



# Sections of a Syllabus

## Office of Academic Affairs

Category	Samples or Details
<b>1. Course Name</b>	Course name & number, CRN, day/time, location
<b>2. Contact Information</b>	<p>Instructor name, office location, office hours, phone, email, instructor's website (if used), URL for online course materials.</p> <p>Suggestions: Your preferred contact method – phone or email; preferred pronouns</p>
<p><b>3. Course description</b></p> <p> Typically the course description provides information on the substance or content of the course.</p>	<p>Sample 1: “Explores the relationships between psychological, physiological, behavioral, cognitive, and social aspects of older adults’ lives. In addition, topics related to living environments, retirement, social support, family relationships, and diseases of older adulthood will be covered.”</p> <p>Sample 2: “The primary objective of this class is to improve your proficiency in the various forms of public relations writing targeted to specific audiences, including: [examples deleted for brevity]. In the process of studying and practicing writing, we will discuss the role of public relations in organizations, as well as ethical and legal issues in the public relations field.”</p> <p>Sample 3: “This course is designed to study the origins of ballet from the Italian courts of the Renaissance through to its development in the Twentieth Century. Emphasis will be placed on leading dance artists and their historical and cultural influence. Class time will consist of lectures and videos, followed by discussion and writing assignments.”</p> <p>Sample 4: <i>“This course introduces students to the theories and practices related to the interdisciplinary fields of geropsychology and gerontology. Students will learn about the relationships between psychological, physiological, behavioral, cognitive, and social aspects of older adults’ lives and how they can vary as a function of various demographic and cultural variables.</i></p>
<p><b>4. Course Goals (Student Learning Outcomes)</b></p> <p>At the university level, we use “course goals” to refer to student learning outcomes. Instructors may also break course goals into “learning objectives” that indicate the learning is encompassed by a given course goal.</p> <p>Student learning is enhanced when they experience an intentional, directional and coherent education: They should know why they are doing something, where it is going and how it fits with other parts of</p>	<p>“Learning objectives focus on knowledge, skills, and values. What should students know? What should they be able to do? What should they value? The objectives are <u>behavioral</u>...and [use] active verbs—verbs that delineate behaviors (e.g., describe, use, explain, recognize, apply). They describe the student behaviors that demonstrate their learning.”</p> <p><i>Source: Allen, M.J., Assessing Academic Programs in Higher Education, 2004, p28.</i></p> <p>Course goals/objectives complete the statement “At the completion of the course, students [know, are or can do]”. They are clear about how students demonstrate achievement of the goal; therefore, verbs that represent purely internal states such as “know”, “understand”, and “appreciate” are not ideal for course goals. Bloom’s taxonomy is a very good resource for identifying options for active verbs that capture students’ demonstrated learning.</p>

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their education. For this reason at least one course goal should align with a program learning outcome (to indicate the purpose of the course in the program), and at least one course goal should align to a Graduate, Undergraduate, or General Education Learning Outcome (to indicate the course's purpose in the larger education of WOU students).

 **Be sure your course goals (learning outcomes) focus on the student's learning, NOT just what will be taught.**

Samples:

"You will write effective & appropriate public relations releases for both print & electronic media and demonstrate skills in copy revision and proofreading."

"Improve students' ability to generate communication strategies and message designs associated with more effective communication in personal/romantic relationships."

"Demonstrate the ability to interpret and write informed analyses of ballets by combining one's personal opinions with the information found in sources that discuss their historical, social, cultural, and aesthetic contexts."

"Explain the different frameworks used to analyze dance performance and how to utilize them when analyzing specific dance works from different time periods."

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## 5. Required text, reading materials, other materials.

It helps to provide year, edition & ISBN; many students go online to buy or rent instead of using the bookstore. (The WOU bookstore also has a rental program for texts.) If you will be putting a copy on reserve at the library, mention that. If you use a reading packet created by the bookstore & WOU print shop, tell students that it will be sold through the bookstore.

If you can post the required text name online (either on your faculty website or the course Moodle page) before the term begins, students will more likely have it when classes start.

Samples:

"*The Associated Press Stylebook*. 2012. A reference guide that you must bring to class each day. **Additional readings will be made available in class and on [online.wou.edu](http://www.wou.edu).**"

"Cavanaugh, J. C. & Blanchard-Fields, F. (2011). *Adult Development and Aging*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. **ISBN-10: 0495601748.**"

"Required Text: Floyd, K. (2009). *Interpersonal communication: the whole story*. McGraw-Hill. **Buy new/used texts at the WOU bookstore or an e-book at <http://www.coursesmart.com> (\$55.50)**"

"Students must have high-speed internet access."

"WOU email account activated with Google Docs & Google Plus features"

"Oregon Writing Benchmarks and Standards: [www.ode.state.or.us](http://www.ode.state.or.us). At ODE's homepage, click on Content Standards. Choose English Language Arts and choose your grade level."

"A scientific calculator with at least the capabilities of a T. I. – 83 is required. A T. I. – 83 or 84 is highly recommended. The WOU bookstore sells and rents calculators."

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## 6. Grading and your process, if any, for a student to challenge a grade.

It's helpful to include:

- List of assignments with brief description.
- Distribution of points across assignments, either by total points or % of grade.
- Point values for each letter grade (A= 95-100%, 333-350 points/350 total)

Sample:

"If you want me to reconsider a grade you've been given for an assignment, you must submit your rationale in writing within one week of receiving the assignment back with the grade. Your request should identify the specific change requested and provide a reasoned argument and evidence in support of the change. You must deliver your request for grade change to me in my office, during my office hours."

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## 7. Attendance Policy

Be clear about when attendance does or does not have a potential impact on grade.

Provide a process for students if they will miss class and want the absence excused:

- Do you want them to contact you by email or phone?
- What documentation will they need to excuse an absence?
- What do you expect if it is a WOU-sanctioned absence such as athletic or performance events?

## Samples:

“Attendance will be taken randomly throughout the quarter. Acceptable justifications for excused absences are determined by the professor. Not attending classes will result in a lower grade due to fewer attendance points and missing information that could jeopardize your ability to succeed on the exams.”

“Students who need to miss class due to WOU-related obligations should discuss this with me at least one week prior to the planned absence.”

“In the case of an unplanned, extenuating circumstance (e.g. physical/mental health matters, death of a loved one, legal obligations/jury duty, inclement weather) that will keep you from attending class, you may submit an absence notification request form at: [www.wou.edu/advising/absence](http://www.wou.edu/advising/absence). This form allows the Student Success and Advising office to relay the information regarding your absence to instructors in a timely manner. It will still be your responsibility to communicate with your instructors for any work missed during your absence. You are not required to share sensitive explanations or documentation, such as medical information, to verify your absence.”

Missed class grade deductions (% deduction from earned class total %)		
Absence type	Deduction	Requirements
University Sanctioned	-0%	Arranged in advance if possible or emergency verified after; work made up to satisfaction of professor per given deadline
	-1% / class day	Not arranged in advance if possible; work made up to satisfaction of professor per given deadline OR arranged in advance, but work <u>not</u> made up satisfactorily
Illness	-0%	Professor contacted day of illness and work made up to satisfaction of professor per given deadline
	-1% / class day	Professor not contacted day of illness or work not made up to satisfaction of professor per given deadline
Unexcused	-1%	First day
	-2% / class day	After first unexcused day in term

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## 8. Incomplete Policy

Not everyone includes this in a syllabus, but it can help reduce problems later in the term.

## Samples:

“I do not give incompletes (I) grades as a way for a student to avoid an F grade. To be eligible for an incomplete in this class you must be passing the class but lack one essential requirement, such as missing one exam or one project. In addition, I must find your reason for requesting an incomplete acceptable (e.g., an illness or death in the family would probably be acceptable, whereas a trip to the beach would probably not be acceptable). See me for more details regarding incompletes.”

“Incompletes will be given only for emergency cases and by prior arrangement. It is the student’s responsibility to make arrangements with me prior to the final grade due date.”

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## 9. Assessment Rubric

Consider providing students with some sort of assessment rubric for written work, either in the syllabus or in the assignment handout.

The Writing Center (Dr. Katherine Schmidt, 503-838-8234) can help you look at possible options.

## Sample:

### **Assignment Evaluation (For a specific writing assignment)**

**Excellent work** (A range) means the subject is covered completely; language use is appropriate for the audience; ideas are original and are logically presented/organized; arguments justified by evidence. Top quality. Virtually nothing can be added. An “excellent” work should have no typographical errors (e.g., spelling, grammar, punctuation, AP format).

**Very Good work** (B range) means the subject is covered well; ideas are expressed competently; there is a consistent point of view; and logical arguments. A “very good” work has, at most, no more than a couple of typographical errors (although I will frown on those anyway).

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**Good work** (C range) means what you created has potential but the subject is fairly underdeveloped and/or uninteresting; lacks sufficient detail, or has missing elements or copy errors. Perhaps you did not understand the assignment, or did not address it in the depth needed.

**Poor work** (D-F range) is that which inadequately addresses the subject, has an inconsistent point of view; is disorganized, lacks major important elements, or has numerous errors.

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## 10. Late Policy

It may help you to specify conditions under which you will accept late assignments or allow students to make up tests or other in-class assignments.

It helps to also specify the points or grade penalty you'll apply to late work.

Samples:

“Remember Murphy’s Law “If something can go wrong it will go wrong.” Computer crashes, lost data, and printers that malfunction at the last minute can be very annoying. Be sure to finish your work 24 hours in advance and make sure you have a copy of your work. If your paper is turned in late, it will have points automatically deducted from the number of points possible at a rate of 10% per day; up to 40%. Hand in late assignments, in-person, to your professor’s office (location) or the XXX office (location).”


“Out-of-class assignments must be on my desk promptly at the beginning of class—10 a.m. Assignments handed in one day, one hour or one minute late will receive an F. There are no exceptions. Printing during class time does not count. Plan accordingly.”

“All assignments are due at the beginning of class. Failure to turn in the assignment on time, or to provide prior notification with an acceptable rationale, will result in an automatic 10% grade reduction for the assignment per missed class period. Late assignments will be accepted until the last day of class, Friday, X/xx/XX.”

“Assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class on the assigned due date. Any assignments not turned in then will be considered late, and no late papers will be accepted unless the instructor grants permission at least two days before the due date.”


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## 11. Disability Accommodations

 **You must include a statement that explains the availability of accommodation for disabilities.**

The Office of Disability Services statement for course syllabi is:

“Western Oregon University values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to fostering full participation for all students. Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty, and the Disability Services’ office. Please notify me if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. If you would like to apply for disability related accommodations please contact the Office of Disability Services at: [503-838-8250](tel:503-838-8250), Academic Programs Services Center (APSC) 405, [ods@wou.edu](mailto:ods@wou.edu)”

 You cannot extend special accommodations to (or make special arrangements for) a student on the basis of disability if you haven’t received confirmation from the Office of Disability Services that the student is eligible for such accommodations.

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## 13. Veterans’ Accommodation

You are encouraged to include a statement to assist veterans.


Suggested language:

**“Military Service Personnel (active duty, guard, or reserve)**

Western Oregon University recognizes that those who are actively serving in the Reserves or National Guard of the United States are required by their military contract to attend mandatory training. If you will be absent due to military orders, I strongly encourage you to communicate that with me as soon as possible so we may discuss alternative arrangements.”

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## 14. Academic Integrity

 A statement relating to academic integrity is required on all syllabi.

It will help you if you include the penalties that you will impose on any violation.

For questions on the Student Code of Conduct, and issues of academic integrity, contact Tina Fuchs (Dean of Students & Judicial Affairs) at 503-838-8220.

Samples:

### **“SCHOLASTIC HONESTY**

I expect academic honesty. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on tests and plagiarism. I will not hesitate to apply the appropriate instructor options in the case of scholastic dishonesty, ranging from a warning for minor offenses to a "ZERO" on tests, papers, or other assignments. Students are expected to do their own work. I expect this provision to be unnecessary.”

### **“ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Students must adhere to WOU’s Code of Student Responsibility. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course. I REPORT ALL INSTANCES OF SUSPECTED DISHONESTY. Any student who violates the policy will receive 0 points on the assignment, and MAY also be given a failing grade for the course. At a minimum, academic dishonesty will lead to your final grade being dropped AT LEAST 2 levels. The case will also be turned over to the Student Judicial Committee for further action. Examples of inappropriate behavior includes doing assigned work for another student, sharing answers on work assigned to be done individually, sharing or copying answers during an exam or portraying another person’s writing as your own. If you have questions about what might be considered inappropriate, please ask me!”

Here is the source document:

### ***Scholastic Honesty***

Code of Student Responsibility -- 574-031-0030 Specific Standards and Policies

The following list of prohibited forms of conduct is not all inclusive since it is not possible to list all potential violations. The University requires that all students behave in a manner congruent with established community standards and in a manner conducive to the development of the individual. Actions detrimental to the mission of the University and the legitimate activities of the academic community which constitute the University are in violation of this Code and may be subject to judicial procedures.

1) Academic dishonesty, which includes but is not limited to:


- (a) Cheating- intentional use or attempted use of artifice, deception, fraud, and/or misrepresentations of one’s academic work;
  - (b) Fabrication- unauthorized falsification and/or invention of any information of citation in any academic exercise;
  - (c) Facilitating dishonesty – helping or attempting to help another person commit an act of academic dishonesty. This includes students who substitute for other persons in examinations or represent as their own papers, reports, or any other academic work of others;
  - (d) Plagiarism- representing without giving credit the words, data, or ideas of another person as one’s own work in any academic exercise. This includes submitting, in whole or in part, prewritten term papers of another of research of another, including but not limited product of commercial vendor who sell or distribute such materials. And the appropriation of and/or use of electronic data of another person or persons as one’s own, or using such data without giving proper credit for it; or
  - (e) Any use or attempted use of electronic devices in gaining an illegal advantage in academic work in which use of these devices is prohibited, and such devices include but are not limited to cell phones, pdas, iPads, laptops, programmable calculators, etc.
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## 15. Technology Policies

Consider including your attitude and expectations regarding cell phones or other communication devices in class.

 You cannot restrict a student's use of technology aids (like a recording device) if that is provided as accommodation through the Office of Disability Services.

Samples:

### “ELECTRONICS POLICY

Electronic items such as cell phones, laptops, iPads, iPods and e-book readers should not distract you or your classmates during class. If you are distracting yourself or others, in any way, with an electronic item in class, you will be asked to step into the hall until you are done with the item. Unauthorized electronic items used on exams or quizzes will result in a score of 0 on that entire exam or quiz.”

### “TECHNOLOGY POLICY

By joining this class, you agree to silence your cell phone during class AND to allow me to answer your phone if it rings, beeps, buzzes, sings, tweets or makes any other noise during class. Be prepared to hand me your phone! In return, I will allow a student to answer my phone if it rings during class. (Calls from blocked numbers are exempt.) If you need to take a call or text message during class, please step outside of the classroom to do so. Be advised that I may become cranky if I see a cell phone on a desk!”

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## 16. Email Reminder / Policy

It helps to tell students that you will rely on their assigned WOU email account if you must contact them.

Samples:

### “YOUR STUDENT WOU EMAIL ACCOUNT

All official university and class business will be directed to your WOU student email account. If you do not regularly check this account, please log in to this account and FORWARD your WOU email to an account that you do regularly access. For the “old webmail”; use Options > Mail > Local Account > Forwarding path.”

“To ensure your email is NOT deleted by accident before I read it, write ‘class/#’ in the subject line.”

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## 17. Wolf Connection System information

This tells your students what to expect in case you refer them to the Student Success and Advising office. It also lets them know about resources in case they are struggling with their academic work.

Suggested language from the Student Success and Advising office:

“If your faculty member at any point in the term is concerned about your academic progress and ability to succeed in the course, they may make a referral to Student Success and Advising through the Wolf Connection System (WCS). If a referral is created, an Academic Success Advisor from SSA will connect with you via email or telephone to discuss challenges you may be facing and your plan to overcome those obstacles and achieve success. This referral process is in place as a way to support you in this class and not a punishment. Anytime you want to discuss strategies for academic success, you may schedule an appointment with an Academic Success Advisor by calling 503-838-8428, emailing [studentsuccess@wou.edu](mailto:studentsuccess@wou.edu), or online by logging into the Portal, selecting WCS and selecting Get Advising.”

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## 18. Mental Health statement

This lets your students know about resources available to them in case they are struggling with issues outside the classroom.

Suggested language:

If you experience overwhelming academic stress, difficult life events, or feelings of anxiety or depression, I strongly encourage you to seek support. Remember that getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do – for yourself, for those you care about, and for those who care about you.

- Student Health and Counseling Center ([wou.edu/health](http://wou.edu/health)). Counseling services are free for all WOU students taking at least 6 on-campus credits.
  - WOU’s Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Promotion program ([wou.edu/mental-health](http://wou.edu/mental-health)).
  - For life threatening situations, call 911 or Campus Public Safety ([wou.edu/safety](http://wou.edu/safety)) at (503) 838-9000.
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**19. Responsible Employee statement**

WOU faculty are mandatory reporters. If a student reports that s/he has been sexually victimized then you are required by Title IX to report all information you are given to the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs. Even if the assault occurs off campus, if it involves WOU students, it must be reported.

Additional information, including the contact information for the Division of Student Affairs is here:

<http://www.wou.edu/student/sexual-misconduct-resources/faqs-for-faculty/>

Suggested language:

As an employee at Western Oregon University, I am required by federal law to report any incident of sexual misconduct. If you wish to talk with me about something that has occurred to you or another student, I must inform university personnel. Reporting this information helps the university to safeguard students and get students the help and support needed. You have the right to maintain your privacy. I will only report what you confide in me. If you would like additional information about sexual misconduct response at WOU, please visit the website at <http://www.wou.edu/student/sexual-misconduct-resources/sexual-assault-care/>


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**20. Course calendar, including when assignments or exams will occur.**

Instructors vary in the amount of detail they provide, but at a minimum, your calendar should provide the due dates of assignments, date for exams or announced quizzes, dates for mid-term and final exam or project due date, and any other significant items. If you need some flexibility because of potentials guests or speakers, you may want to add a disclaimer that covers changes, such as “dates may change depending on the course’s need; all changes will be announced in class”.

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**Other syllabus information:**

-  1. Every instructor is required to send an electronic copy of each course’s syllabus to the division’s administrative program assistant (APA); these files are maintained year to year. The APA can help you look over copies of earlier terms’ syllabi for ideas.
- 2. If you’re an adjunct instructor, you may want to check with your division chair about the content expected to be covered in your course and in your syllabus. This is especially true if you’re teaching a course that has multiple sections (some taught by others), or if your course is a prerequisite to other required courses in the program.