

# The Syllabus from a Student Perspective

## After reading this syllabus, do I know:

- \_\_\_\_\_ who the instructor is?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ how to contact the instructor?
    - \_\_\_\_\_ via email
    - \_\_\_\_\_ via phone
  - \_\_\_\_\_ the instructor's departmental affiliation?
    - \_\_\_\_\_ how to contact the instructor's department?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ when the instructor's office hours are scheduled?
    - \_\_\_\_\_ where the instructor's office is? (Or the location at which they're holding office hours?)
    - \_\_\_\_\_ what options I have if those office hours times conflict with my schedule?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ what days and times this class meets? (F2F/Blended only)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ the classroom in which the class meets? (F2F/Blended only)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ what class this is?
    - \_\_\_\_\_ what the official catalog description for this class is?
    - \_\_\_\_\_ how many credit hours this class is?
- 

- \_\_\_\_\_ what the course goals are?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ what knowledge, skills, or understandings I will gain as a result of this course?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ what the primary instructional method will be?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ what the instructor's teaching approach or philosophy is?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ why this class is an important part of my college education?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ how this course fulfills any Core or major requirements, and if there are any minimum grade requirements associated with it? (e.g., must earn at least a C, etc.)
- 

- \_\_\_\_\_ what the required materials for this course are?
    - \_\_\_\_\_ what all of my options are for getting those materials?
    - \_\_\_\_\_ what to do if I can't afford the materials or have trouble finding them?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ what technological access or expertise I will need to be successful? (e.g., knowledge of specific software, access to high-speed internet, a Netflix subscription)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ what the classroom policies/expectations are? (Or how those will be determined?)
-

- \_\_\_\_\_ all of the assignments I will be expected to complete for my course grade?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ how-**exactly**-my grade will be calculated? (Are there weighted grades? Straight percentages or points? Letter grades on a 4-point scale? Something else?)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ what the grading scale for the course is? (e.g., 90-100%=A, etc.)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ how much each individual assignment or assignment category counts for my total grade?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ what each assignment involves? (Are the assignments clearly explained? Is there a more specific description than simply 'essay' or 'exam' or 'think piece'?)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ if I have the opportunity to submit work late? If so, do I know what (if anything) the penalty will be?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ how assignments are to be submitted? (i.e., on Blackboard? Brought to class? Carrier Pigeon?)
- 

- \_\_\_\_\_ what the course's attendance policy is?
    - \_\_\_\_\_ what counts as an excused absence?
    - \_\_\_\_\_ how to make up missed work or material from an excused absence?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ what the course's policy on academic honesty is?
    - \_\_\_\_\_ is there a clear explanation of what constitutes a violation of this policy?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ how I can request assistance or accommodations if I need and/or am entitled to them?
- 

- \_\_\_\_\_ what schedule the course will follow?
    - \_\_\_\_\_ what course content will be covered in each module/week/class session?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ what the due dates are for each required assignment?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ when the final exam/project/presentation is scheduled?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ what I am expected to have completed for each particular class session/week/module?
- 

**Is this syllabus:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ clearly-arranged and professional-looking? (i.e., free of typos, properly-formatted, enough line and margin spacing so text isn't crammed together? Readable font styles and sizes?)
- \_\_\_\_\_ compatible with screen reader technology for visually-impaired students? (i.e., employs specific styles for headings, sub-headings; contains alternate text/descriptions for images)

**Does this syllabus:**

- use a positive, as opposed to negative/punitive, tone? Is it inviting?
- communicate that the instructor cares about the students and their success?
  - suggest specific things students can do to maximize their chances of success?
- describe the students' responsibilities in the learning process?
- have a statement regarding how the course will be an inclusive learning environment?
- inform students of any sensitive or potentially disturbing information/topics/themes that will be covered by the course (if necessary?)
- communicate how students can get any questions answered or concerns addressed, if needed?
- have information regarding campus resources that can assist students? (e.g., tutoring, the writing center, math lab, counseling services, disability services, multicultural office?)
- appear to take into account religious holidays in the schedule and (especially) due dates?
- list important academic dates that fall during the term? (e.g., last day to drop, last day to drop with a 'W')
- contain the text of, or link to, any required institutional language or statements?
- avoid confrontational or adversarial language? (i.e., USING ALL CAPS TO MAKE A POINT)
- contain information about meeting days/times and location that matches the official course schedule for that particular semester?

**COMMENTS:**