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We have designed a syllabus template with selected elements of an effective syllabus,  as well as recommended language related to University policies and resources for students. Use our syllabus template to create your own: [TTC\_syllabus\_template](https://teachingcenter.wustl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/TTC_syllabus_template_20160701.docx).

**The course syllabus has multiple functions:**

1) The syllabus is a course-planning tool. It helps the instructor prepare and organize the course. Taking the time to construct a detailed syllabus will help you define the course goals; plan the course structure and assignments, exams, review sessions, and other activities; and determine how much time you should devote to particular topics.

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3) The syllabus is a reference guide. It provides students with a compendium of information that they will consult throughout the course, including logistical information such as course name and number, prerequisites, and instructor’s name and contact information, as well as due dates, exam times, and course requirements and policies.

4) The syllabus is akin to a contract, in that it sets out course requirements and policies regarding grading, academic integrity, student conduct, attendance, late work, and other issues. Students are responsible for reading and understanding the syllabus, the terms of which they implicitly agree to abide by when they take the course; encourage students to ask questions to ensure that they understand the course policies and requirements. You should include a caveat, however, indicating that you may make changes and adjustments to the document throughout the course, as needed.

**Additional Considerations**

* When preparing the syllabus, pay attention to organization, layout, and typography to ensure that the document is easy to read.
* Date the syllabus before you distribute it to students.
* Consider putting your syllabus online as well as on paper. As part of a course Web site, the syllabus will be easy for you to modify throughout the semester and will be accessible for students who misplace their first copy. If you modify the syllabus during the semester, inform students that a change has been made, highlight the change in a visible way (for example, with a font of a different color), and add an updated date in the “footer” of the document.
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Note that you can choose to put some information on a course Web site or on [Blackboard](https://teachingcenter.wustl.edu/blackboard/) rather than including it on the written document. It is always a good idea, however, to put the “essential information” listed below on the printed syllabus, even if it also appears online.

**Essential Information**

* **Course title, number, time, days, and location; URL for course Web site, if applicable**
* **Name and contact information of instructor(s) and, if applicable, TA(s)**

In addition, indicate how students should contact you, whether by e-mail or by phone, for example; include the appropriate contact information. If the course has TAs, be sure to include their contact information, as well. Include times, days, and locations of office hours, as well as study groups and help sessions.

* **Prerequisites**

Course prerequisites communicate your assumptions about your students and help the students determine whether they have completed the necessary academic preparation for the course.

* **Topics outline**

The outline may be detailed or not, depending on your expectations for students’ preparation and learning. For example, if you want students to come to class ready to discuss particular chapters or articles, your outline will be detailed, listing the specific reading assignment for each day of class; in this case, the topic outline will be equivalent to the course schedule (see below). If you are using a lecture format, on the other hand, you may prefer to list the number of days you expect to spend on each topic and the portion of the required texts that are related to the lectures during those days.

* **Texts, materials, and supplies**

Information about each text should include the title, author, edition, publisher, and where the text can be purchased, borrowed or accessed (if placing material on [Ares](http://library.wustl.edu/units/reserve/), the library reserve-system, or on [Blackboard](https://teachingcenter.wustl.edu/blackboard/)). If students will need additional materials such as a calculator, safety equipment, or art supplies, provide a detailed list and indicate where the materials can be acquired. For each text or other material, specify whether it is “required” or “optional, but recommended.”

* **Assignments and exams**

Briefly describe the nature and format of assignments; add a note indicating that detailed assignments will be distributed and posted on the course Web page, if applicable, at a later date. Include due dates for major assignments such as papers, presentations, and projects, as well as any initial drafts or other preliminary work. Indicate the nature, date, and length of any exam.

* **Additional course requirements**

Include dates and descriptions of required events such as field trips, seminars, additional sessions, or study groups.

* **Grading scale and policies**

Explain the grading scale, indicating the weight of each component, such as homework, papers, quizzes, exams, reports, and participation, within the course grade. Indicate whether the grade is determined on a “curve” or an absolute scale. Note whether any graded assignment can be dropped and how that dropped grade will affect the final grade. Indicate policy on re-grades, if applicable. Direct students to applicable grading rubrics, which you can provide both on paper and on the course Web site.

* **Additional course policies**

Explain in detail policies concerning attendance; class participation; late work; missed exams; academic integrity; requests for extensions and for rescheduling of exams; and expectations for student conduct in the classroom, laboratory, or studio. Keep in mind that incidents of academic integrity are on the rise, and instructors need to take a proactive approach in preventing and responding to these incidents. Express your willingness to help students understand the [Academic Integrity Policy](http://www.wustl.edu/policies/undergraduate-academic-integrity.html) and how they can avoid plagiarism and its serious consequences by learning to cite sources correctly and leaving plenty of time to complete assignments.

**Recommended Information**

* **Caveat**

Indicate that you reserve the right to make adjustments or changes throughout the semester. Remind students that they are responsible to learn about these changes if they miss any class time.

* **Course goals**

The course goals describe what each student should know or be able to do by the end of the course. Including these goals in the syllabus can help you articulate the rationale behind assignments, exams, and the organization of the course. (See [Designing a Course](https://teachingcenter.wustl.edu/resources-2/getting-started/designing-a-course/).)

* **Subsection information**

If the course contains subsections, list their respective start dates, and the time and place that they will be held. Explain their purposes and indicate whether any quizzes or homework will be due during these sections.

**Helpful Additions**

* **Course description**

The description should be consistent with that which appears in the course listings; it may be even more detailed, providing a clear idea of the specific course topic and its significance.

* **Course schedule**

Include on the course schedule the dates that you will be covering specific topics, the due dates for major assignments; and the date of the final exam. The more detailed the course schedule, the more useful it will be for the students. When preparing the schedule, consult the relevant [academic calendars](https://teachingcenter.wustl.edu/programs/programs-for-faculty/academic-calendars/) and keep in mind religious holidays and significant campus events (for example, Homecoming and Thurtene Carnival).

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List information about relevant resources that might be helpful to students in your course, such as those found at The Writing Center, [Cornerstone](http://cornerstone.wustl.edu/) (academic mentoring, tutoring, and disability resources), and the [University Libraries](http://library.wustl.edu/). Include information about any available lecture notes or videotapes of lectures.

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Include a note about any relevant supplementary materials such as study hints, safety guidelines, information about exam preparation, and online resources; the note might, for example, direct students to find these materials on the course Web site.

**Links and References for Preparing a Syllabus**

“Creating a Syllabus.” Instruction at FSU: A Guide to Teaching and Learning Practices. Instructional Development Services. Florida State University. [http://learningforlife.fsu.edu/ctl/explore/onlineresources/docs/Chptr3.pdf](https://distance.fsu.edu/docs/instruction_at_fsu/Chptr3.pdf)

Davis, Barbara Gross. “Creating a Syllabus.” Tools for Teaching. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993.

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<https://teachingcommons.stanford.edu/resources/course-preparation-resources/creating-syllabus>

# Creating Your Syllabus

Jennifer Sinor and Matt Kaplan

### Center for Research on Learning and Teaching

The syllabus—what students eagerly await on the first day; a record of the class; one of the only artifacts to remain after the students move on. Your syllabus represents both an end and a beginning—a final product of your course planning and a valuable way to introduce yourself and the course to your students. Because your syllabus is one of the few formal, tangible links between you and your students and because it will be referred to throughout the semester, time and energy should be spent on constructing your syllabus. Research indicates that outstanding instruction and a detailed syllabus are directly related (Grunert, 1997).  Students will appreciate and respond positively to a syllabus that bears the marks of being well planned.

The information you will need to include in your syllabus will vary depending on the course or section you are teaching as well as your responsibilities in the class. For example, GSIs teaching discussion sections will include different kinds and amounts of information than GSIs who are responsible for an entire course. Therefore, you will need to tailor the following description to your particular teaching duties**. It is, however, a good idea in all courses and sections to hand out some form of syllabus on the first day.** Examples of syllabi representing a variety of teaching responsibilities can be found on subsequent pages.

The syllabus sets forth your responsibilities and those of your students. This does not mean that your calendar or your assignments are set in stone on the first day and that you have no flexibility. Those kinds of precautions can be written in (e.g., This calendar is subject to change.). What it does mean is that both you and your students are agreeing to a certain course of action, with specific expectations on both parts, and you are all accountable for maintaining the agreed upon route. Major changes—like changes in the grading policy or additions of assignments—are not fair to students and should be avoided.

In the initial planning stages, you may find it helpful to look at others’ syllabi, especially if you can find past examples from the course or section you are teaching. This will give you a good idea of what has been expected in the past in terms of the average number of pages of reading assigned per week, the kinds of texts used, average page length of papers, and general policies for the course or section. It is also useful to read the department’s course description that can often be found on the Web or in the departmental office. Additionally, there are many Internet resources on syllabus planning that can be helpful in designing your syllabus. Get a feel for what others’ syllabi look like and don’t be afraid to use others’ structure or language. Just remember that course material, like other academic writing, is intellectual property and the original source should be given credit.

Also, take some time to think about the tone you would like to establish in your syllabus. Usually the syllabus is the first document students receive from you and one which will be closely examined and continually revisited. Make sure to communicate the high expectations you have for your students. The tone you set throughout your syllabus should reflect your teaching style. For example, if you have an informal style of teaching you might wish to write your syllabus in a more familiar tone, maybe in the first person. If you would prefer to create a more formal atmosphere, a third person approach might be better.

## Mapping the Territory: Goals for Student Learning

If you think of your syllabus as a map to your course or section, then you realize how important it is to have an intended destination. Before you actually begin constructing the syllabus, take some time to think about what you expect your students to learn over the course of the semester. What knowledge do you expect students to acquire? What skills (e.g., critical thinking, analytical ability, mathematical or computational skills, forming and testing hypotheses) do you expect students to gain? As you do this, it is important to keep in mind the level of the course and the level of the students, especially in introductory courses. Remember that for many students an introductory course is often the last (rather than the first) exposure they will have to your discipline during their time at the University. Plan to meet the needs of those who are just passing through as well as those who are beginning extended study.

To help you stay focused on the students in your class, describe your course goals in terms of learning, using active verbs that indicate what students will need to do as the semester progresses. For example, in a course on history, one instructor told students that they would acquire the “basic skills used by historians,” which included the ability to:

critically analyze primary documents

identify an author’s thesis and evaluate how well it is supported

write a logical and coherent argument of their own.

For instructors, having a clearly articulated set of goals has at least two benefits. First, if you know what you expect your students to accomplish, it will be easier to plan out the semester and the individual class sessions. Second, by knowing what you expect students to learn, you will have a clearer sense of how to evaluate students (which will make it easier for you to create and grade exams and assignments).

## What to Include

Actual syllabi will vary from field to field and course to course. Keeping in mind your responsibilities and goals for the course or section, you will need to tailor your syllabus to meet the needs of your class. That said, most syllabi include the following features (a checklist can be found on page 25).

### Basic Information

Your syllabus should include the name of the course or section and the course or section number as well as the particular semester and year (e.g., Fall 2008). Include the meeting times and days of the class as well as the building name and room number where you will meet. You should also include your name, your email address, the location of your office, your office phone number (or a university number where messages can be left), and the days and times of your office hours. If your syllabus or other course or section material is available on the Internet, you will want to include the URL address. Also, if you have created a group email for the class, you may provide that email address as well. Some instructors choose to give students their home phone numbers. You should not feel obligated to do this. If you decide to include your home phone number, emphasize to students that this is a privilege. Include times when it is acceptable to call you at home (e.g., Please call only between the hours of 9AM and 10PM.). Many instructors and students prefer the convenience and flexibility of email communication, and you may consider encouraging your students to contact you this way.

### Course or Section Description

Course or section descriptions can vary significantly. Typically they are from one to several paragraphs in length and are meant to give students an idea of the course or section content and objectives. They may be in the form of a letter welcoming students to your class, or they may be more formally laid out with specific, bulleted goals. You can rely on the generic course description written by the department, or you may prefer to describe why the subject is of interest to you, what you bring to it, or how your own background informs the direction you see the class taking. You could use this space to illustrate overarching themes or connections for the students (maybe adding a note encouraging students to revisit the course/section description throughout the semester). You might also consider describing the teaching methods you will be using (e.g., small groups, lectures, writing workshops, class discussions), or you can describe the relevance and applicability of the course. This is also a space to list any pre-requisites that are required or recommended as well as any philosophical or pedagogical assumptions you are making (e.g., I am assuming that you have taken Introductory Composition or the equivalent and that you are familiar with the basic modes of writing. If not, please come and see me).

Whatever you decide to include in this section, remember that this is a place where tone is really important. It is the section where you are creating a narrative about your class. You do not want to overwhelm students with information that might be better understood later in the semester, such as in-depth descriptions of key concepts. Instead, think of this section as a place to really get students excited about the semester.

### Texts/Materials

Include the texts you will be using for the course or section, making sure to clearly mark which are required and which are recommended. Let students know where the texts can be purchased (including name and address of the bookstore). It is also helpful if you let them know if you have placed the texts on reserve at the library or if they will be available as a pdf on your Canvas site.  (For standard course reserves, see [www.lib.umich.edu/course-reserves/](http://www.lib.umich.edu/course-reserves/)). Give the same information about coursepacks. You also may decide to use this space to give brief descriptions about the texts to peak student interest. Just don’t overwhelm them with too much information.

If applicable, include other materials required for the course including calculators, lab equipment, or specific tools. Specify make, model, or brand and provide information about where to purchase these supplies.

## Course Schedule/Weekly Calendar/Assignments

The course or section schedule is a description of what is happening each week in class. As mentioned above, it is often a good idea to indicate to students that the schedule is tentative and subject to change. Keep in mind, though, that if you want your students to perform well on tests and assignments it is best to give them a clear and stable sense of due dates so that they can plan their time accordingly. Make sure to **bold**, underline, or highlight significant due dates for papers, projects, or lab reports (including dates for preliminary drafts) and dates of exams, quizzes, or finals. To reinforce the importance of these dates, you may consider handing out a separate list of all the major assignments and their due dates. Also include in your syllabus dates of special events or guest speakers and school holidays.

You may choose to simply list the date of the class and the assignment that is due that day.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Week** | **Date** | **Topic** | **Reading Due** |
| 1 | 1/7 | Intro. to Natural Selection | Ch1 in Barney |

Or you may want to give a more detailed description of what you will be doing in each class (adapted from Grunert, 1997).

|  |
| --- |
| **Monday, January 10**  **In class:** Demo on marking up artwork for printer critique of typographic  poster roughs   \*four page layout: due as hard copy, mounted and flapped and marked   for printer by the end of class   \*typographic poster/ad: 3 rough drafts due next week. I will provide clip art.  **Assignment:** Begin reading Bigg’s Into Art We Go (Chapters 1, 3, 5-7). |

You may also choose to include a section that gives further detail about the major projects or writing assignments of the class. You could describe, briefly, the various writing opportunities or research projects. You can also use this space to describe additional lab requirements or other various learning opportunities. Again, you could decide to distribute this information at a later date if you are worried about giving too much information all at once or if you would like this information to receive separate time and attention.

### Course or Section Policies

This section provides students with the logistical information about your daily expectations. Depending on the course or section being taught, some instructors have more flexibility than others to create their own policies. In some large courses, instructors are asked to maintain the same policies across sections. These section policies may be predetermined by the department, or you may meet with other section instructors before classes begin to determine section-wide policies like attendance and late assignments. Find out what your responsibilities are for creating course or section policies.

**Attendance**: Make sure to include your attendance policy as well as your tardy policy (if you choose to have one or both). Let students know how you will be keeping attendance (e.g., passing a sheet around, calling role) and the specific penalty for accumulating absences or tardies. Be clear and make sure to call students’ attention to this section.

**Class participation**: Some instructors decide not to formally evaluate class participation. They may feel it is impossible to grade participation fairly or objectively, or they may feel active participation is a given. Other instructors prefer to encourage class participation and discussion by making it a formal component of assessment. If you do choose to grade students on class participation, you need to let students know how you will be evaluating their participation as well as how it will figure into their course or section grade. Be specific.

**Late/Missing Assignments and Exams**: Most instructors choose to have a late/missing assignment policy. Some refuse to accept late assignments. Others create a sliding grade scale for each day the assignment is late. You should also include information about your make-up policy for missed exams, if applicable. Indicate and HIGHLIGHT these important policies and be fair to your students by upholding them.

**Academic Dishonesty**: The University of Michigan has a Code of Student Conduct that frames the university’s policy on academic dishonesty and student misconduct. Each school and college, however, has developed a more detailed and discipline specific code that defines academic dishonesty and describes the procedures for dealing with violations. (See pg. 162 for links to the policies of the different schools and colleges.) Some instructors choose to include the actual statements in their syllabi. Whether you include the institutional statement or create your own, it is really important to have stated in writing how you will respond to academic dishonesty. Because some students (especially first- and second-year students) simply do not know when or how they should cite sources, many instructors spend an entire class talking about what counts as plagiarism or cheating. If your students will be engaging in group work on assignments you may want to refer specifically to fair and effective collaboration. Openness about what cheating is, and what the repercussions are, will reduce both ignorance and the number of infractions.

**Grading Criteria**: You should include a statement about assessment and evaluation. You can be assured that students will want detailed descriptions of how you plan to assess them, the criteria you will use, and how you will arrive at their final grade. Even if you decide to include this information on a separate handout, it is always a good idea to have at least the framework in your syllabus—including percentages and/or respective weight of the different components of assessment. Let students know how much lab reports count, or essays count, whether you accept rewrites or extra credit work. Again, if you are planning on having students engage in group work for a group grade, be especially clear about how you will be determining that grade.

**Expectations about Scholarship**: You may want to provide students with explicit information about incompletes and/or withdrawals. Check with your department to find out the school or college’s policy. You also can estimate the number of hours of course work you are expecting students to complete outside of class time. A standard measurement is two hours of work outside of class for every hour spent in class.

**Accommodations**: You should also include a section or a statement on accommodations for students. It can address multiple learning needs or individual needs. An example would be: Please see me or email me if you require special accommodations due to learning disabilities, religious practices, physical requirements, medical needs, or any other reasons.

## Other Information That Can Be Included

* lab use or safety procedures
* additional support services
* writing centers
* tutoring centers
* computer centers
* library hours
* strategies for success in your class
* how to take good notes
* sample test questions
* detailed assignment expectations
* guidelines for papers or reports

## Final Thoughts

Keep in mind, too, that your syllabus demonstrates the kind of teaching you do. It is a record of your approach to learning.  You may want to include your syllabus as well as other documents (like assignments, sample exams, student papers, and other handouts) in your teaching portfolio when you go on the job market. Begin collecting these documents early on in your teaching career.

Your syllabus is an extension of your teaching self. It is more than a list of information. It is a way to get students excited about the upcoming semester and interested in the class. Personalize it by adding quotations or interesting facts related to the subject you will be studying. You can even add cartoons and other graphics. Put your syllabus on your Web page if you have one or post it outside your office. Like any learning tool, your syllabus can create new opportunities for students to consider and reconsider the subject you are teaching and their time spent in your class.

## References

Altman, H.B., & Cashin, W.E. (1992). Writing a syllabus. Exchange, September, unpaginated.

Grunert, J. (1997). The course syllabus: A learning-centered approach. Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing Co., Inc.

The Center for Teaching and Learning. (1991). Teaching at Carolina: A handbook for instructors. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.

## Preparing an Effective Course Syllabus

The following is a transcript of the "Preparing an Effective Syllabus " multimedia presentation available [here](http://www.niu.edu/resources/quicktips/index" \l "syllabus).

Welcome to this presentation which provides an overview of "Preparing an Effective Syllabus."

I'm Janet Giesen, Instructional Design Coordinator of the Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center at Northern Illinois University. This presentation will provide NIU faculty and staff the basics of preparing a course syllabus including what to do before you design the syllabus and general items to include in the syllabus. An easy-to-follow checklist is also available to get you started!

**Before you actually develop your syllabus, you should plan its contents and purpose.**

Begin by considering the purpose of a course syllabus. Think of a syllabus as a roadmap you and your students can follow as you navigate the course throughout the semester. The syllabus, then, is a primary source of information to guide your students throughout the semester and should carefully explain course components.

Most likely, your syllabus will be one of the first substantial means of communication between you and your students. The ultimate goal of a well-designed syllabus is to ensure students understand what is expected of them throughout the semester. Therefore, the syllabus should be easy to read, understand, and follow.

Find out whether your department/school and/or college have policies that require specific information to be included on the syllabus. This might include policies on grading, attendance, make-up work, make-up exams and information related to standards and accreditation or other requirements.

If you are preparing a syllabus for a course which has multiple sections, check with your department chair to see what content, books, and other course components should be consistently provided in all sections of the same course.

If you are teaching a course for the first time, review the approved course proposal to adequately represent course goals, objectives and content.

Goals and learning objectives are the heart of your instruction and should be carefully written. Course goals and objectives represent what students should be able to do after successfully completing the course; they should be observable and measurable and be stated in terms of student outcomes. Plan activities, assignments, and outcomes which help students achieve the goals and objectives. When planning assignments and class activities, consider listing with them which course goals and objectives will be achieved when these tasks are completed. By showing relevance of course requirements with related goals and objectives students will better understand why they have been assigned.

Select appropriate teaching methods, activities, assignments, and assessment strategies you plan to use throughout the semester and make sure they reflect the course goals and learning objectives. Also, consider way to present course content in different ways (visual, auditory, and hands-on) to meet the varied learning preferences of your students.

Consider including in the syllabus a teaching philosophy that conveys your enthusiasm for teaching and subject and respect for your students. Explain the importance and benefits of why students should take the course. Adding a positive and optimistic teaching philosophy statement to your syllabus can send an important message to your students of your love for the subject and that you are truly interested in students’ success in the course!

Decide upon a grading system and check with your department chair, if necessary, to make sure it is consistent with departmental standards. Choose a grading system that is suitable for the course and communicates to your students your expectations about what is important and what you expect from them. Grading criteria can be made available in the form of rubrics and can increase objectivity when grading students' work

Adopt appropriate textbooks and resources and relate required readings to course goals, objectives, activities and outcomes. Contact the bookstore for book order deadlines and ask your department chair if certain books are required for the course.

Many faculty provide a format that clearly lays out the course meeting dates, assignments, readings, exams, and due dates for each requirement which can be very useful to help students plan for the semester

Course schedules also help faculty stay on task, too! If you plan on developing a course calendar or schedule, refer to the NIU calendar to carefully sequence quizzes, exams, projects, and assignments to avoid overlapping due dates and other potential conflicts.

Decide where you plan to put statements on students with disabilities or academic integrity – some faculty place these statements toward the end of the syllabus. Faculty Development and Instructional Design has developed online tutorials, one for faculty and one for students, which can be useful in preparing an academic integrity statement and can be reviewed online at <http://www.niu.edu/ai>.

**Now that you have planned the overall content of the syllabus, it's time to put it all together and develop it!**

You can customize your syllabus to match your subject and teaching style and making it personal does not mean it shouldn't be organized and thorough. The order in which the sections are presented here follows many syllabus models but can be arranged to fit your needs.

**Course information:** Course designator and number, section number, title, credit hours, classroom location, course day or days and meeting times, any related lab or recitation session locations and course Web site URL if you have one.

**Course description:** Include the catalog course description and its prerequisites.

**Instructor information:** Your name, title, office location, phone number, email address, office hours, and other ways in which students can contact or interact with you.

**TA information, if one has been assigned:** His or her name, office location, phone number, email address, and office hours and the role the TA has in the course.

**Course requirements:**List appropriate and meaningful assignments, readings, quizzes and exams and describe the requirements for successful completion of these activities. Samples of projects and assignment can be made available in your office or be made available electronically.

**Course assessment:** Provide a list of standards and criteria for each graded course component such as assignments, exams, and class participation so students know your expectations. State how much each graded course activity will count toward the final course grade. Include the course grading scale so students can keep track of their progress.

State how students be rewarded for effort and progress and if you will allow extra credit—how will these be used toward a student’s final grade?

State specifically how final grades will be determined and provide information such as whether you weight letter grades, use accumulated points, or if you will you grade on a curve.

**Course resources (required and recommended):**Provide full citation and edition number for textbooks and other course resources. State where students can purchase these resources, their cost (if known), and if using e-books or alternative sources is acceptable. Include any course-related Websites and Blackboard links if applicable.

Provide information on support services such as the NIU Writing Center, Learning Centers, and ways students can obtain peer tutoring (this is especially helpful for undergraduate students).

**Course policies and accommodations:**Provide clear and succinct information on attendance, late arrivals and early departures, late work, missed quizzes and exams, and make-up work. Also include information on use of copyrighted materials, individual and group work and classroom comportment such as mutual civility, respectfulness, use of cell phones or electronic devices, and eating and drinking in the classroom. Finally, list policies related to lab work such as safety, human subjects, university property, and so on.

**Receiving assistance:** Include a statement requesting that students with disabilities contact you regarding accommodation needs. Visit the Center for Access-Ability Resources (CAAR) website at [www.niu.edu/caar](http://www.niu.edu/caar) for further information on ways to provide this information to students who request such assistance.

Also, you could include a statement that says something about how student success is important to you and that any student who has a disability or any other special circumstance that may have some impact on their work in the class, and for which they might require special accommodations, to contact you early in the semester so that accommodations can be made in a timely manner.

In a separate and prominent location of your syllabus, include a University Plagiarism Statement and Conduct and Discipline Regulations statement. Both of these statements can be found in the NIU Undergraduate Catalogs in print form or online or through NIU's Judicial Office at (815) 753.1571 or 1572, or the Office of Ombudsman at (815) 753.1414. Also, list the URL for the Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center's Online Tutorial on Academic Integrity. That URL is [www.niu.edu/ai/students](http://www.niu.edu/ai/students).

**Course calendar and schedule:**If you have planned to include course information in a calendar or schedule, provide a list of topics, chapter readings, assignments, exams and other requirements with their due dates. Indicate that the schedule is subject to change.

**Finally, let's talk about the overall appeal of the syllabus:**Use headings, short sentences, outlines, lists, charts and diagrams for organization and quick reference.

Use welcoming and encouraging language and what you will do to help students throughout the semester.

Instead of completely filling the page with dense text consider incorporating some open areas of blank space or even some content-related visuals.

**After your syllabus has been created—**ask a colleague or your department chair to check it for accuracy and clarity.

Then, file the syllabus with your department as a record of your course, to be used for accreditation purposes, and as a reference when students search for course information.

Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center provides handouts, checklist, as well as face-to-face workshops which can help you prepare an effective syllabus in greater detail. Visit the Faculty Development web site for more information about these and upcoming programs and resources for NIU faculty and staff at [www.niu.edu/facdev](http://www.niu.edu/index)/.