

Student-Centered Syllabus Checklist



The syllabus serves as the first and most comprehensive representation of a course. Because of this, it must be presented in a way that is accessible and understandable for all students. Additionally, the syllabus is an important tool for fostering a sense of belonging and community. To accomplish this, in addition to using a warm, welcoming tone, including specific information about the course content, materials, supports, and expectations should be included to both meet the needs of all students. This two-part checklist will help you ensure all the vital information included and assess the overall tone and accessibility of the syllabus.

Purpose and Applications

- Assess the student-centered communication effectiveness of a syllabus.
- Examine overall course structure.

Part I: Key Information

Students need a lot of information about the course and the institution to be successful. If the syllabus is to serve as the course guide, all that information needs to be included. Hover over the bold word in each bullet for more information.

My syllabus includes:

About the Instructor

- ☐ my name with **pronunciation and honorific**.
- ☐ my **office location**, with full building name and office number.
- ☐ information about my virtual office.
- ☐ a **variety of office/student hours** spanning multiple days and times.
- ☐ my contact information with **available hours and response time estimates**.
- ☐ **multiple methods** of communication (email, text, phone, etc).
- ☐ my **teaching philosophy/statement**.
- ☐ a short **personal narrative**.

About the Course

- ☐ the full course title with **abbreviation and number**.
- ☐ the **delivery mode**, with times, dates, and meeting locations.
- ☐ the courses **prerequisites and corequisites**.
- ☐ the **student learning outcomes** (SLO), written with minimal jargon.
- ☐ the **purpose of the course** in reference to the program(s), career(s), and life experience(s).
- ☐ a **course calendar**.

Assessment and Grading

- ☐ the **grading scale and weights**.
- ☐ a **list of assessment types and descriptions**.
- ☐ a **schedule of due dates**.
- ☐ a **variety of assessments**.
- ☐ the **alignment to the SLOs**.

Resources and Support

- ☐ contact information for **tutorial centers**.
- ☐ **self-assessment** options.
- ☐ how to access **disability/accessibility services**.
- ☐ information **health and mental health services**.
- ☐ the **library's information**, local, and services.
- ☐ how to use **Ally to access course materials in audio or other formats**.
- ☐ **extensions, tool, and websites** that can provide support.
- ☐ a **career-relevant curriculum**.

Policies and Expectations

- ☐ developed a **reasonable attendance policy and shared why you require it**.
- ☐ developed a **reasonable late work and/or missing work policy and shared reason for policy**.
- ☐ expectations on **collaboration and interactions**.
- ☐ what the **student and teacher responsibilities** are.
- ☐ a **communication plan**.
- ☐ how you expect work/communications to be **formatted or what technology to use**.

Part II: Tone and Accessibility

Now that student have access to all the most important information, it is time to make sure that all students can receive that information and it is presented in a way that help to build the learning community. **My syllabus:**

Accessibility and Readability

- ☐ uses **headings**.
- ☐ uses an **appropriate font size and shape**.
- ☐ uses **color** properly.
- ☐ provides **proper spacing**.
- ☐ provides a descriptive **alternate text** on all images.
- ☐ properly formats the **tables**.

Tone and Perspective

- ☐ has a **warm, inviting tone**.
- ☐ has a **growth mindset**.
- ☐ encourages **collaboration**.
- ☐ honors **students as individuals**.