

From: Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning <vptl@villanova.edu>

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To: Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning <vptl@villanova.edu>

Subject: Fall semester academic information

Faculty Colleagues,

Everyone in the Provost's Office hopes you had a great, productive, restful, and fun filled summer. As we continue to prepare for an exciting fall semester with the opening of the Cabrini Campus I wanted to provide you with some important academic updates and reminders for the fall semester.

Timely Grading and Feedback for Undergraduate Students

The faculty handbook ([section 43](#)) entry on Grades and Assessment for Undergraduates has been updated with input and approval from the Academic Policy Committee, Counsel of Deans, and the Provost. Please read this carefully as there are several changes, including clarifying timely feedback for students. Timely feedback means returning items such as student exams, assignments, and participation grades with constructive feedback promptly enough for learners to apply those corrections to future work. Rather than an arbitrary deadline, it is a pedagogical practice designed to prevent bad habits from taking root in the course and to keep students motivated and aware of their academic standing. Some highlights include:

- Faculty are required to evaluate and provide feedback on all undergraduate student work that was due before the midterm break prior to assigning a midterm grade. This evaluation must include all components that contribute to the student's grade, such as class participation, assignments, exams, and other assessed items, even if these components remain ongoing at the time of assigning the midterm grade.
- A best practice is to grade material within two weeks of the due date.
- Faculty must assign a valid midterm grade unless the department chair has approved eliminating the midterm grade for the course.
- New first-time, first-year students must receive a midterm grade for all courses in their first year.

Foundational Use of the LMS Requirement

All instructors must meet [foundational use requirements](#) in Brightspace for all their courses. In short, this policy requires that faculty will post their syllabus, use the gradebook, post all digitally available material, and add due dates (using the "Due Date" setting) for assignments, exams, quizzes, readings, and other course requirements in Brightspace. Training and assistance are available [here](#).

Textbook Access Program (non Law, EMBA, Grad Tax, or study abroad)

Students in credit-bearing undergraduate and graduate programs, except as noted above, are part of the textbook access program which provides students with all of their required course text materials for a fixed fee of \$20.60 per credit in which they are enrolled. Required materials (including the use of Lab

Archives for courses) must be entered into the [Barnes and Noble College \(BNC\) system](#). Students can opt out of the program and purchase materials on their own. Students in the program should only obtain their required materials through the program; please do not ask them to print, purchase, or find materials on their own (unless it is at no cost). If you utilize digital materials for your course(s), the bookstore will email you instructions for how to add them to your Brightspace course so students can access them. Details on the program can be found [here](#) and all questions should be addressed to 610-519-4160 or coursematerials@villanova.edu.

Lecture Capture Classrooms

Faculty assigned to [Lecture Capture Capable](#) classrooms outside the Law School will receive an email prior to the start of the semester with directions on how to select your classes for automatic recordings. These recordings will remain private in the [MyMediasite](#) library of the lead professor. *Classes will not be automatically recorded. You will need to **opt in** to the recordings.*

Thanksgiving Week Update

All undergraduate, graduate, and professional education classes on Monday, November 23, and Tuesday, November 24 will meet in a fully online format. Law School classes will continue to meet in person. Faculty are not permitted to hold classes in person or to cancel classes in lieu of holding them online. This change is a pilot for Fall 2026, after which students and faculty will be surveyed for feedback to inform future decisions.

AI and Data Security

As a reminder, you can only use Villanova data classified as Public in free AI systems. If you use Single Sign On to access our enterprise AI systems (CoPilot, Zoom AI, and ChatGPT), you should verify what type of data you can use in each. This information can be found [here](#). If you have access to Department or College AI tools, please verify what data is approved for each before using. Villanova's data classifications can be found [here](#).

Applications Available in Brightspace

There are so many third-party tools available in Brightspace to help you enhance teaching, student engagement, and learning. You can find them all [here](#). Furthermore, consider using [Turnitin](#), which has plagiarism and AI detection capabilities. Recall that AI detection is not always accurate and should be used in conjunction with [other evidence](#) to support any academic integrity violations.

As always, reach out at any time with any questions. I look forward to seeing everyone on campus, both campuses, soon.

Randy Weinstein
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Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning