Policy on Teaching and Learning

1. Introduction
Quality teaching and learning is central to the vision and the mission of Bethlehem University. The Policy on Teaching and Learning articulates the commitment of the University to provide students with an education of the highest standards to prepare them for life, work and citizenship so to be capable of adapting to the changing environments in which they find themselves.

2. Policy Type
Academic

3. Responsible Office
Office of Academic Affairs

4. Oversight Executive
Vice President for Academic Affairs

5. Implementing Body
Academic Council

6. Applies to
This policy applies to all teaching and learning activities in undergraduate and graduate courses and programs including practicum and professional experiences.

7. Purpose of the policy
Bethlehem University subscribes to the student-centered approach in its educational provision. The purpose of this Policy is to guide the implementation of this approach to all teaching and learning processes at Bethlehem University. It is designed to ensure that Bethlehem University provides students with 

excellent teaching practices that are supported by resource-enriched learning environments. The policy guides the strategic development of teaching and learning throughout the University. This policy, together with the Policy on Assessment and the Policy on Research, provides the basis from which
8. Definitions of Terms
The following concepts and expressions have specific meanings in this Policy and related policies and procedures:

8.1 Student-centered approach
A teaching approach in which teachers act as facilitators of the learning process in order to help students construct their knowledge and learn how to think for themselves.

8.2 Learning outcomes
Refer to the knowledge, skills and attitudes that students should acquire and demonstrate at the end of a course or a program.

8.3 Teacher Portfolio
A collection of teacher’s work, in which he/she documents the teaching process and provides evidence of his/her best teaching and learning approaches appropriate to their disciplines, curriculum and student educational needs. In particular this Policy provides a framework and focus for the university management for quality assurance.

8.4 Course Portfolio
A collection of materials pertaining to specific course such as course outlines, assessment and teaching methods. The aim is to provide an evidence about the achievement of the course learning outcomes.

8.5 Program Specification Portfolio
A document that specify the objectives of a program, its benchmarks, learning outcomes (knowledge and understanding, skills and attitudes), structure, assessment strategies and teaching methods.

8.6 Community engagement
Is an academic strategy that seeks to engage students in activities that enhance academic learning, students’ civic responsibility and their skills while also enhancing community capacity through service.

8.7 E-learning
A teaching approach that uses electronic resources to support students learning.

8.8 Pedagogical technology knowledge
An understanding of the uses of different technological resources to support learning.

8.9 Subject knowledge
A deep understanding of the materials to be taught to students as well as the methods that should be used to enhance students’ understanding of the subject.

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Teachers’ understanding of student needs and their ability to use instructional methods that enhance students’ learning and understanding.

8.11 Teacher
A member of the faculty/staff who is responsible to deliver part of or all of a course in a program.

9. Guiding Principles
This policy is being informed and guided by the following principles:

9.1 Teaching and learning are planned processes that are guided by the Vision and Mission of Bethlehem University and the Characteristics of BU Graduates.

9.2 All teaching practices emphasize the achievement of learning outcomes in contrast with content-oriented teaching strategies.

9.3 The University’s academic programs and courses are planned and reviewed based on their relevance to local, national and global needs as well as the changing work environment.

9.4 All teaching programs and activities contribute towards the personal and intellectual growth of the individual student and emphasize student active learning and engagement.

9.5 All teaching and learning activities are inclusive of all students and cater for their diverse needs and backgrounds.

9.6 The University actively encourages the use of technology to enhance teaching, learning and the student experience.

9.7 Academic practice of the university faculty and students includes a balance of commitments between teaching and learning, research, and community engagement.

9.8 The University recognizes the vital role of assessment and feedback to students as an integral part of the learning process. (cf: Policy on Assessment)

9.9 The University recognizes the vital role of student critical feedback to the enhancement of the learning process and the quality of teaching. (cf: Policy on Course-Faculty Evaluation)

9.10 The University actively supports the continued professional development of its academic leadership, faculty, and staff and fosters the sense of a community of learners that recognizes and awards excellence in teaching and learning.

9.11 The University emphasizes scholarship supported by a research-informed approach to teaching, learning and assessment.

10.8 The University recognizes the vital role of the academic practice of the university faculty and their ability to use instructional methods that enhance students’ learning and understanding.

11.8 Teacher
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10.8 مادة أساسية
تستند هذه السياسة إلى المبادئ الأساسية التالية:

1.7 التعلم والتعليم عملية معطيات استشردون برؤية جامعة بيت لحم ورسالتها وخصوصية خريجي جامعة بيت لحم الواردة في رسالة الجامعة.

2.7 تؤكد كافة الممارسات التعليمية من خريجي جامعة بيت لحم ورسالتها وخصوصية خريجي جامعة بيت لحم الواردة في رسالة الجامعة.

3.7 تقوم الجامعات الأكاديمية وكافة المسالك توضع وتمت اعتمادًا على الاحتياجات المحلية والعالمية إضافة إلى بيئة العمل المتغيرة.

4.7 تضمن كافة الجامعات الأكاديمية والمتعلقة في تنمية شخصية كل طالب وفكرة وتمت اعتمادًا على النشاط والمشاركة الفعلية لكل طالب.

5.7 تشمل كافة أنشطة التعلم والتعليم جميع الطلبة وتنبي الاستجابة من الطلبة وتحقيق الرضا من الطلبة وتحقيق رضا الطلبة.

6.7 تضمن الجامعات بشكل عملي استخدام التكنولوجيا لتعزيز عملية التعلم والتعلم والخبرات الطلابية.

7.7 تحاول الممارسة الأكاديمية لأعضاء هيئة التدريس بالانضباط والتمساح عليه توازن بين التزامات التعليم والتعلم، والبحث، والمشاركة المجتمعية.

8.7 تدرك الجامعة الدور الحيوي لتقنية التعليم والتعلم والرفعية الذين يقدمون للطلبة كجزء لا يمكنه من عملية التعليم. (أقترب: سياسة التقييم)

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10.8 تدعم الجامعة بشكل عملي نشاط التطور المهني المستمر لقادتها الأكاديميين وأعضاء هيئة التدريس والموظفين، وتعزز الشعور بالانتماء إلى مجتمع متعلم يعترف بالتميز في التعليم والتعلم ويكافح.

11.8 تؤكد الجامعة على دراسة التعلم المنطقي على منهج البحث في عمليات التعلم والتعلم والتقييم.
10. Program and Course Design

Programs and courses are designed around both discipline based content and processes of delivery in line with the student-centered approach. They are based upon the achievement of learning outcomes that are aligned with program goals and the Characteristics of the Bethlehem University Graduate. Learning outcomes refer to the knowledge, skills and attitudes that students should acquire and be able to demonstrate at the end of a course or program. Focusing on learning outcomes rather than content oriented objectives of a program helps identify appropriate teaching methods and associated assessment methods to ensure effective learning. The Policy thus calls for the following.

10.1 All programs at Bethlehem University are required to have an associated set of learning outcomes. It is the responsibility of the Department/Faculty to maintain and update a program specification portfolio for each of its programs that includes clearly articulated program learning outcomes, a mapping of courses of the program to the learning outcomes, identified appropriate methods of delivery and assessment. Program Specifications Portfolio is accompanied by course portfolios.

10.2 It is the responsibility of the teachers to plan their courses in alignment with the program and course learning outcomes as specified in the program specification portfolio, course portfolios and to identify the teaching and assessment methods through which the achievement of the course learning outcomes by the student are demonstrated.

10.3 It is the responsibility of the Chairperson (or the Dean for faculties that have no departments) to oversee the process of the achievement of program learning outcomes based on students’ course evaluations, the teachers’ course portfolios and assessment procedures used.

10.4 The Deans of the Faculties and the Director of the Institute of Hotel Management are responsible to manage the teaching learning process to ensure its high quality.

11. Teaching Methods

Teaching at Bethlehem University is about fostering values and challenging students’ attitudes, improving their thinking and questioning skills, and enriching their subject and professional knowledge in order to positively impact their professional practices. As a result, the variety of teaching methods combines to form a fundamental element to achieving these objectives. In choosing teaching methods to use,
teachers should:

- Focus on motivating students to learn and to conduct their own studies and investigations to construct their own learning.
- Promote the active participation of students and involve them in the teaching activities and tasks.
- Provide purposeful content through meaningful contexts and activities.
- Provide opportunities for collaborative learning through peer discussion and team work.
- Construct teaching activities and tasks that enhance students’ critical thinking skills.

The policy calls for the following:

11.1 Courses are delivered in a face-to-face mode supported by pedagogical technology and resources in line with the strategy for enhancing IT skills across the University.

11.2 Each department FACULTY, based on its program and course learning outcomes identifies the teaching methods (lectures, group work, class presentations, service learning, fieldwork, e-learning, problem-based learning) for their effective delivery.

11.3 Each teacher considers the use of a variety of teaching methods from the ones identified in the program specification portfolio to promote students’ achievement of the learning outcomes.

11.4 Each teacher considers the use of formative assessment to support and enhance the effectiveness of the teaching methods.

12. Course Outlines

To facilitate clear communication about courses between students and faculty, Bethlehem University requires every teacher to provide the students with course outlines containing specific information about the structure of the course. The Policy requires the following:

12.1 Course outlines are given to the students at the beginning of each semester. Irrespective of discipline or level, every course outline must contain the following:

1. Code and Name of the course, lecturers’ contact information and office hours
2. Course description as it appears in the University Catalogue
3. Learning Outcomes as stated in the Program Specification Portfolio
4. Topics to be covered in the course
5. Course schedule
6. Textbooks and/or readings

The policy requires every teacher to provide the students with feedback on their performance. This feedback should be based on the following:

- The structure of the course.
- The Policy requires the assessment to support and enhance the learning outcomes.
- Teaching methods from the ones identified in the program specification portfolio to promote students’ achievement of the learning outcomes.
- The policy requires every teacher to provide the students with feedback on their performance. This feedback should be based on the following:

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7. Assessment plan (Refer to the Policy on Assessment)
8. Task description, weighting and targeted learning outcomes (Refer to the Policy on Assessment)
9. List of books on the reserve shelf in the Library (if applicable)
10. Instructions related to make-up exams or other work
11. A statement related to accommodations for students with special needs
12. Other technical information in the course is up to the teacher to determine and include in the course outline.

12.2 Teachers must submit copies of course outlines to the Department Chair/Faculty Dean to document implementation of this policy.
12.3 All courses outlines each semester must be posted on the university’s website at least three days prior to the first day of classes and must be retrained on this site for the duration of the semester or summer course.

13. Teaching and Learning Environment
Bethlehem University subscribes to the notion that quality support services are key to student learning, success and progress towards a degree. Bethlehem University supports its students by:

13.1 Integrating students into University life: The curriculum is designed with a liberal education approach to fulfill The University’s mission to provide an environment of respect for diversity.
13.2 New Student Orientation: In addition to orientation program provided by the Office of the Dean of Students, each faculty/department plans the integration of students into academic programs by providing them with materials and resources that help them to understand the expectations of them as students as well as the department’s and university’s regulations.
13.3 Academic Advising: Each Faculty/Department appoints an academic advisor for each student to help them track their academic progress from the moment of enrollment until graduation and, where necessary, to take steps to ensure that the student remains on course for successful completion of requirements.
13.4 The physical teaching and learning environment which includes library facilities, teaching venues and IT facilities, are designed and equipped to support the achievement the expectations of quality standards.

12. Mismatches of Non-Academic Nature, other work

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14. Scholarship in Teaching and Learning

National and international research links good teaching practices to enquiry into teaching and learning. The University facilitates and supports lecturers’ initiatives to review and research their practices systematically and rigorously. The University expects the faculty to engage in the scholarship in teaching and learning through the following practices:

14.1 Conducting organized research into faculty’s own teaching practices for the purpose of promoting excellence in these practices.
14.2 Reflecting on formal and informal student and peer feedback to improve lecturer’s own practices.
14.3 Participation of faculty in communities of practice and associations, presenting their research works in quality conferences and in publishing the outcomes of their studies in refereed local and international journals on the scholarship of teaching and learning.
14.4 Engagement of faculty in professional learning through keeping up with development and innovations in their disciplines and pedagogy.
14.5 Enrichment of their subject knowledge through following recent studies/work that are related to their subject and to organize activities within their departments in order to share this knowledge with colleagues and students.

15. Support for Professional Development of Faculty

To ensure pursuit of excellence in teaching and learning, Bethlehem University through the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning provides faculty with training opportunities on issues related to teaching and learning in Higher Education. Bethlehem University is committed to:

15.1 Encouraging research initiatives in teaching and learning through seeking grant resources from the Dean of Research
15.2 Supporting faculty’s participation in local, regional and international conferences.
15.3 Seeking scholarships to encourage and support faculty to obtain higher degrees from well-established universities.
15.4 Offering awards for innovative teaching initiatives that challenge the students intellectually and engage them in effective learning contexts.
16. QUALITY ASSURANCE

The university is responsible for the academic standards of its programs and degrees awarded in its name. In contemporary higher education, the evaluation of programs, courses and teaching is a necessary component of quality assurance and quality enhancement. A variety of methods are used to obtain feedback about the quality of teaching and learning with the intention of linking them central idea of improving student learning. These methods include but are not limited to:

16.1 Every semester, students are expected to complete on-line course evaluations for every course. Students should be informed of actions taken as a result of evaluation of courses.

16.2 Faculties/Departments implement a plan for the systematic evaluation of all courses portfolios to facilitate the identification of critical issues with regard to student progress and course delivery.

16.3 Faculties/Departments implement a plan for periodic reviews of approaches to assessment, range of teaching methods and the extent to which learning outcomes at the program level are being achieved.

16.4 Teacher Portfolios are the basis on which Deans/Chairpersons evaluate teaching, course management and teachers’ support of student learning and engagement.

17. MEASURES TO REVIEW AND UPDATE THE POLICY

This policy is subject to review and renewal based on documents and evidence.