**Regular and Substantive Interaction Policy**

Custodian of Policy: Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs

Relevant Policy: CFR Title 34.B.VI.600.2 (<https://www.ecfr.gov/>) and HLC Glossary

Effective Date: Spring 2026

Last Review: Fall 2025

Next Review:

**Rationale and Scope**

Students thrive academically when they connect with their instructors through their coursework, and Minnesota State University Moorhead takes pride in providing quality instruction and support of students. That support includes giving every student in every class regular and substantive interaction with their instructor. This policy provides guidelines on what students can expect for regular and substantive interaction with their faculty members. Faculty interactions with students in their classes that adhere to this policy meet some of the requirements for regular and substantive interaction, as required by the federal policy and HLC definition referenced above, and in general promote student retention and graduation.

**Definitions:**

**Regular interaction:** Prior to the completion of a course, a faculty member

1. Provides the opportunity for substantive interactions with the student on a predictable and scheduled basis commensurate with the length of time and the amount of content in the course; and
2. Monitors the student’s academic engagement and success. The instructor is responsible for promptly and proactively engaging in substantive interaction with the student when needed on the basis of such monitoring, or upon request by the student.

**Substantive interaction:** Substantive interaction is engaging students in teaching, learning, and assessment, consistent with the content under discussion, and includes at least two of the following.

1. Providing direct instruction.
2. Assessing or providing feedback on a student’s coursework.
3. Providing information or responding to questions about the content of a course.
4. Facilitating group discussion regarding the content of a course or competency.

**Direct Instruction:** Direct instruction is instruction that is delivered by the instructor in real-time to students who are present and able to interact with that instructor, whether on campus in a classroom or online in a synchronous modality. Recorded lectures are not direct instruction, even if they are recorded for each new section and term.

**Policy**

Every course at Minnesota State Moorhead must provide regular and substantial interaction with the students enrolled in the course, regardless of delivery mode, session, or full-time status of the instructor.

Office hours that adhere to the Office Hours policy will meet the first requirement for regular interaction and the third requirement for substantive interaction.

Courses that meet the [Timely Grading, Monitoring, and Feedback] Policy will meet the second requirement for regular interaction.

Courses where content is regularly delivered to students who are present and can interact with the faculty member, either in a face-to-face format on campus and online courses that are delivered in a synchronous manner, meet the first requirement for substantive interaction.

The use of discussion boards in a class may or may not meet the fourth requirement for substantive interaction, depending on the structure of the interaction in the discussion board and the instructor and student involvement.

Computer-graded work does not meet the second requirement for substantive interaction. However, if a faculty member regularly monitors the students’ grades, provides feedback on an individual basis to each student in the class, and reaches out to individual students as needed based on that monitoring, it may meet the requirement. A key component of this requirement is that the interaction is initiated by the faculty member, not the student.

Courses that are online asynchronous or hyflex (for enrolled students taking advantage of an online asynchronous option) meet the requirements of substantive interaction in a variety of ways that are appropriate to the demands of the field and the needs and preferences of the instructors and students in the course. Instructors for online asynchronous and hyflex courses must fill out a survey at the start of each semester, and for each course, that documents how that course will meet the requirements for substantive interaction.