Syllabus Best Practices for Faculty

A primary purpose of a syllabus is to communicate to your students what the course is about, why it is taught, where it is going, and what will be required of the students for them to complete the course with a passing grade. Because students will view your syllabus as a kind of "contract," it is important to be as clear as possible, and to avoid changing major aspects of the syllabus after the first day of class. View **Steps to a Good Syllabus** on the **Center for Teaching Excellence's** website for additional information on creating a quality syllabus.

Below is a list of best practices for you to include in your syllabus. Items marked with * are required and must be in included in your syllabus.

General Course Information

1. *Course designator, course number, course title and Carolina Core designation (if applicable)
2. Semester and year of offering
3. *Class meeting days, time and location

Instructor/TA Contact Information

4. *Instructor name
5. Instructor preferred title
6. *Contact information (phone, email)
7. Preferred method of contact
8. Office location
9. Office hours
10. TA contact information (if applicable)

Course Description

11. *Undergraduate or Graduate Academic Bulletin course description
12. *Prerequisite(s)
13. *Course learning outcomes (measurable and stated as observable learner behaviors using action verbs)
14. *Statement verifying learning outcomes are equivalent to those of a face-to-face (F2F) version of the course (distributed learning course)
15. *Overview of how the course will be conducted (distributed learning course)
16. *Communication/feedback turnaround time on discussion board postings, email, assignments, etc (distributed learning course)

Instructional and Technology Information

17. *List of required textbooks or materials (include ISBN and edition for all books and differentiate between required and optional textbooks)
18. *Citation for each required reading/material and a notation that all readings/materials comply with copyright/fair use policies (distributed learning course)
19. *Specific technologies/software/programs to be used in the course (distributed learning course)
20. *Minimal student technical requirements/skills (distributed learning course)
21. Technical support

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Course Assignments and Assessments

22. *Assignments, projects, quizzes, and/or exams with brief descriptions of expectations with points/weights assigned to each activity

23. *Grading scheme and weights

Note: Courses at the Advanced Undergraduate/Entry Level Graduate Courses must include separate grading schemes for undergraduate and graduate credit.

24. *Rubric information or statement (if applicable) (distributed learning course)

25. Formatting for assignments

26. *Securing online tests/quizzes statement (distributed learning course)

27. *Clearly distinguished requirements for undergraduate and graduate credit (for 500 or 600 level courses).

Note: Courses at the Advanced Undergraduate/Entry Level Graduate Courses (500 and 600 level) must include one or more assignments for graduate credit that are clearly differentiated from undergraduate assignments.

Course Policies and Procedures

28. *Attendance policy (absences and tardiness for traditional course)

29. *Academic integrity statement

30. Expectations for classroom behavior

31. Laptop/smartphone policy (face-to-face courses)

32. Netiquette statement (distributed learning courses)

33. Late work/make-up policy

34. Instructional methods

35. Diversity and inclusion

36. Expectations of the instructor

37. Copyright/fair use statement

38. Interpersonal violence statement

Student Support Resources

39. Academic success statement

40. Student Success Center (undergraduate students only)

41. Writing Center

42. Library resources

43. *Disability services

Course Outline/Schedule

44. *Topics and timeline

45. Reading assignments

46. Due dates for assignments

47. Test and exam dates

48. Use of first class session – more than syllabus review

49. No tests or major assignments due last week of class

50. *Final exam date/time included (from university schedule)

Note: It's important to use Final Exam period for Final Exam or other activity