

Checklist for Preparing a Syllabus

A Good Syllabus Includes:

Important names, numbers and places

- Course number and title
- Instructor name
- Meeting times and places
- Office location
- Contact numbers and email addresses
- Office hours

Introduction to the course, including

- Brief description of the subject matter
- Rationale for studying the subject
- Introduction to required texts and readings
- If it is a General Education course, identification of the 3 general education skills that will be emphasized and preview of how they will be addressed.

Statements of course goals, indicating

- What **students** will be able to do (not what the course or instructor will do)
You will be able to..., not The course will introduce you to...
- The **behaviors** they'll perform (e.g., recall ideas, recognize examples, apply concepts)
You'll be able to describe examples of important concepts and principles,
not You'll understand important concepts and principles.
- The **outcomes** of instruction, (not the instructional methods or assignments)
You'll be able to report and explain the significance of current research about a topic,
not You'll write a term paper on a topic that interests you.

Preview of instructional activities:

- How you will spend class time
- What students will be expected to do to prepare for class

Assessment practices –description of all factors that count toward the final grade, including what each will be like and how much each will count:

- quizzes
- exams
- papers, lab reports
- homework
- class participation
- individual and/or group projects

Explanation of how final grades will be determined

- If norm-referenced (e.g., grading on a curve), how will cut-off points be determined?
- If criterion-referenced (e.g., 90-100 is an A, 80-89 is a B, etc.), what are the cut-off points?

Semester calendar (week by week or class by class)

- Lists topics to be covered
- Indicates readings and other assignments due
- Gives exact dates for exams and due dates for other major requirements

The Fine Print:

- Policies on attendance, late work, make-up exams, safety, etc.
- Policies regarding placement exams, prerequisites, concurrent enrollment in lab sections

Other resources and opportunities:

- Invitation to students with disabilities to meet with you
- Information on the Academic Enhancement Center, the Writing Center, tutoring