Recommended Course Syllabus Format

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Overview

As the primary, commonly available, summary of a course, the syllabus serves several purposes. It outlines the course, it denotes what students may expect from the course, and it locates the course in the curriculum. Not only read by prospective students, it is the best, concise, description of a course by those who teach it that is available to students and colleagues. The University Committee on Courses uses course syllabi in its review of courses. To maximize the usefulness of a syllabus to students and faculty, it is suggested that it contain the following information.

Recommended Syllabus Format

1. Course Number
2. Title
3. Credits
4. Term, place, time, instructor
   (For a new course proposal, indicate when it is likely to be offered, and how frequently)
   (For a new course proposal, indicate who is likely to teach the course)
5. Place in Curriculum
   • Group requirement satisfying? (Explain why)
   • Multicultural requirement satisfying? (Explain why)
   • Other general education requirement satisfying?
   • Satisfying other major or program requirement?
   • Preparatory for other courses?
   • Prerequisites or other suggested preparation.
6. Format (Lecture, Discussion, Lab, …)
7. Outline of subject and topics explored
8. Course materials (Texts, books, readings, …)
9. Expectations for students
Explicitly (by pages assigned, lengths of assignments, etc.), or by
Expected student engagement (see suggested Student Engagement Inventory)
Readings
Problems
Attendance
Project
Writing
Laboratory
Field work
Electronic media/network/online
Performance
Presentation
Tests
Differential expected for graduate work for joint 400/500 level courses.

10. Assessment
- Methods (testing, homework, …)
- Times or frequency
- Grading policy

Student Engagement Inventory

To aid in assigning student credit hours uniformly to courses in the curriculum, the committee inventories the amount of student engagement in a course. The committee has found the following tool to be useful. Departments preparing course proposals are invited to use this, when deciding how many SCH units to request for a proposed course, and encouraged to report to the committee how this tool may be improved for their use.

Please identify the number of hours a typical or average student would be expected to spend in each of the following activities. The general guideline is that each credit should reflect 30 hours of student engagement. Therefore, a 3-credit course would engage students for 90 hours total among the activities listed below, whereas a 4-credit course would list 120 hours of activities in which students are engaged over the course of the term. Graduate students are expected to perform at a higher level, typically with an additional 20-25 percent effort and assignments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational activity</th>
<th>Hours student engaged</th>
<th>Explanatory comments (if any)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course attendance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assigned readings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing assignments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab or workshop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field work/experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online interaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performances/creative activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total hours:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Definition of Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Attendance</td>
<td>Actual time student spends in class with instructor or GTF.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assigned Readings</td>
<td>Estimated time it takes for a student with average reading ability to read all assigned readings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Assignments</td>
<td>Estimated time it takes for a student with average writing ability to produce a final, acceptable written product as required by the assignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project</td>
<td>Estimated time a student would be expected to spend creating or contributing to a project that meets course requirements (includes individual and group projects).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab or Workshop</td>
<td>Actual time scheduled for any lab or workshop activities that are required but are scheduled outside of class hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Activities</td>
<td>Actual or estimated time a student would spend or be expected to spend engaged in required field work or other field-based activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performances/Creative Activities</td>
<td>Actual or estimated time a student would spend or be expected to spend outside of class hours engaged in preparing for required performance or creative activity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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