for the week. Attendance is not required to be recorded for a holiday.

Faculty teaching fully asynchronous courses are expected to track and report student participation in accordance with university policy, using the standards and procedures applicable to that modality. Faculty should not create independent attendance standards outside of university policy and should consult their program chair or the Office of Faculty Affairs if questions arise regarding participation tracking in fully asynchronous courses.

More information on attendance specifics can be found in the [Westcliff University Attendance Policy](#), [Absence Type Description & Action Document](#), and the [Faculty FAQs](#).

Tracking Attendance

Faculty who are teaching live classes should enter attendance exactly how the student attended class. Faculty are not to police a student's mode of attendance, only report it in GAP. Faculty must record student attendance in GAP by noon PST the day after the live session. It is considered best practice to enter attendance and participation scores immediately after class has ended. Attendance is not recorded for a holiday that falls on a session meeting day. Faculty teaching fully asynchronous courses are expected to track and report participation in accordance with university policy and should not establish independent attendance standards outside of those requirements.

Missed Class Sessions and VCSA Requirements

Attendance expectations differ by course format and must be applied in accordance with university policy. Because attendance structures differ between Weekly and Professional course formats, faculty must apply attendance and substitute assignment expectations according to the requirements of the assigned course format. Weekly classes generally follow attendance expectations tied to regularly scheduled class meetings, while Professional classes include weekend instructional requirements. Faculty should not apply Weekly attendance practices automatically to Professional courses and should instead follow the specific attendance and VCSA requirements established for that format.

For Weekly classes, students are expected to attend all scheduled class sessions. If a student misses a live class session, the student may be permitted to complete a Virtual Classroom Substitute Assignment (VCSA) or other approved alternative assignment, in accordance with university policy. Students may submit no more than two (2) VCSAs per class without additional approval. After two missed class sessions, any additional use of a VCSA or alternative assignment must be approved by the program chair and/or dean and is limited to special circumstances supported by appropriate documentation or verification.

For the online class sessions connected to the Professional format, students are also required to attend the scheduled Saturday sessions before and after the assigned residency weekend. If a student is unable to attend one of these live sessions, attendance and participation credit may only be earned through a VCSA approved by the program chair, supported by documentation demonstrating an extraordinary circumstance. Advisors and faculty must direct students to the program chair for VCSA approval in Professional-format courses.

In Professional-format courses, VCSA use is limited and is not intended to function as a routine substitute for live attendance. Faculty should direct students to the program chair for approval where required and apply attendance, participation, and substitute assignment expectations consistently and in accordance with university policy. Questions regarding format-specific attendance expectations should be directed to the program chair and/or the Office of Faculty Affairs.

Faculty are expected to apply attendance and VCSA requirements consistently and should not create independent attendance or make-up rules outside of university policy. Faculty with questions regarding missed classes, VCSA use, or attendance expectations should consult their program chair or the Office of Faculty Affairs.

Early Dismissal of Classes

Accreditation mandates that class sessions not end early in order for students to meet academic rigor. Disciplinary action will be taken if it is verified that a faculty member is dismissing classes early.

Class Breaks

For every hour of instruction, a class may break for 10 minutes. For example, 1 hour of class credit equals 50 minutes of instruction and 10 minutes of break time. Breaks should not exceed 10 minutes and are given at the instructor's discretion. Faculty are not to pause the Zoom recording during the break session but rather create a PPT slide that shows "*We are on a Break*" during that time.

3.2 Grading Policy

Grades are based on completed assignments. Faculty may allow assignment revisions or late submission (up to 3 days), but may not change grades to acknowledge class participation or on other grounds. All grades are to be submitted to the course gradebook in GAP. After all grades have been submitted and are considered final, faculty must notify the registrar.

Mandatory grading guidelines must be followed, and course grade averages must comply with these guidelines. Faculty must grade via the rubrics provided, either in GAP or Turnitin. Once recorded, grades should not be changed unless there has been a clerical error or a student proves the grade was wrong or given as a result of bias.

Deadlines for Grades

Final course grades must be submitted within 3 days of the end of a course.

Change of Assignment Deadline

No assignment deadlines are to be changed.

Change-of-Grade Process

If a computing error is discovered within 1 year of award of a final grade, the faculty member may correct the error on a [change-of-grade form](#). The change must be approved by the program chair. For all other potential changes to grades, please refer to the Grade Appeal Policy.

Late Work

Late submission of assignments may be allowed at the faculty member's discretion. Students are strongly encouraged to remain communicative with the faculty member if they believe an assignment will be submitted late. Assignments more than 3 days late without faculty permission will not be accepted. Week 8 assignments cannot be submitted late unless there is an extenuating circumstance or technical issue, and the student has provided supporting documentation to the faculty and the program chair. Extenuating circumstances that prohibit the timely submission of assignments allow for variance of this policy. Such circumstances must be timely communicated and properly documented by the faculty member. **No late work will be accepted by faculty beyond the last day of the course.** Any assignment submitted after the last day of class will require a grade appeal which is submitted through the student services advisor and reviewed by the program chair or college dean.

An incomplete grade, or I, is a temporary grade that may be assigned at a faculty member's

discretion. The faculty member may assign an incomplete grade when coursework is incomplete at the end of an academic session or term because of a student's illness, hospitalization, approved absence, or other reasons beyond the student's control, and the student had submitted at least 67% of the coursework of passing quality.

More information can be found in the [Catalog and Student Handbook](#).

3.3 Academic Integrity Policy

The university tolerates no academic misconduct, such as cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and/or self-plagiarism. Any student found to have committed academic misconduct is subject to disciplinary action.

Cheating

Cheating includes, but is not limited to, using unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise; altering answers on a graded document before submitting it for re-grading; and/or failing to observe procedures or instructions for an academic exercise, such as instructions regarding seating or conversation during an exam.

Fabrication

Fabrication includes, but is not limited to, falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise, including fabrication or falsification of research:

Fabrication of Research - making up data or results and recording or reporting them

Falsification of Research - manipulating research materials, equipment or processes, or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record

Plagiarism & Artificial Intelligence

Plagiarism is the deliberate use of written work or copying of written work of any length without giving credit to the original author with a proper citation. This includes work published in books, in journals and magazines, and on the internet, as well as unpublished work.

Plagiarism is highly unethical, a grave violation of university policy, and an infringement of U.S. copyright law. It is a breach of academic integrity as the principle that all members of the academic community must acknowledge their debt to the originators of ideas, words, and data incorporated into the member's own work. Passing off another's work as one's own is poor scholarship and

shows that the plagiarizer has failed to engage in the learning process.

The misuse of AI in academic work may constitute plagiarism or other forms of academic misconduct. Students may not use AI to complete coursework without explicit permission from the instructor. When AI use is permitted, students must follow university policy and course-specific expectations regarding disclosure, attribution, and appropriate use. AI may be used only to support student learning and must not replace the student's own original thinking, analysis, or academic work. Any permitted AI-generated content must comply with university guidelines, including applicable limits on the amount of AI-generated material allowed in an assignment. Submitting AI-generated work as one's own, using AI in prohibited assessments, or using AI to fabricate data, sources, citations, or other academic content is a violation of academic integrity and may result in disciplinary action. If there is sufficient similarity or inappropriate use of AI, the faculty should contact or meet with the student for an explanation as a first step.

Faculty may establish course-specific expectations regarding the use of AI, provided those expectations remain consistent with university policy and are clearly communicated to students in the course environment.

Deliberate plagiarism is unethical and can have serious consequences for the student's future career. A student found to have committed plagiarism will undergo the following disciplinary procedure:

- A faculty member will review the materials provided by Turnitin for verification.
- If plagiarism or improper use of AI is confirmed, the faculty member will allocate a grade of zero.
- Faculty *may allow* the student to redo the assignment. However, the resulting grade may be reduced, at faculty discretion, as a penalty for the plagiaristic conduct. The faculty member will document the information using the [Plagiarism Report Form](#), even if the student is allowed to resubmit the assignment.
- If the student submits another plagiarized assignment, the faculty member will document the information using the [Plagiarism Report Form](#). The information will be sent to the program chair and then to the dean of student affairs, who will initiate a review with the conduct board.
- The conduct board will review the materials and interview the student. Depending on its findings, the student may be academically suspended or dismissed from the university.
- The length of a suspension depends on the seriousness of the offense.
- The student receives a letter from the dean of student affairs, by registered mail, outlining the board decision. A copy is kept in the student's file.

Self-Plagiarism

It is possible for students to self-plagiarize by reusing, without proper citation, excerpts from their

own prior work or by re-submitting prior work that had been submitted at Westcliff or another institution. Students wishing to reuse their own work or excerpts from their prior work, should first consult the faculty member before resubmitting the assignment.

Process for Student Appeals

Students may appeal findings that they violated the academic integrity policy. The student appeal policy and process are in the [Catalog and Student Handbook](#).

3.4 Room and Space Use

Faculty may reserve rooms, at the front desk, for classroom instruction and discussion, guest speaker events, and other academic purposes.

3.5 Zoom Use

Faculty must register their Zoom account using their Westcliff email address upon hire. To log into classes, the account must be registered with the university. Zoom training is provided by the LITE Center and Zoom proficiency is expected of all Westcliff faculty.

The Zoom-related expectations below apply primarily to courses conducted through live virtual class sessions. They do not govern fully asynchronous courses except where a faculty member is required to use Zoom or another approved live communication method for office hours, student support, meetings, or other university-approved purposes.

When conducting courses on Zoom, faculty should make every effort to adhere to these best practices:

- Use a Westcliff Zoom background at all times.
- Consider VCS appearances as live video productions.
- Ensure the webcam is on during class at all times except for during breaks.
- Ensure your head and shoulders are centered in the camera frame.
- Align the camera horizontal with your eyes and nose.
- Use headphones to help avoid sound looping.
- Wear appropriate attire (business casual).
- Have good lighting for high quality images.
- Have no source of light (e.g., windows) behind the camera or in view of the camera.
- Turn off cell phones.
- Limit movement as it can be disconcerting to viewers.
- Ensure that no one is walking behind the camera or talking in the same room as the camera while class is being conducted.

- Avoid dead air by chatting or broadcasting pleasant music while waiting for students at the beginning of class.
- Bring PPT slides to life by telling stories of personal experience or developing interactive conversations about information presented on the slides.
- Ensure that students have their video cameras on at all times during class, unless they have messaged stating they need to step away momentarily or have discussed personal objections to camera usage privately with their instructor beforehand.
- Enrich sessions with different digital tools that meet the lesson's objectives and engage students in meaningful learning experiences.
- Fuse different planning strategies that impact the pacing of the lesson.
- Select strategies to foster active learning during group discussions (e.g., think-pair-share, instructor-designed questions, "stand where I stand" debate).
- Choose appropriate videos and create pre-watching and post-watching tasks to encourage active student participation.
- Use different Zoom features (e.g., whiteboard, breakout rooms, polls).
- Incorporate different types of questions (e.g., closed, funnel, probing) to foster critical thinking skills.
- Use retrieval practice to bring information to students' minds to boost learning.
- Provide different types of purposeful feedback, always keeping the rubrics in mind.
- Think outside the box so as to bring innovation to VCS/OCS.

3.6 University Supplies and Equipment for Onsite Courses

The faculty must erase all boards at the end of class. Each classroom should have a set of dry-erase markers available for faculty usage. Replacement dry-erase markers and erasers are available from the front desk and should remain in the classroom after class has ended.

Technology is available for instructional use. Faculty should allow enough pre-class time to set up. Faculty can obtain technology department assistance by submitting a [help desk ticket](#) at least 24 hours prior to a class meeting.

Section 4 | Ethical Responsibilities of Faculty

Due to the unique environment of a university and the sensitive nature of relationships in, and related to, teaching and learning, faculty are expected to adhere to all Westcliff University policies (including those covered in the [Employee Handbook](#)) and all applicable local, state, and federal laws.

4.1 Statement of Academic Integrity

Westcliff University is a self-governing institution that sets high expectations of ethical behavior for its administration, faculty, staff, and students. In every facet of academia (learning, teaching, and research), the university is dedicated to upholding values of respect, honesty, equity, and fairness, all of which are fundamental to the accomplishment of the university's mission.

Westcliff University is dedicated to:

- preparing its students to consistently conduct themselves with integrity in their professional and personal lives
- supporting the dissemination of knowledge and equitable access to information to benefit our local and global community
- encouraging faculty and students to ethically engage in research and scholastic activities that add value to the wider academic community
- reinforcing the values of honesty, responsibility, dedication, and fairness with students through modeling ethical behavior and moral standards

The university is committed to providing an inclusive learning environment where academic integrity is upheld, reinforced, and valued. To achieve this aim, faculty affiliated with the university are to model academic integrity in the curation, expression, and dissemination of knowledge and information. Faculty are to accurately represent the university and what it stands for as well as aid the student body in discovering their voice and role within the university and society. Students are expected to engage in the learning process ethically and honestly and avoid any instances of plagiarism, cheating, or unethical conduct.

Practice of Academic Integrity

The values of academic integrity constitute ideals for forming a wider community of scholastic integrity. Westcliff University believes in putting these ideals into action through these practices:

Respect

Westcliff believes in creating a scholastic learning environment where all individuals are respected and, within that, values the diversity of opinions and ideas. The university is dedicated to perpetuating the growth of knowledge through the incorporation of active learning, collaboration, and spirited discourse. This creates the need for a safe space where everyone feels that they have a voice and are considered.

Mutual respect should be the basis of interaction between/among any members of the university. Students show respect to themselves by embracing the opportunity to learn from various perspectives, practicing civil discourse in speech and in word, and creating a climate of respect where freedom of expression is possible. Faculty show respect by valuing contributions of students, modeling proper and ethical behavior, providing a stimulating educational environment, and speaking in a way that communicates attentiveness and openness. All members of the university show respect for the field of academia by acknowledging intellectual contributions through proper citation and avoidance of plagiarism.

Dedication to Core Values

Dedication to the core values of Westcliff University first requires clear communication of the university's mission, vision, and values. All members of the university should explicitly understand, embrace, and model these standards. The university consistently reflects upon its adherence to these standards and remains open to dialogue and discussion regarding these practices. The university mission is communicated to the local and global community.

Responsibility and Professionalism

Personal responsibility is foundational to creating a higher learning environment of integrity. Every member of the university must be accountable for their actions, behavior, and protection of the values of honesty and fairness in academia. Members of the university are to perpetually maintain professionalism and adherence to proper conduct in fulfilling their commitments to the roles they hold. Students are responsible for taking ownership of their education, embracing the opportunities with which they are provided, and being accountable to themselves and the university in remaining in alignment with the university's code of conduct. Faculty are responsible for providing students with a quality education, upholding academic standards, maintaining professionalism in all interactions, and creating a learning environment where all students are encouraged to succeed.

Honesty and Trust

The foundation of honesty creates a basis of trust. Trust is essential for the open communication and authentic dialogue needed to sustain an environment of inclusion and freedom of expression. Faculty can develop trust through consistent adherence to academic standards, reliability of feedback and communication, and genuine interaction. Students can gain the trust of faculty by submitting original work, remaining in consistent communication, and choosing honesty, especially

when it requires courage. Trust is essential to encourage the academic community to collaborate with one another, freely share ideas, and express themselves without fear of retaliation, or not receiving credit for one's work.

4.2 Notice of Non-Discrimination

Westcliff University does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, age, national origin, national ancestry, sex, pregnancy, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, military service or veteran status, physical ability, or genetic information in employment, admission, treatment, or access to its programs or activities.

4.3 Conflicts of Interest

Westcliff University policy requires all personnel to adhere conscientiously to the highest standards of ethics, law, and morals. Conflicts of interest are to be avoided. Such conflicts may include providing goods or services to Westcliff or providing services to or investing in competitive institutions. There is potential for conflict whenever personnel have the opportunity to influence university operations or decision-making in ways that could result in the person's direct or indirect monetary gain or benefit. Indirect conflict may arise, for example, from acts that benefit a spouse or partner, or close relative or friend.

Anyone with an actual or possible conflict of interest or who contemplates activities that could constitute direct or indirect conflicts of interest is required to report them immediately to university administration. The administration shall determine a fair, appropriate way to safeguard the university's interest. Should the administration determine acceptance or mitigation of the conflict to be infeasible, it may require the personnel member to abandon the existing or prospective activity as a condition of continued employment.

As stated earlier, actual or potential conflicts may arise when university personnel hold management or other positions in, or consult for, another organization that offers services similar to Westcliff University, particularly if the organization is an actual or potential Westcliff University competitor.

Examples of potential conflicts of interest involving provision of goods and services to the university, all of which require immediate disclosure:

- business services
- consulting
- counseling
- food services

- computer hardware/software or related
- IT services
- legal services
- document preparation
- marketing
- mail or shipping services
- temp services
- office equipment or supplies
- construction or maintenance services

Further examples of activities that constitute the conflict of interest:

- using university property or resources of any type (owned or leased), facilities, equipment, or other resources for personal gain of the employee or others
- using university property or resources of any type (owned or leased) in any manner that supports an external not-for-profit entity, except with university permission
- using university stationery or letterhead (in any form) in connection with any activities other than those legitimately related to university business
- advocating, endorsing, or marketing the sale of products or services other than as part of an employee's Westcliff responsibilities without prior approval
- using the university's name, trademark, or intellectual property for personal gain of the employee or others
- using university data or information for personal gain of the employee or others
- using university personnel for outside activity during normal paid work time
- participating in the selection or awarding of a contract between the university and other entities in which an employee is seeking employment or has or may be offered employment

4.4 Faculty Personnel Record Policy

The university maintains two files for each faculty member: the Faculty Qualification File and the Faculty Personnel File. The Faculty Qualification File consists of a current (within 1 year) and accurate curriculum vitae (CV), all official transcripts, relevant certificates, and professional development records. This information is used to qualify faculty to teach courses as well as for recordkeeping purposes prescribed by our accreditors. The Faculty Qualification File is maintained by the faculty operations department. Separation of files ensures that personnel file information is kept confidential. The Faculty Personnel File is maintained by the Human Resources Department.

4.5 Whistleblower Policy

A “whistleblower” is an employee who discloses information to a government or law enforcement agency, or internally within the institution, when the employee has reasonable cause to believe the information discloses a violation of a state or federal statute, a violation or noncompliance with a state or federal rule or regulation or with reference to employee safety or health, and/or unsafe working conditions or work practices in the employee’s place of employment.

The university will not make, adopt, or enforce any rule, regulation, or policy preventing an employee from being a whistleblower. The university will not retaliate against an employee for refusing to participate in an activity that would result in a violation of a state or federal statute or a violation or noncompliance with a state, provincial, or federal rule or regulation. The university will not retaliate against an employee who is a whistleblower and will not retaliate against an employee for having exercised their rights as a whistleblower in any former employment. Specific legal protections and reporting hotlines vary by location; faculty working outside of California should consult the Employee Handbook.

Under California Labor Code Section 98.6, if an employer retaliates against a whistleblower, the employer may be required to reinstate the employee’s employment and work benefits, pay lost wages, and take other steps necessary to comply with the law. The university informs all employees of their rights as a whistleblower and their right to call the California State Attorney General’s Whistleblower Hotline at 1-800-952-5225.

4.6 Confidentiality Policy

No faculty member shall disclose or discuss with any non-employee or unauthorized person any confidential matter regarding university procedures and operations, university activities, or confidential information obtained by virtue of employment with the university, the disclosure of which might in any way be detrimental to the university’s interests.

4.7 Copyright Policy

Instructors have a special responsibility to avoid and discourage copyright infringement. Books, handouts, audio and video resources, slides, and other materials, in whatever form, when supplied to instructors for their instructional or research use, are copyrighted by the source and must be restricted to good use. They must not be copied, distributed, or made accessible otherwise to students or anyone else, except with the copyright holder’s written permission. Instructors must also strongly discourage students from copyright infringement.

4.8 Intellectual Property

Course Materials

All instructional materials created by faculty members, whether full-time or part-time, in the normal course and scope of teaching at Westcliff University, are the University's sole and exclusive intellectual property. These materials include, without limitation, syllabi, lecture notes and recordings, presentations, assignments and assessments, grading rubrics, and online course shells and modules. Such materials are deemed "works made for hire" under U.S. copyright law and are owned by the University regardless of when or where they are created. Faculty may not retain or reuse these materials outside the University without Westcliff's prior written consent.

Scholarly and Non-Course Work

Faculty members retain ownership of scholarly, creative, and academic works created outside the scope of assigned teaching duties, such as articles, books, and manuscripts, conference papers, creative works, and research publications, provided that such works do not involve substantial use of University resources beyond those normally made available to faculty for instructional purposes. If substantial University resources are used in the development of such work, the University reserves the right to assert full or joint ownership, or to negotiate an appropriate license or assignment of rights.

University Use of Faculty-Created Materials

To the extent faculty retain any rights in course-related or non-course-related works, the University shall be granted a non-exclusive, royalty-free, perpetual license to use such materials for internal academic or accreditation purposes, including display in faculty portfolios, program reviews, or institutional reporting.

4.9 University Statements

Academic Freedom

Academic freedom is imperative for the welfare of a university. It functions to protect the faculty, staff, and students at Westcliff University from unwarranted interference by external groups and to ensure the retention of the services of those whose contributions toward its goals make them essential assets of the faculty. Academic freedom promotes the autonomy and integrity of the university and makes its development as an intellectual learning community an outcome of primary focus.

Academic freedom is an unqualified right of each member of the faculty. It carries the obligation to respect and to maintain the academic freedom of every other member of the university community. Academic freedom includes the ability to teach inside and outside the classroom, perform research, and publish (in various manners) the results of such inquiries, and to address any matter of institutional policy or action, without risk of official interference or professional disadvantage whether or not as a member of institutional governance.

Furthermore, faculty should have freedom to address their larger community with regard to matters of social, political, economic, or other interests, without institutional discipline, save in response to fundamental violations of professional ethics, statements that suggest disciplinary incompetence, or intolerance of other groups – including racism, violations, or injustices of professional obligations.

Inclusion

Westcliff University is deeply committed to the equitable treatment of all and the elimination of discrimination in the world around us; every member of the human family has the potential to make a contribution for the benefit of all. Westcliff makes it a focus to encourage and promote such contributions.

The university seeks practices that are inclusive to all as Westcliff promotes the acceptance and appreciation of all individuals regardless of race, gender, age, ethnicity, ability, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, or country of origin. The more inclusive the university, the stronger it grows.

Free Speech

Westcliff University encourages and supports the respectful and free expression of ideas, viewpoints, and opinions in public or private forums, recognizing rights of expression, affiliation, and peaceful assembly so long as they neither disrupt university functions nor infringe upon the rights of others.

The university has an obligation to protect the rights and freedoms of those who choose to participate in free speech or peaceful assembly and protect the rights and freedoms of those who do not wish to do so. Additionally, the university has an obligation to protect its property and to assure continuation of the activities of students, faculty, staff, and visitors on its campuses, both physical and virtual.

Free speech may be legitimately regulated with regard to time, place, and manner. Expressions of free speech must comply at all times with the orders or directives of university officials and law

enforcement officers or any other type of official seeking to maintain peace. Disruptions are not allowed if they cause any of the following that may include but are not limited to:

- interfering with, impairing, or impeding teaching, research, or administration of programs
- interfering with, impeding, or blocking the flow of any type of traffic (e.g., automobiles, accessibility devices, bicycles, or pedestrians) on any streets, paths, buildings, grounds, or parking areas
- interfering with any entrance or exit to any building on or related to a campus
- violating any federal; state; or local laws, regulations, or fire codes
- interfering with any events
- disrupting the peaceful operation of the university in, on, or around any campus
- destroying, removing, or preventing access to any type of property
- frightening, coercing, or intimidating any individuals whether related to the university or not

The university is committed to the elimination of all forms of bigotry whether on or off campus, either related to or not related to the university.

The university will consider each alleged violation case-by-case and examine all relevant facts. The university encourages all faculty, staff, students, and visitors to responsibly exercise their rights of free speech.

Intellectual Diversity

Intellectual diversity promotes and welcomes the pluralistic and free exchange of ideas. Intellectual diversity is an authentic form of diversity and an element of free speech that fosters curiosity, diverse thinking, constructivism, and openness.

Westcliff University is committed to maintaining a welcoming environment where intellectual expressions, including research, are respected and ensured. The university expects all, in their expression of intellectual diversity, to state their viewpoints professionally, constructively, and collegially. All protective parameters found in the statements of diversity and free speech similarly apply to intellectual diversity.

No Commitments on the University's Behalf

Faculty members, staff, and coaches are not authorized to make promises or commitments, whether verbal or written, on the university's behalf. This includes communications that recipients might construe as promises or commitments. However, requests may be submitted to an appropriate supervisor for consideration. Failure to follow this rule may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Appendices, Addenda & Links

The following pages will contain any appendices, addenda, and links to assist faculty or to outline any changes to the Faculty Handbook after initial publication. The links are listed here for your reference but many are also included in the various sections throughout the Faculty Handbook.

[Absence Type Description & Action](#)

[ACORN & SSO Login Steps to Access ACORN](#)

[AI Policy Guide](#)

[Catalog and Student Handbook](#)

[Change-of-Grade Form](#)

[Class Types & Nuances for Faculty](#)

[Curriculum Update/Change Request Form](#)

[Discussion Board “Post First” Training Guides](#)

[Doctoral Affairs and Academic Resources](#)

[Example on Allocation Hours](#)

[Faculty Engagement, Performance, and Assignment Policy](#)

[Faculty Evaluation Process](#)

[Faculty Fellows](#)

[Faculty Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Faculty Scheduling Description & Course Workload Table](#)

[IT Ticket Creation \(Internal\)](#)

[IT Ticket Creation \(External\)](#)

[Late Submissions for Late Add Students](#)

[Late Student Additions Guidelines](#)

[Labor Distribution and Job Costing Labels](#)

[LITE Center Teaching Effectiveness Guidelines](#)

[Payroll Guidelines for Part-Time Professors](#)

[Plagiarism Report Form](#)

[Professional Development Form](#)

[Proctored Exams](#)

[Registrar’s Grading Guide for Faculty](#)

[Research Colloquium](#)

[Recognition for a Degree Without Official Documentation](#)

[Substitute Request Form, Substitute FAQs, & Substitute Policy](#)

[Supporting & Understanding F-1 Visa Students](#)

[Symposium on Applied Research \(SOAR\)](#)

[Teaching Effectiveness FAQs](#)

[The Professional Weekend Residency Experience](#)

[VCS and Attendance Guide](#)

[Westcliff Gmail Link](#)

[Westcliff International Journal of Applied Research \(WIJAR\)](#)

Handbook Acknowledgment Form

All faculty are provided with a copy of the Westcliff University Faculty Handbook. This handbook works as a guide to university policies, procedures, and general information but should not be considered to be exhaustive of all official university policies. Faculty may reach out to the Office of Faculty Affairs if they have questions, concerns, or need additional information about any policy.

I understand that I should consult my direct supervisor regarding any questions not answered by this handbook. I have entered into my employment relationship with Westcliff University voluntarily and acknowledge that there is no specified length of time of employment. Either the university or I can terminate the employment relationship at will, with or without cause, at any time, so long as there is no violation of applicable federal, state, or provincial law.

As the information and policies described in the handbook are subject to change, I acknowledge that revisions may occur, except with regard to the university's policy of employment-at-will. All changes will be communicated through official notices, and I understand that the revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies.

I understand that the Office of Faculty Affairs oversees the annual review and updating of the Faculty Handbook, that the final yearly version is reviewed and approved by the Faculty Senate, and that addendums or interim updates issued during the academic year may be authorized and approved by the Chief Academic Officer and/or the President of the University.

I acknowledge and accept that this handbook is neither a contract of employment nor a legal document.

I acknowledge that my responsibility to Westcliff University is to comply with the policies contained in this handbook and any revisions to it. All information within it is the property of Westcliff University.

Faculty Name: _____

Faculty Signature: _____

Date: _____