Syllabus Creation

Your syllabus is an extremely important element of your course. It is a contract between you and your students. It clarifies your relationships, expectations, policies, and procedures. In addition, it is a way of connecting with your students immediately and giving them a view of you and your course. The syllabus for the course you are teaching may have been created by a faculty member or you may have to create it yourself. Keep in mind that certain items are required on all syllabi according to University policy found at:

curriculumsystems.uga.edu/Policies/CourseSyllabusPolicy.pdf

Required Components of Any Syllabus

• **Course info.** Course title, number, and description as they appear in the course catalogue.
• **Place.** Building name and room number where the class convenes.
• **Instructor.** Instructor’s name, first name if you want students to call you by first name.
• **Office location & hours.** Instructor’s office, building name (if different from where the class is held) and room number; Office hours, days, and times.
• **Contact info.** Office or department telephone number, and/or your email address.
• **Requisites/cross-listings.** Prerequisites, corequisites, and cross-listings for the course.
• **Objectives and topics.** Course objectives or expected learning outcomes for students in the course. Outline of topics to be covered in the course.
• **Academic Honesty statement.** Reference to University Honor Code and Academic Honesty Policy and a statement as to what behavior unique to the course could be academically dishonest. The syllabus **must** include this statement:

> As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University's academic honesty policy, “A Culture of Honesty,” and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in “A Culture of Honesty” found at: [www.uga.edu/honesty](http://www.uga.edu/honesty). Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

• **Deviations statement.** The syllabus also **must** include this statement:

> The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviation announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

• **Assignments.** Principle course assignments and when they are due.
• **Requirements & policies.** Required texts and materials, including lab/technology fees; course requirements regarding grades (e.g., written tests, papers, participation); grading policy (i.e., how final grade will be determined and assignment weights); attendance policy (e.g., if attendance is weighed for the final grade); make-up exam policy.
• **Students with disabilities.** Your syllabus should include a statement about accommodations for students with disabilities, such as:

> Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations in order to participate in course activities or meet course requirements should contact the instructor during regular office hours or by appointment.
Suggested Components of Any Syllabus

- **Goals.** State the purpose and learning goals of the course.

- **Style.** Use an attractive design (e.g. readable font type and size, colored paper, appropriate pictures or cartoons). Consider adding interesting and relevant quotations.

- **Helpful electronic resources.** Mention of relevant electronic resources (e.g. eLC, class List-serv, departmental URL, links to personal sites that may include a philosophy of teaching statement).

- **Student support resources.** Contact numbers for Academic Enhancement, the Writing Center, and other on-campus academic resources. (See the Campus Resources handout.)

Further Suggestions

Use your syllabus to communicate. Avoid simply listing assignments and important dates without a rationale for your choices. Try to link the content with your students’ interests and needs. Use your syllabus to really communicate with your students. Consider using the following questions to further clarify or enlarge upon the basics of your syllabus:

**What . . .**

- . . . will be studied? What are the topics, themes, issues and questions?
- . . . kind of prerequisites are necessary for this course?
- . . . specific rules and regulations will apply to this course?
- . . . are the objectives of the course?
- . . . will students be able to do after they take this course?
- . . . books are required for the course?
- . . . order will the instructor use to present the material and what is the rationale for organizing the course in a particular way?
- . . . kind of instruction will take place? Will the course be primarily lectures, discussions or group work?
- . . . kind of participation is required? Will attendance, questions, responses and level of preparation count?
- . . . kind of learning will take place? Will students analyze, synthesize, compare or contrast? What are students expected to be able to do? How will students practice these skills?
- . . . are the major requirements? Are they clearly described? What is the goal of the assignment? What strategies will help the student successfully complete the assignments?
- . . . evaluation procedures will be used? How do they measure student performance on the behaviors described in the course objectives? What kind of tests will be given?
- . . . counts in the final grade? What percentage of the grade is assigned to each test or requirement and why?

**Why . . .**

- . . . were the books chosen for this course? How will they be used in the course?
- . . . should students want to take this course? Is it relevant to student goals?
- . . . are the objectives important and how will the course help students accomplish those objectives?

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