Best Practices for Communication in the Online Classroom
UNM – Los Alamos

Criteria for instructor interaction and communication

The overall intent of instructor interaction and communication is to maintain a tangible, attentive and reliable presence in the course. The guidelines provided are designed to facilitate this intent.

- Instructor's establish and maintain a clear and evident presence in the course and achieve this in a variety of ways (email, discussion participation, feedback and comments on assignments, etc.).
- Instructors post frequent (at least weekly) announcements or other group communications to students.
- Instructors respond to emails in a timely manner (ideally, responses should be given within 24 hours; 48 hours should be the maximum time for a response; during the first few days of the course, these response times should be shorter).

- Instructors correct assignments in a timely manner (generally within one week)
- Instructors post grades for individual assignments and make these available for student viewing in a timely manner (one week from due date).
- Instructors build into their courses the regular use of at least one tool (chat, discussion, synchronous "live" classrooms, etc.) that enables and requires weekly interactions amongst students and between students and the instructor.
- Instructor's observations and comments are shared regularly in these discussions, chats, etc.
- Instructors monitor these discussions, chats, etc.
- Instructors create an atmosphere and exemplify a tone of warm, mature and easy communication that encourages open student participation and fosters active engagement.