



## The Learning-Centered FIU Syllabus: A Checklist

This checklist is meant to help you design or refine your syllabi so they are accessible, motivating, and learning-centered. The sections are organized around questions students might have about any college course. Please refer to the FIU Faculty Handbook for official syllabus requirements, which have been noted below with ◊.

### Course Information: Am I in the right place?

- Course name and number◊
- Semester and year offered◊
- Pre- and co-requisites (if any)◊
- Course modality (hybrid, online, face-to-face)
- Classroom location and times of class meetings (if any)

### Who will help me learn?

- Instructor name and contact information◊
- Instructor department, office location, and office hours◊
- TA names, contact information, and office hours (if any)
- LA names, contact information, and office hours (if any)

### What will I learn in this course?

- A course description◊ that communicates what students will learn and why the course is important (e.g. relevance to future coursework, career, civic life), written in student-friendly language
- Goals for student learning, covering not only concepts and skills, but also a set of perspectives, priorities, or even shifted values
- A list of ways students will be changed because they took this course

### How will I learn in this course?

- Clear descriptions of the kinds of activities students will do to accomplish the learning goals
- A schedule◊ that shows the order in which students will build their knowledge and skills through practice and feedback
- An explanation of the purpose of the various learning activities and the rationale for the sequencing and pacing of those activities

### When and how will we measure my progress?

- A list of major assessments◊ that will measure students' progress toward the learning goals (e.g. exams, projects, performances) with due dates
- Clear explanations of your expectations for performance on those major assessments (What does success look like?)
- A grading scheme◊ that illustrates how you will determine final course grades, including a variety of items and their relative weights (e.g. homework, quizzes, exams, discussions, projects, reflective writing, etc.)
- A clear explanation of the rationale behind your grading scheme and evaluation practices

## What materials will I need?

- Texts (including ISBN)<sup>◇</sup>; denote if required, recommended, or optional/supplemental
- Lab supplies, artistic supplies, professional and ancillary items (if any)<sup>◇</sup>
- Technology (if any)

## What behaviors will help me succeed in this course?

- A clear description of students' role in the course and what active, productive participation looks like both in and out of class (taking into account the modality)
- A realistic idea of how much time students should set aside for coursework
- Tips for success, including time management, use of resources, habits of successful students, etc.
- An expression of high expectations for academic integrity, including what ethical conduct entails and why it is essential in your field
- An explanation of why attendance in class is important
- Any policies of the instructor and/or department that may impact a student's enrollment or final grade<sup>◇</sup>

## What are the best ways to communicate with my professor, TA, and peers?

- A welcoming invitation to communicate with you, TAs and LAs (if any), and peers
- A statement of your preferred methods of communication, how you prefer to be addressed, and what students should expect regarding response times and other details
- Tips for the best ways to communicate and collaborate with peers, especially online

## Where can I go for extra support or resources?

- Information about resources relevant to the course and/or the discipline
- Information about on-campus support (e.g. the Disability Resource Center, the Center for Academic Success, the Center for Excellence in Writing, Counseling & Psychological Services)<sup>◇</sup>

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## Syllabus Usability Checklist:

- Is the information logically organized?
- Are the formatting, layout, and font size, type, and color accessible for students? (Please note that some students are visually impaired or colorblind. For more details and/or help, refer to [WCAG 2.1 at a Glance.](#))
- Are the tone and diction appropriate for the audience?
- Is the course information easy to find?
- Is your contact information easy to find?
- Is the grading scheme clear?
- Have you identified important dates (e.g. drop date, holidays, etc.)?<sup>◇</sup>
- Is the syllabus available electronically?
- Have you asked a colleague and/or consulted with a student for feedback on the tone and clarity of your syllabus?