



# A GUIDE TO THE 12 CORE CHARACTERISTICS

# Introduction

This guide provides a more in-depth explanation of each of the 12 Core Characteristics of the 4CQ Model. The material here can help you develop your own Personal Teaching Profile. The PTP is a tool we have created to help faculty create their own action plan out of the 4CQ Model. In the final week of your online learning training course, you will create your own Personal Teaching Profile. This Guide is intended to give you more specific explanations and ideas for completing that process.

Each section of the Guide gives you a set of prompting questions to help you begin to formulate your own individual plan of the 4CQ Model. (See the box labeled “Personal Teaching Profile”). We have also included a bullet list of ideas, examples, and suggestions for action items for each of the 12 characteristics. These suggestions are just that: ideas or things we’ve done that have worked well. In some cases, they really would be “best practices”.

You will find the Personal Teaching Profile tool in the Appendix. This is a tool that you will work through

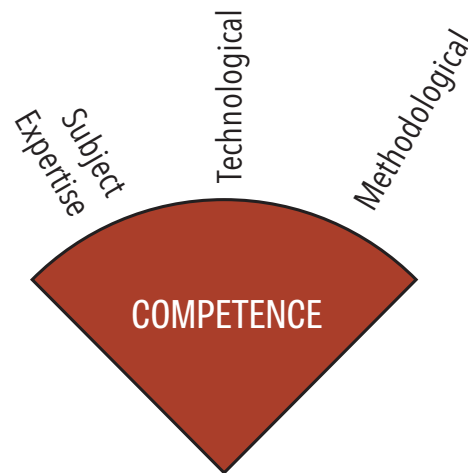
individually and fill out. For each of the 12 characteristics, you should identify a few critical, substantial action items that you will undertake in your teaching. This should not be an exhaustive list of *everything* you might possibly do. The goal is to push you to set some meaningful and important goals for yourself as a Quality Faculty member. These goals should be things that you and your faculty mentor and, later, your faculty evaluator can measure and observe.

The PTP is also meant to be a dynamic document that you will periodically update as you gain experience, learn new approaches, or try different things in different classes. Your Profile will serve as a roadmap and a reference point for helping you engage all 12 aspects of the model in some meaningful way.

*\*Note: This guide has been revised to streamline the original 16 Characteristics down to 12.*

# COMPETENCE

The **Competence Quality** describes the faculty member's knowledge/expertise in the subject matter, teaching methodology, and the learning tools and setting. The **focus** is on continually improving and expanding their skills and knowledge. A Quality Faculty member understands their subject, students, and classroom. They also add depth & breadth to student learning beyond the course materials or prepared content. They demonstrate expertise in subject matter, lifelong learning, good teaching, and technology skills. They model a passion for teaching and learning subject matter.



## Core Characteristic 1: Subject Expertise

**Highly knowledgeable in their subject area and continually learning new ideas or skills**

This characteristic emphasizes your knowledge and expertise as an instructor as well as learning new things, gaining greater understanding and knowledge, or developing your skills. A Quality Faculty does more than just facilitate discussion and grade assignments. He or she adds knowledge value and content to the learning experience. A Quality Faculty is also a great learner with a passion for learning and the simple joys of discovery. As such, you also stay abreast of the changing trends and ideas in your subject area.

Do you regularly read magazines, blogs, or journals related to your field? When was the last time you read up on a new idea, a new tool or method, or a new concept? Do you know where the good websites are for learning about your topic? The 4C Model seeks to allow room for you as the faculty member to meaningfully contribute your own understanding, knowledge, and expertise to the students' learning.

Different programs use different approaches for developing curriculum. In a more traditional teaching environment, the faculty member has responsibility for 100% of the classroom: the content, the lessons, the

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resources, the presentation, and the grading. In OKWU's online model, we use more of a facilitator model in which the bulk of the curriculum has already been developed. The faculty member comes to the classroom with the lessons, resources, objectives, and assignments already laid out. In most cases, these decisions are made independent of the adjunct instructor. In many such models, the instructor's primary role is to facilitate dialogue and grade submitted work.

However, we want to make use of the knowledge, experiences, and formal education that adjuncts bring to the table. We recognize that you have something worthwhile to offer in the area in which you've been hired to teach. Your expertise was an important factor in assigning you to this course. We are constantly working on ways to allow an instructor to bring their own knowledge and learning to the table.

**Personal Teaching Profile:**

**What specific subject areas, topics, or specialties do you have that you could bring to this class? What are you good at or very knowledgeable in that would be of value to your students? What things will you do to continue to learn new things about your subject area or to stay current in your field or area of teaching focus?**

Some suggestions and ideas we've used:

- For a particular course, consider what you could add to the material or resources that would make a difference to the students.
- Maintain a list of your best topics and subjects that you would love to share with your students
- Prepare resources such as PDF lectures, short video clips, or narrated PowerPoint files that you could upload to the course
- Identify articles or web resources that you would recommend as top-shelf material for additional learning or even assignments
- Write mini-lectures (800-1000 words) about different topics related to the course and publish those mini-lectures in the discussion boards, as downloadable documents, or video files
- Maintain licensure or certification through continued education.
- Become a member of a professional organization related to your area of expertise or experience.

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- Join professional networks such as LinkedIn or Academia.edu.
- Follow related professionals or notable figures on Twitter, Facebook, or other social media.
- Use the online databases through the university library to regularly find new articles or journals related to topics of interest.
- Use online news aggregators such as Zite or Flipbook to collect news, trends, articles, or blog posts about topics you choose.

### *Core Characteristic 2: Technological*

#### **Uses technology and other learning tools to be more effective in teaching and to better engage students**

This characteristic relates to your understanding of and comfort level with technology as a vital part of the learning process. A Quality Faculty is skilled at using a wide variety of learning tools available around them to connect with their students and their content. The simple truth is that your teaching is happening in the middle of a digital culture. Digital technology – mobile devices, the Internet, social media, text messaging, ebooks, Amazon, Google, and YouTube – have radically shifted the paradigm of education. Obviously, if you are preparing to be an online instructor, you are already aware of the central role that technology plays.

Remember that digital technology is deeply integrated in the everyday lives of the vast majority of your students. Even if we did not use technology to help us teach, our students routinely use technology in almost every facet of their lives. In fact, the concept of *digital culture* means that technology is no longer merely a tool we use to perform a task better or faster, but that digital technology has become woven in the fabric of society itself to where it is a fundamental

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component of how we communicate, exchange information, share experiences, maintain relationships, make decisions, store knowledge, express our feelings and fears, and experience the world around us.

A Quality Faculty member recognizes the reality of technology and is skilled at teaching and engaging students in that kind of a culture. So as you go through your training, consider how will you incorporate technology into your teaching?

In some cases, that may already be done for you. Online courses, for instance, require the use of an online learning system, Blackboard. You likely already use email or text messaging to communicate with others, so extending that to include your teaching and connection to students is a natural fit.

What tools are you aware of that are available for use in teaching? Where will you go to learn more about what is available? What can you do to be a student of technology and try different things out to see what works?

### **Personal Teaching Profile:**

**How will you use technology to enhance your teaching, communication, feedback, or presence? Consider current**

**technologies that you are already good at using. What technologies are you aware of but are not skilled enough with to use in the classroom? What can you do to periodically learn about new educational technologies and how you might incorporate those in your teaching?**

Some suggestions and ideas we've used:

- Use TurnItIn to check for plagiarism & provide rubric-styled feedback to students.
- Record audio feedback right in student's assignment paper using TurnItIn.
- Create simple video announcements at the start of the week to introduce new concepts or assignment information. Post announcements and summarizations of the weekly learning using YouTube videos you can make right at your desk. Nothing fancy needed.
- Web conferencing has advanced so much in recent years that the use of real-time web conferencing tools such as Skype, Zoom, or WebEx for things like virtual office hours, class meetings, or 1-1 help sessions is a very real and practical option. Nowadays, the vast majority of students have high-speed Internet, so the use of video and web conferencing is quite normal.
- Develop your own online library of relevant videos to share with class.

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- Use a personal account on sites like YouTube, GodTube, Wistia, or Vimeo to publish playlists of existing videos or upload your own.
- Sign up for email newsletters from academic groups for online faculty and practitioners in your field.
- Test out a new technology in your class and assess the effectiveness of each new technology resource

### *Core Characteristic 3: Methodological*

***Understands different ways and contexts of learning and utilizes effective teaching tools and instructional skills appropriate to each***

This characteristic deals with the wider array of theories, models, and practices related to teaching and learning. Methodology primarily deals with connecting the right methods of instruction to the context, content, and types of learners. A Quality Faculty understands there are a variety of ways of learning and are skilled at understanding the student as learner, identifying which ways of learning best fit the situation or subject, and connecting students to the learning process. In short, this characteristic emphasizes learning and what the faculty member can do to facilitate it happening.

In this characteristic, it is essential that faculty pay attention to what methods are effective, allow students to identify ways of learning that stimulate learning, and do research to see what methods best work for the particular learning goals. A **pedagogical approach** is often appropriate for a traditional, undergraduate student. In this approach, the instructor is responsible for the material being taught. The learner has little experience to provide context to the learning objective. Students are motivated by

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external measures, such as grades and the consequences from failure. With an **andragogical approach** (appropriate for most adult or graduate learners), the learner is self-directed and often brings experience that benefits their ability to learn. Learners want to perform tasks, solve problems, and see relevance to real-life scenarios.

These two approaches in recent educational theory really form a continuum of sorts, although some argue that *andragogy* is just a particular subset of *pedagogy*. The reality is that whether it is a traditional college course or an online adult accelerated course, students can fall all along that continuum. You can have traditional age-college students in a typical class that are much more self-motivated, street-wise, savvy in multiple disciplines, and naturally sharp at critical thinking. Likewise, you can have an adult student in an online or accelerated adult course with years of experience in a field but lacks the most fundamental knowledge and context for a particular course and struggles to engage in the level of dialogue and critical thinking that andragogical principles would suggest.

The key thing for a quality faculty member is the ability to discern where individual students fall along that continuum and adapt accordingly. Effective teaching involves shaping the method and the assumptions to

fit the specific moment. Draw from published learning theories such as andragogy, but become an expert of your own and knowing when to utilize which approach.

What different ways of learning will be involved in your particular classes or area? How will you adapt your teaching to the specific course context? How will you identify when students do not fit the typical assumptions and respond accordingly?

### Personal Teaching Profile:

**How aware are you of the different ways of learning and how the context shapes one's teaching? What different ways of learning will be involved in your particular classes or area? How will you adapt your teaching to the specific course context?**

Some suggestions and ideas we've used:

- Explore what learning theories are most applicable to the specific context of the course you are teaching.
- Familiarize yourself with some of the current leading theories on adult learning; Bloom's revised taxonomy, Fink's Significant Learning Experiences, the 7 Ways of Learning, etc.
- Personalize the delivery of learning, using multiple methods to share concepts to meet student preferences.

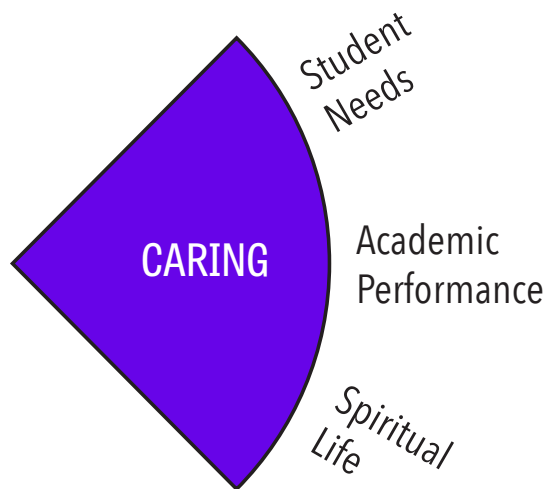


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- Allow student flexibility in delivery of an assignment (e.g., write a paper, a narrated PowerPoint, a video presentation, a Zoom lecture to class).
- Pay attention to what methods are effective, allowing students to identify ways of learning that stimulate learning, or doing the research to see what methods best work for the particular learning goals are all essential parts of this characteristics.

# CARING

The **Caring Quality** describes the faculty member's awareness of and actions related to student needs, learning goals, and outcomes. The **focus** is on the end result of the student's growth as a whole person. A Quality Faculty member is compassionate and concerned for life issues or circumstances, learning goals, and academic performance of students. They are sensitive to needs of learners and able to be flexible in dealing with timelines, performance, and conflict. They value students as people beyond the coursework.



## Core Characteristic 4: Student Needs

### **Shows concern for student needs and life circumstances**

A Quality Faculty shows concern for the circumstances and needs of the student even beyond the classroom. This means being attentive to life situations, showing care when students are dealing with difficult circumstances such as illness, death, stress factors at work, or family situations. The faculty member reaches out through prayer, phone calls, email, whatever method might help the student feel that personal touch.

Caring also means asking the kind of careful personal questions in dialogue forums or class discussions that invites students to share their lives. Personal touches, openness, a genuine spirit of being interested and concerned all positively affect the student. You should strive to balance high academic expectations with deeper concern for student's overall wellbeing. How might you demonstrate this caring and hold yourself accountable that the students know that they matter? When students know you care for them personally, they are far more likely to engage and contribute much more deeply to the classroom experience.

**Personal Teaching Profile:**

How will students know that you care and are concerned for their lives? What will you do to remain aware of issues such as illness or other circumstances that may affect a student's performance in class? What will your response be for students requesting consideration, extensions, or exceptions due to life circumstances beyond the classroom?

Some suggestions and ideas we've used:

- Ask to pray for students
- Follow-up on their personal issues
- Respond with forum posts or personal emails when you see comments about a personal issue they are facing
- Connect with the student's academic advisor if personal needs seem to be making it difficult for the student to keep up
- Be willing to develop an extension plan with student/advisor if appropriate to the life circumstances of students
- Use humor and personal examples or stories in class; show them that you are real
- Ask questions that probe beyond the assignment and encourage students to dialog
- Show flexibility in deadlines or by extending grace for makeup work when reasonable

### Core Characteristic 5: **Academic Performance**

***Helps students accomplish individual and program learning outcomes and reach their academic potential***

This characteristic deals with evaluating student work in light of course objectives, assisting the students to grow beyond the minimum expectations of the course, and instilling into students a desire for learning and inquiry.

To help students achieve the highest level of academic performance, the faculty must appropriately assess a student's current status, identifying strengths, specific areas needing improvement, and giving the student some direction as to how to make those improvements.

By clearly articulating the assignment objectives and evaluating the student based on specific criteria, faculty can judge if the student has met the objective. The key activities for the faculty are providing useful feedback and using the proper tools to assess student performance.

Students respond to both positive and negative expectations. Quality Faculty motivates students with encouragement. Students may enter a course with varying levels of experience and skill levels. The goal of each class is to move individual student's skills and knowledge forward. An educator can impede student success if assumptions are made concerning the student's motivation or abilities. By believing in students, a faculty member has the ability to directly influence academic success.

How can faculty assess a student's level of knowledge and skill? What steps can be taken to help the student improve week by week? How will you address underperforming students? How will you motivate students who have the ability to work beyond the average expectations of the course?

**Personal Teaching Profile:**

**How will you encourage students to work to their full potential and encourage those who are not? How will you monitor their individual growth in light of the objectives of the course? How does your philosophy of grading and evaluation account for individual potential and skill or knowledge level? What is your understanding of feedback and how will you provide it to encourage maximum academic growth? What will you do to try to discover or take into account a student's own personal goals and motivations for learning?**

Some suggestions and ideas we've used:

- Carefully assess the students' abilities with each assignment, providing meaningful feedback, and developing meaningful dialog with each student.
- Providing extensive feedback on assignments that give actionable ways for improving on subsequent work.
- Provide virtual office hours using Zoom, Skype, or something similar
- Offer to schedule 1-1 Zoom sessions for students needing extra assistance.
- Depending on the students' status, focus feedback on higher order areas (structure, development of thesis), and as progress is

made, shift emphasis to lower order areas (spelling, grammar, mechanics).

- Allow students to submit drafts and receive formative feedback on assignments prior to final submission (this requires careful communication and attentive timing).
- Think of creative ways to monitor progress to quickly identify at-risk students
- Proactively reach out to offer tutoring opportunities.
- Identify high achievers mid-course and send out personal emails to acknowledge high achievers' progress
- Reinforce the expected learning outcomes by reiterate the specific assignment learning objectives in lecture notes, an instructional video, or through course announcements
- Focus the students' attention on the most important elements of the course through lecture notes, videos, or other resources.
- Set high expectations
- Let students know via the feedback and assessments what is expected
- Give the students a fair grade, based on the assignment rubric. Avoid giving students an "A" when the grade isn't earned.

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- Grade hard, reserving the highest grades for the “wow” factor; consider an “A” or 98% for work that exceeds expectations.

### Core Characteristic 6: *Spiritual Life*

#### **Concerned for and helps nurture student's spiritual growth in their walk with God**

This characteristic deals with the faculty member's care for the spiritual life and growth of the student. The University's overarching mission is helping our students cultivate a biblical worldview and a vital relationship with God. The life of the intellect and the life of the heart should be inseparably linked.

Although academic performance is the primary activity that gets graded and assessed – for instance, we do not require students to be a believer either when they enroll or when they graduate – education at a Christian liberal arts university is about far more than earning a degree or gaining professional skills. It is about being formed into a particular kind of person. This is a holistic and integrated view. And for us, the backdrop of that education is that every student is created in his image, intended to share his holy character, and called to be a citizen of his kingdom.

This means that for OKWU, the education in the classroom is a particular form of discipleship. A deep spiritual life is not something we can require like we can taking a quiz or writing a paper. But *through* the study of these subjects, and, most importantly, through the guidance, modeling, and wisdom of the faculty

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member, we can help nurture and challenge students in their relationship with the Triune God.

### Personal Teaching Profile:

**How will you cultivate students' spiritual growth? What all will you do to discover and learn about where students are spiritually? What will you do to encourage the students in their daily walk with Jesus Christ? How will you challenge them to grow deeper in their faith? How will you push students to think critically and develop a biblical worldview?**

Some suggestions and ideas we've used:

- Ask critical thinking questions that encourage students to explore the “why” behind their thoughts, beliefs and actions
- Work with the Dean or a course designer to add Scripture reading requirements to your course.
- Require students to read and reflect on assigned passages of Scripture and to apply those to their experience or to situations related to course themes.
- Establish a chapel forum, providing a safe place to share prayer requests and praise reports
- Identify collision points between secular worldview and the Christian worldview in relationship to your specific course learning
- Seek opportunities to pray with students individually or incorporate Scripture references (i.e. 1-1 phone calls, Zoom meetings, email, discussion forums, etc.)
- Build bridges between course concepts and the application of God's word. Ask the questions: what did the Scripture mean when it was written, what is the timeless truth behind what is being said, how does it apply today?
- Share devotionals in Chapel Forum or Announcements that are relevant to student concerns
- Share you own faith story, encourage students to share theirs, and identify students in need of stronger faith connections

# COMMITMENT

The **Commitment Quality** describes the faculty member's attitude toward institutional / program concerns, their role in the learning process, and the degree of their willingness to engage the process and make it their own. The **focus** is on the profession of teaching as a calling for the transformation of lives. A Quality Faculty member demonstrates a high degree of commitment to mission of the university and to helping students grow academically and spiritually within a robust biblical worldview. They work to uphold program policies and best practices while demonstrating initiative & creativity in the teaching vocation.



## Core Characteristic 7: Mission Priority

**Committed to advancing the University's mission and cultivating a biblical, Christian worldview**

As an evangelical Christian university of The Wesleyan Church, Oklahoma Wesleyan University models a way of thought, a way of life, and a way of faith. It is a place of serious study, honest questions, and critical engagement, all in the context of a liberal arts community that honors the Primacy of Jesus Christ, the Priority of Scripture, the Pursuit of Truth, and the Practice of Wisdom. This is the driving force behind all that we do and what we expect of our faculty.

### Personal Teaching Profile:

What is your understanding on the University's mission and the 4 Pillars? How will you connect your subject area or a particular course to that mission and those pillars? How can you incorporate the university's mission and Pillars into the day-to-day teaching of your class? How will you connect the concepts in a given course or subject area to a biblical worldview and the 4 Pillars?

Some suggestions and ideas we've used:

- Reference appropriate Scripture and sharing personal faith through discussion posts and announcements.



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- Use the 4 Pillars as a framework for asking focused questions and replies in discussion forums; e.g., “How does Scripture speak to this?”, “What underlying truths or principles support this?”, “What does this teach about God or his world?”, “How could we apply this truth to live wise, godly lives?”
- Locate the Collision Points for the related school or program in which your course falls. If not provided for in the syllabus, identify ways you can help students wrestle with these collision points through their interaction.
- Post a welcome video in which you personally reflect on what the 4 Pillars mean to you and your life calling.
- Affirm these through your Twitter feeds, Facebook activity, or blog posts (if you are a writer or active in social media.).
- Share links to articles or resources you come across that can stimulate students to think about a biblical worldview.

### *Core Characteristic 8: Creative Initiative*

***Takes ownership of teaching and classroom and demonstrates intrinsic motivation for professionalism, excellence, and creativity***

A Quality Faculty takes the initiative to be engaged in the whole process. This involves seeking ways to adapt or improve the course content, structure, policies, or tools; thinking creatively about student activities, ways to engage students; and contributing new ideas for learning at-large throughout the institution.

The institution provides a high level of standardization across all courses. This primarily involves course formats, syllabi, course content structure and key learning resources and activities. We also provide a default package of course content, learning activities, and assessments. But we want our faculty to take the initiative to go beyond this, to help both their courses as well as the program as a whole.

Teaching and learning is as much an art as it is science. A Quality Faculty member is committed to helping advance both the art and science of teaching. A Quality Faculty member finds ways to approach the same course or the similar content with fresh eyes. They expend some energy finding ways to

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go beyond the rote practice of facilitating the same course with minimal effort, not content with merely getting by.

We are looking to our faculty to help us know where improvements can be made. Our faculty are partners with the administration and staff in helping build the programs, structures, and tools. While its true that we have to build courses that can be handed from one instructor to the next, that is our minimum expectation. Get involved! Take ownership! Work with us to always be making things better!

How can you show initiative both in the classroom as a teacher and in the institution as a faculty partner?

### Personal Teaching Profile:

**How will students know you are motivated to be a good teacher and motivated to help then engage and have a positive experience? How will you demonstrate an innovative spirit in shaping the learning environment of your course? Beyond the classroom, what are some things you could take the initiative to create course materials, new learning resources, provide suggestions or feedback for course revisions, or engage in faculty development activities?**

Some suggestions and ideas we've used:

- Offering 1-1 help sessions (Seeking out student who are in need of support, and being proactive in setting up these sessions)
- Providing feedback to improve student performance beyond the subject area of the course (i.e. developing writing skills in non-writing classes).
- Be aware of career opportunities and integrate deeper participation in University's Adjunct Rank system
- Seeking assistance from senior faculty mentor for questions or concerns, lending to faster and more effective service to students.
- Integrate publisher content and activities into the classroom.
- Look for ways to improve opportunities for engaging students and your own teaching.
- Provide constructive feedback and suggested resources for improving or enhancing a course.
- Get involved in institutional activities, follow the Connect:ED faculty newsletter, participate in Twitter feeds, follow us on Twitter using #OKWUonline – follow the hashtag!
- Contribute articles to Connect:ED, the AGS faculty newsletter

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- Think of new activities or ways to engage students each time you teach the class. Don't just recycle the same old processes.
- Implement course enhancements that add value to the learning process.
- Collaborate with senior colleagues to gain best practices and seek feedback on proposed enhancements in your field of instruction.
- Think of ways to bring the stock content to life. Find the most-up-to-date current events to make it relevant.
- Identify some common problem or challenge you face in teaching and research ways to address it.

### *Core Characteristic 9: Institutional Processes*

#### ***Appreciates and abides by institutional processes and policies that support student success, retention, and engagement***

This characteristic describes the faculty member's awareness of and willingness to follow the policies and expectations established by the institution. While every organization has its rules that may appear to be (or actually are) unnecessary or obtrusive, our goal is to provide a system that works for all our programs and allows us to be efficient and effective stewards of the entire organization. That means there are inevitably policies or processes you are asked to follow that seem like they don't matter but play a key role behind the scenes for our student support services.

There are many factors related to financial aid, federal student aid regulations, business accounting and auditing practices that have little obvious bearing on the classroom, but the classroom can have major bearing on those issues. Hence, policies like attendance, retention (at-risk performance) monitoring, advisor notifications, and the like are crucial to the bigger work of the school.

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From an academic perspective, student performance and retention are of great concern. As faculty, you are the front lines for communication when there are potential obstacles students may be facing.

In addition, students are much more likely to engage and perform well when the expectations and processes for the classroom are clearly spelled out up front and then adhered to. Every faculty member has their way of doing particular things. A Quality Faculty takes the time to spell those out and communicate with the students how “things work in this class”. But a Quality Faculty is also attentive to how their expectations mesh with those of the university so as to not create conflicting requirements.

### Personal Teaching Profile:

**How clear are you on the policies and procedures for OKWU AGS, especially regarding attendance, late submissions, student participation, grading deadlines, communication, and final grade submissions? Where do you go for information, faculty resources, or answers to policy questions (staff, Blackboard, website)? What will you do to ensure that program and instructor expectations are understood and followed? Do your personal policies align with the university and other generally accepted practices? How do you know?**

Some suggestions and ideas we've used:

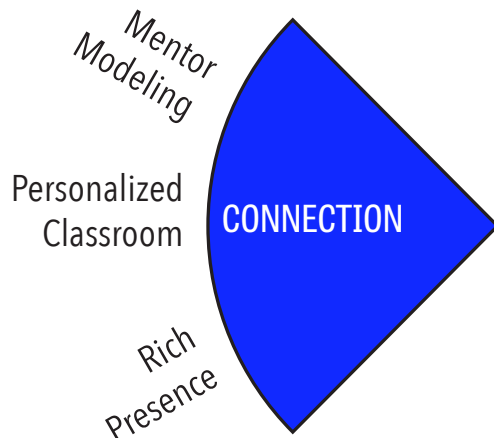
- Clearly identify your expectations and processes for things like communicating, answering questions, grading, and feedback.
- Create and post a “Prof \_\_\_\_\_'s Faculty Policy Statement” so students can know how you work.
- Study and adhere to the expectations for faculty as posted by the University or published in the Faculty Handbook.
- Respond to student questions promptly within 24 hours, and no longer than 36 hours on your days offline.
- Provide useful and corrective feedback on assignments, test, papers, and activities in a timely manner, within one week (7 days) of the posted assignment and seven (7) days after the last day of class.
- Establish some kind of regular frequency for engaging students and logging into class, we would generally expect a minimum of 3 days each week spread from beginning to end as a pattern.
- Engage with students/course using communication methods such as Posts, announcements, ZOOM, 1:1 discussions, text messaging, class emails, and through grading feedback

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- Provide personalized communication to each student through email, Zoom sessions, or within assignment feedback at least two times each week.
- Direct a discussion forum response to each student at least once each week, using his or her name in the DQ title (Prof. Cook's response to John DQ1).
- Track personal "touches" to each student using FOLT Roster to ensure engagement is spread to all.
- Volunteer to create a training module for other faculty.
- Consider pursuing additional credentialing or certification.

# CONNECTION

The **Competence Quality** describes the faculty member’s skill and activity aimed at developing and sustaining relationships with the students; being accessible, conveying information, being involved, reproducing themselves. The **focus** is on the relationships with students and colleagues. A Quality Faculty member meaningfully engages with students and is noticeably connected to all aspects of the classroom experience, provides useful feedback & direction, challenges & motivates students, and manages classroom issues through timely and personal communication. Their personality, passions, and unique skillset come through.



## Core Characteristic 10: Active Engagement

**Engages and interacts with students in a variety of meaningful ways or times and is responsive and accessible**

Being actively engaged in the classroom means you are present in the classroom in such a way as to command attention, establish rapport, and build a connection. Engagement and interaction through a variety of means allows students to experience the “rich presence” of the faculty.

You are not merely entering grades or delivering lectures. Through the intentional ways in which you present yourself and make yourself visible, students know who you are, what your priorities are, whether you value them, and how willing you are to help them be successful.

Active engagement and rich presence is the result of multiple factors all working together to create the environment in which students experience you. The challenge is the same, whether in a brick-and-mortar classroom or in a virtual online course. Each learning environment has its own unique challenges, but either way, a Quality Faculty member is highly intentional about making their presence known.

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It is critical to student engagement and satisfaction that faculty are reasonably responsive when students try to communicate. This doesn't mean that you have to answer your cell phone on the first ring or check your email every 10 minutes. On the other hand, students should not have to wait and wonder for a week or two at a time whether the professor received their message.

Quality Faculty make themselves available (within reason) to students and is attentive to the communication process. When students have a question about the course, encounter a problem that will affect their participation, need clarification on an assignment or grade, or have other general questions, they have a reasonable expectation that the faculty member is there and available.

From a customer service perspective, the student is the customer (although the student is *not* always right). However, they *are* our customers and we are here to serve them. To the extent we can make it happen, students should routinely walk away from their interactions with us feeling affirmed and connected. Being accessible and engaged is a key part of making that happen.

### Personal Teaching Profile:

**How will students experience your presence in a regular and meaningful way in the classroom? In what ways will students and the online staff interact with you so that they know you are connected and involved? How will you ensure that students can reach you easily and quickly, especially since they may be focusing on school during evening or weekend hours? What expectation should students have about you responding to their inquiries and how will they know this? What is your plan for regular interaction in this particular class?**

Some suggestions and ideas we've used:

- Share personal insights and professional experiences of course concepts
- Organize the online learning content to create a mix of learning activities that are appropriate to meet unique student needs.
- Post a Bio and Welcome message in the Course Information section that details your experience, and demonstrates your commitment to help students develop a Christian Worldview in the classroom.
- Send a welcome email several days prior to the start of class.
- Login and communicate at least 3 days each week

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- Avoid being “offline” 2 consecutive days (48 hours or more).
- Send Announcements mid-week, prior to weekend, and Weekly Review/Preview.
- Provide videos of yourself in your “natural” setting. Do *not* overproduce or make things look commercial.
- Recognize that students value your attention and face time.
- Practice the discipline of active listening.
- Let students know your personal situations, especially when it may affect your availability, but share your life.
- Invite students to call your personal phone.
- Schedule time to call each student once during the duration of the class.
- Send emails of encouragement or prayer.
- Offer virtual office hours for students who need more face-to-face interaction (maybe web conferencing tools like Zoom or Skype)
- Respond to student emails in a timely and complete manner (usually within 24 hours; faster if critical).
- Notify class when you experience one-off events where you are not online, and how to contact you (e.g., Announcement “I’ll be on the road from 12-4, so please call my cell”).

### **Core Characteristic 11: Personalized Classroom**

***Works to go beyond the basic shell of course to make it their own, suited to their passions, interests, expertise, and teaching skills***

This characteristic really feeds off of initiative and creativity but is much more specifically focused on making a course “yours”. Personalizing a course means shaping it to fit your personality, your gifts, and your abilities, albeit within the boundaries set by the school. The characteristics of Mentor-modeling, Lifelong Learning, and Creativity all relate to the passion and interests of the faculty member. But this characteristic means that passion, creativity, and initiative show up in the course structure and content. High Quality faculty here will tend to think much more holistically about the class as an extension of their own interests and desires to see others grow.

How will you add personality to the course, making it “your” class?



**Personal Teaching Profile:**

How will you go beyond the basic shell of the course to make it your own, suited to your passions, interests, expertise, and teaching skills? How can you go beyond the basic shell of the course which you have been given and add something of substance and meaning to it? What are some different ways you intend to share your own story and experiences in the classroom? What do you personally bring to the classroom that would be missing if you were not teaching this class?

Some suggestions and ideas we've used:

- Provide personal lecture notes.
- Edit discussion forum questions to play to your strengths and knowledge areas.
- Share personal experience through announcements and discussions.
- Add your own content, make your own videos, create learning materials for the class to add to the stock material provided by the University and that add new ideas, perspective, or tools.
- Create active learning (interview leaders in your field, scavenger hunts for content, apply current events to learning concepts, i.e., dissecting what occurred in the news story based on the concepts we earned in class?)
- Create role play exercises
- Post assignment self-assessment - what went well, where could I improve, what factors impacted my performance
- Create Learning Groups at the beginning of the course as Study Groups. Use this forum and have students use ZOOM for reading review, study sessions, test prep, assignment peer reviews, create week's recap of achievement of learning objectives
- Give students options of assignments topics, or DQ options (Answer DQ 1, A or B)
- Create unique learning experiences that allow students to be in charge (e.g., lead a discussion forum, summarize the week's learning, student resident experts. and create their own DQs based on the reading; submit proposed exam questions)

### Core Characteristic 12: Mentor Modeling

**Models scholarship, critical/reflective thinking, worldview integration, and holistic learning for students**

High quality teaching is not merely dumping information off to students and leaving them to do with it what they will. Great education involves a life-to-life transfer of some kind. This is the heart of mentoring and modeling. Engagement with the faculty is a critical part of the learning process. Students can receive volumes of information and data from all kinds of places. They don't necessarily need you, the faculty, for that. But a Quality Faculty models for students the whole range of true learning around that information. They model critical thinking, curiosity and inquisitiveness, a passion for learning and to answer questions. They model an appreciation for a broad and deeply anchored worldview. They model the 4 Pillars of the University. They mentor students in wrestling with crucial questions, applying learning to current circumstances, or wrestling to overcome obstacles or grasp difficult concepts.

Learning research consistently shows that for many students, the influence and example of a faculty member is one of the most important motivators that leads to effective lifelong learning.

#### Personal Teaching Profile:

How will you model scholarship, critical/reflective thinking, worldview integration, and holistic learning for students in this class? What are some general practices and strategies you can use across all your classes? What are some different things that could be done in this particular class?

Some suggestions and ideas we've used:

- Share weekly news articles with the latest research & findings
- Recommend additional books and resources to encourage further research
- Take an active role to help students achieve their goals
- Show genuine enthusiasm and excitement about the learning
- Model appropriate discussion forum participation; highlight student achievements with public praise
- Have students maintain a reflective learning journal; how much did they study on the learning concepts; how did their performance reflect their investment? What concepts did they grasp? What learning activities were most effective for their comprehension?
- Share opportunities to participate in service activities, encourage students to seek out

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mentors professionally, academically, and spiritually.

- Encourage students to mentor fellow students, and contribute to the learning material of the course. Ask them to share their experiences with the class and document in reflective journals.
- Model Christian service by volunteering to serve, contributing beyond the basics, mentoring junior or new adjuncts.
- Share the joyful experiences of giving to others with your students so they understand the value of reaching back to lift up others.
- Seek out student examples of application of course learning to their professional roles. Often students are able to take learning and apply to their careers immediately and this is exciting.

## GENERAL COMMENTS

You probably have observed to yourself that some of these characteristics could arguably overlap. That is certainly true. Many times, it's a combination of substance plus action.

Sending an email note to a student giving them some specific feedback and instructions about their use of APA in a paper could fit in both Connection (rich presence) and Caring (academic performance). But the Connection part is the *act* of reaching out to the student. The Caring part is the value and time spent providing substantive comments to the student.

Posting a reply to a student in which you share your personal testimony is also an example of both Active Engagement (sharing yourself) and a concern for helping their Spiritual Growth (Caring).

Likewise, you've maybe noticed that the suggestion to post videos shows up in multiple categories. But again, think of this in terms of substance plus method. The use of the method of uploading videos could involve multiple facets all at once.

The key is not to be absolutely distinct and artificially separate. The purpose of this model is to give you meaningful but useable guiderails in which you can establish practical, realistic goals for yourself.

As you begin using this guide to developing your Personal Teaching Profile, when you come across activities that could fit into different characteristics, go ahead and go with it. But as you work through your PTP, for each activity you put down (even if they are duplicated), ask yourself this question: *What specifically do I envision accomplishing with this activity in this Quality area?*