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2.0	13/05/2022	13/05/2022	Policy Owner: Center for Learning Excellence Reviewed by: Learning Excellence Committee; Educational Affairs Committee. Approved by: Provost	Updated and reformatted to meet policy guidelines.
1.0	01/07/2020	01/07/2020	Developed by: Director of CIE Reviewed by: Provost, College Deans, Head of Faculty Approved by: President	Framework for active teaching and learning for Academic year 2020-21

Web version

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Establish the university's commitment to active teaching and learning.
- Establish the expectations of faculty for active learning and the support mechanisms available to them.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all VinUniversity faculty, whether full-time, part-time, Adjunct, or Affiliated, with teaching responsibilities for courses that are offered for-credit at VinUniversity.

***Note:** The policy does not apply to Teaching Assistants (TAs). The training and competency requirements for TAs are part of the job responsibilities as outlined by each college/program.*

3. POLICY STATEMENTS

3.1. University Commitment to Active Learning

VinUniversity has made a commitment to conduct all learning activities using the principles of Active Learning. Faculty are expected to prepare learning content and materials in a manner that facilitates effective learner participation in the learning process while ensuring a high level of academic and skill proficiency expected of VinUniversity students. The university does not mandate any Active Learning format, pedagogy, or duration, as long as the teaching method meets the above description.

3.2. Faculty Preparedness to Teach in an Active Learning Mode

To facilitate a high quality of student learning in an Active Learning mode, faculty and teaching support staff must have the necessary training and skills in this type of teaching in both online and in-person modes. Therefore, at a minimum, all faculty must complete a certificate program in principles, practices, and technologies for active and effective university teaching from established and reputable institutions or organizations in higher education, within their first year at VinUniversity. These are divided into two categories:

a. Fundamentals of University Teaching

Faculty should present evidence of one of the following basic training programs in university teaching: Certification by internationally recognized organizations in higher education such as:

- Advance HE <https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/>
- Harvard University Certificate on Higher Education Teaching (<https://online-learning.harvard.edu/course/higher-education-teaching-certificate?delta=9>)
- Certificate courses on active learning offered by the MOET, MOH, and other national or international entities
- Certificate program on overall higher education teaching offered at VinUniversity.
- Alternatively, another structured, certificate program on teaching fundamentals is offered by recognized international academic institutions and organizations.

***Note:** Method-specific programs such as Team-Based Learning, and Case-Based Teaching, may not qualify as an alternative since the emphasis of these programs is specific to the method as opposed to the overall practice of teaching and learning.*

To ensure that the particular training programs are appropriate for the discipline, the College Dean or Program Director (if delegated by the Dean) will decide on the appropriateness and equivalence of such programs.

b. Fundamentals of Learning Technologies at VinUniversity

Learning technologies are an integral part of active learning. VinUniversity uses several technologies such as Canvas LMS, Zoom, Teams video conferencing, online collaboration platforms, student feedback systems, etc. to facilitate student participation. To teach effectively, faculty must be familiar with and comfortable with using these technologies. Each year VinUniversity will offer several workshops on learning technologies that it utilizes. Faculty must complete **one** such series within their first year at VinUniversity.

***Note:** Faculty with extensive experience in Active learning methodologies and the use of VinUniversity-specific learning technologies can be exempted from this requirement if approved by the College Dean or Program Director.*

3.3. Adequate Course Planning and Readiness for First-Time Teaching

Before a faculty member – whether full-time, adjunct, affiliate or visiting – teaches any course for the first time at VinUniversity, s/he must present the course plan and planned pedagogy to VinUniversity faculty colleagues (and if necessary, to external experts) to receive structured feedback. This includes, at a minimum, a review of the syllabus, assessment approaches, and learning activities for the course. At the Dean and Program Director's discretion, faculty may be asked to conduct a demo teaching session with either their peers, students, or both.

- This requirement applies even if the faculty member has taught the same course elsewhere.
- This requirement applies to all faculty who teach at VinUniversity, including full-time, part-time, Adjunct, Affiliate, and Visiting faculty.
- The Registrar will include this item in the readiness checklist when collecting the requirements for semester planning.
- Deans/Faculty Heads/Program Directors are responsible for implementing and documenting this process.

3.4. Mapping Learning Outcomes with Accreditation Standards

VinUniversity is committed to achieving national and international accreditation for all its degree programs. This requires, among other things, that Course Learning Outcomes are mapped with the Expected Student Outcomes to meet the relevant accreditation specifications.

Therefore, all faculty are expected to map their course learning outcomes to the relevant accreditation standards of their program and communicate with students in the course syllabus.

To the extent possible, faculty are encouraged to map the course learning outcomes in the LMS for easy tracking and reporting for accreditation.

3.5. Required use of Canvas Learning Management System (LMS)

- Canvas is the LMS for all VinUniversity for-credit courses. Accordingly, all marks must be input in Canvas. For an improved student experience, assignments and feedback should be integrated within Canvas, but faculty are permitted to use external tools when Canvas is not fit for purpose.
- Instructors should ensure that, at a minimum, the Course Syllabi, Instructor Information, Learning Outcomes, and Gradebook are set up in Canvas. Faculty may use other course management tools depending on their usefulness for their course.
- Prior to the start of the semester, each Canvas course must meet the minimum requirements

for readiness. Center staff will review each course and assist faculty as needed to meet the minimum standards in LMS before the course commences.

- Although faculty are encouraged to personalize their Canvas course to meet their course needs, VinUniversity Canvas shells for classes offered for-credit must remain consistent with the VinUniversity design guidelines and include the standard VinUniversity statement on Academic Integrity. Please refer to the [University policy on Academic Integrity](#).

3.6. Commitment to Ongoing Professional Development and Community of Learning

The university is committed to ensuring continuing innovation, growth, and improvement in the teaching and learning space. All faculty are expected to participate in ongoing professional development activities related to teaching. While faculty should personalize their individual teaching development plan in consultation with their program director or supervisor, typically, this ongoing engagement will include some of the following activities:

- a. **Online Learning:** Faculty who are new to teaching may benefit from completing one or more of the highly regarded MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) on university teaching listed in Appendix 1.
- b. **University organized workshops and sharing sessions** on teaching-related best practices. Faculty are encouraged to lead and facilitate these workshops and contribute to the community of learning.
- c. **Other professional development:** Faculty are encouraged to use Professional Development funds for continuing development of pedagogies and emerging best practices in teaching and learning.

3.7. Collecting Student Feedback

Part of active learning is embracing student engagement and ownership of the learning experience. VinUniversity considers student feedback to be an essential component of continuous development and actively solicits and welcomes feedback – formal or informal – from students about their learning experiences.

Accordingly, an end-of-semester formal course evaluation and a mid-semester informal assessment are required for each for-credit course. Please refer to the [VinUniversity policy on Course Evaluations](#) for details.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

Faculty:

- Fulfill the requirements of foundational training before teaching a course at VinUniversity.
- Before offering any course for the first time, receive structured feedback on the course plan and pedagogy from VinUniversity faculty colleagues, and if necessary, external reviewers, adjust as necessary and get approval from the Program DirectorsDeans &

Program Directors:

- Ensure that the courses and learning activities in their college/program are delivered using active learning pedagogy.
- Ensure that faculty are appropriately trained and prepared to teach their courses in an active way.
- Support faculty and teaching support staff in making resources available for them to

effectively produce learning resources, integrate learning technologies and deliver learning activities in an active way.

- Ensure that the course plan and pedagogy of each new course have received structured peer feedback from VinUniversity faculty colleagues, and if necessary, external experts, and approve the final outcomes.

VinUniversity Center for Learning Excellence:

- Develop and deliver active learning and foundational programs for VinUniversity faculty and staff.
- Deliver Learning Technology training and workshops to VinUniversity faculty and staff.
- Assist in organizing course peer feedback sessions in partnership with program directors and faculty members.
- Develop and implement a peer support program, in consultation with the Learning Excellence Committee (LEC) which meets faculty needs.
- Conduct ongoing seminars, workshops, and training sessions to meet the needs of faculty, as well as to promote best/current good practices in teaching.
- Support mid-semester feedback activities for courses as requested by colleges/programs
- Provide individual consultation to faculty on teaching-related matters as requested.
- Develop, compile, and distribute teaching related resources to faculty, either by newsletter, faculty portal or website.

5. DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Active Learning	“Any approach to instruction in which all students are asked to engage in the learning process. Active learning stands in contrast to ‘traditional’ modes of instruction in which students are passive recipients of knowledge from an expert. Active learning can take many forms and be executed in any discipline. Commonly, students will engage in small or large activities centered around writing, talking, problem-solving, or reflecting.” (University of Minnesota, 2021)
Learning technologies	An umbrella term that includes communication, information, and technological tools used for learning, teaching, and assessment in online and in-person teaching modes. This includes learning management systems, student response systems, digital collaboration tools, digital content creation tools, video conferencing tools, computer-based learning, multimedia materials, simulations, social media platforms, virtual reality, etc. used to supplement or facilitate learning activities, both in and outside the classroom.

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS AND FORMS

[VinUniversity Policy 14 on Academic Integrity](#)

[VinUniversity Policy 17 on Course Evaluations](#)

[VinUniversity Policy 30 Research And Professional Funds](#)

7. APPENDICES

Suggested MOOCs on University Teaching (the course content is typically available for free, but a small fee is required if individuals would like to get a Certificate of Completion).

- [University Teaching](#) by the Centre for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning at the University of Hong Kong, offered on Coursera
- [Evidence-Based Undergraduate STEM Teaching](#) offered on edX
- [Uncommon Sense Teaching](#), by Professor Barbara Oakley, offered on Coursera