Course Syllabus Production Guide (items to consider)

Questions to Ask When Writing a Syllabus

➢ What do my students need to know, demonstrate to succeed in this course and beyond?
➢ What kind of learning environment do I want to convey to my students?
➢ How might I communicate an engaging, inclusive perspective on my course?
➢ How might the syllabus indicate a sense of community?
➢ How can I introduce students to this course and encourage them take responsibility for their learning?

Course details: Have you included this?

1. Course name, number, & term
2. When and where the class meets
3. Instructor’s name, office location & phone number
4. Instructor’s office hours
5. Lab or discussion section(s) time & place
6. Co-instructor’s name, office location, office hours, contact information

Course overview:

7. Course description, e.g., course catalogue
8. Teaching approaches / activities; i.e., how will students learn the material?
   ➢ In-class, out-of-class? Online? Hybrid?
9. Learning goals; i.e., what will students know, be able to do as a result of taking the class?
10. Related, what skills will students develop?
11. How does the course fit within the program of study?
12. How do the course goals support the academic program goals?
13. How do the course goals align with the University goals?

Course requirements:

14. Course prerequisites, e.g., what prior knowledge, skills do students need for success?
15. Textbooks and other required materials
16. Detailed description of how grades are calculated
17. How will student assessment occur? e.g., tests, presentations, homework, papers
18. How do assignments, exams relate to learning goals?
   ➢ e.g., why weekly quizzes: how do they support student learning?
19. Grading policies: How will assignments be graded?
   e.g., rubrics to guide assignment development and clarify expectations.
   Actual rubrics do not need to be included; rather description of how the assignments will be assessed.

20. Class management policies: What is expected from the students?
   e.g., attendance, makeup exams, late policy, academic honesty, participation,
   extra credit, cell phones & personal computer usage during class, clickers

21. Course calendar: In what sequence will the course content be taught?
   e.g., exam dates, due dates for major projects, other special dates (guest speaker,
   field trip), required readings, service-learning component, internships

Other information:

22. Recommended readings (how accessed? e.g., Blackboard (Bb) course site)

23. How will students receive timely feedback on their performance?
   e.g., Instructor feedback? Self-assessment? Peer review? Online via Bb? In-class?

24. Related, how will students be informed about their progress and grades?
   e.g., Bb grade book

25. What resources are available to assist students? e.g., online lecture notes posted in Bb,
   study guides, sample quizzes, study groups, Learning Support Services, Writing Center

26. How will students be able to provide feedback about their learning experience?
   e.g., student feedback early in the term, at midterm? Short written feedback regarding
   what helps students learn, what would further help their learning?

Also consider

27. Are assignments connected to learning goals and teaching methods?

28. Might the syllabus provide too little / too much detail? Might instructions for assignments
   be provided at the time the assignment is introduced in class?

29. Will there be some flexibility built into the schedule?

30. Is the syllabus “user friendly?” Written with the student audience in mind?

31. Is the language encouraging, does it invoke excitement for the course, does it
    communicate instructor interest in the material, concern for student learning?

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Adapted from: