

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Instructional Faculty

FROM: Gretchen Ritter, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and Faculty Governance

DATE: May 10, 2010

SUBJECT: Requirement to Provide a Course Syllabus by First Meeting Day of All Classes

On June 13, 2007 President Powers approved a section of the Educational Policy Committee Proposal to Improve Course Availability for Undergraduates (D 3835 -3837) requiring that faculty provide students a course syllabus by the first meeting day of all classes. In addition, the state legislature (HB 2504) recently adopted new requirements concerning the need to make course syllabi publicly available on the University's website. In response to these mandates, this memorandum specifies the University's policy on providing and posting course syllabi.

The syllabus **must** contain the following items:

- The course number and title
- The instructor's name, office location, and office hours *
- If there are teaching assistants for the class, their names, office locations, and office hours*
- An overview of the class, including prerequisites, the subject matter of each lecture or discussion, as well as the academic/learning goals for the course and how they will be assessed
- Grading policy, including whether attendance is used in determining the course grade
- A brief descriptive overview of all major course requirements and assignments, along with the dates of exams and assignments that count for 20 percent or more of the class grade
- A list of required and recommended materials, such as textbooks, image collections, audio and audiovisual materials, supplies, articles, chapters, and excerpts as

* Listing of office hours and location is not required for the publicly available version of the syllabus.

appropriate, identified by author, title and publisher.

- Final exam date and time (when available)
- The class web site, if any
- A notice that students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259, <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>

Recommended Materials:

In addition, we recommend that faculty include the following information on their course syllabi:

- A notice regarding academic dishonesty. UT Honor Code (or statement of ethics) and an explanation or example of what constitutes plagiarism (Link to University Honor Code: <http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/gi09-10/ch01/index.html>)
- A notice regarding accommodations for religious holidays. (Sample statement—“By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.”)

For additional suggested templates and guidance on writing an effective syllabus, please refer instructors to materials available on the DIIA website:
<http://www.utexas.edu/academic/diia/teaching/>

Posting Syllabi

Additionally, instructors need to provide a copy of their syllabus for each organized course (or section thereof) they teach to their home department or office (and any cross-listing departments or centers) by the first day of class. All class syllabi for undergraduate courses should be provided in electronic form in a PDF file format (created from a word processing package such as MS Word - the PDF should NOT be created from a scanned image or fax). These PDF syllabi will be posted to the respective class via the Registrar's Office Class Manager System or Information Management and Analysis' FaSET System by the seventh class day. Note that if multiple sections of a course use an identical syllabus with identical assignments and readings, only one syllabus shall be posted for the course.

If you have any questions about this policy memorandum, please contact Diana Hernandez, 232-4231.