

Tips for Constructing an Effective Syllabus



The syllabus is a reference guide for students that explains the course requirements and performance expectations. It also serves as an invitation to encourage students to learn.

Set specific, measurable, student-centered learning goals
You might answer the following question: What should students learn from the course?

Indicate attendance and participation policies
What should be done in case of absence; will participation be evaluated; and what are the policies for using technology during the lecture?

Give your students an active role
Keep part of the course open (e.g. two weeks) and let students determine its topics, implement peer evaluation strategy.

Establish clear teaching and assessment policies
Use rubrics to evaluate requirements; indicate your policy on late work, missed exams, and incomplete assignments.

Describe the course requirements clearly and in detail
Number and dates of exams; lectures' topics and dates; what students will be required to do to prepare for lectures or to complete assignments; grades' division; and criteria for success for each requirement.