

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Deans, Department Chairs, Center Directors

FROM: Vice Provost Gretchen Ritter

DATE: July 1, 2009

SUBJECT: Requirement to Provide Students 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, and the subject matter of each lecture or discussion
- Grading policy, including whether attendance is used in determining the class grade, and whether plus/minus grades will be assigned for the final 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
- Final exam date and time when available.
- A list of required and recommended materials, such as textbooks, supplies, and packets

- 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.

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

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 so they may be posted on the department's website by the seventh class day and searched by keyword and phrases. The page on which syllabi are posted should be searchable by the course number, the name of the instructor, the time and day that the class is offered, and the title of the course.

Syllabi postings from classes offered in previous semesters should be archived on the department's website (and remain publicly available there) for two years after the semester in which the course is offered.

If you have any questions about this policy memorandum, please contact Kevin Carney, 232-3312.