

The Ohio State University at Lima

Syllabus Guidelines

The syllabus is defined by the *UCAT* (University Center for the Advancement of Teaching) website as “a formal statement of what the course is about, what students will be asked to do and how their performance will be evaluated.” (see *UCAT* link below and at end of document for more information).

Syllabi are required for every OSU course (i.e., lecture, seminar, laboratory, clinic, studio, field or independent study).

Items to Include on the Syllabus - as outlined by *UCAT* website: <http://ucat.osu.edu/>
Click on purple box on lower left of webpage: **Handbook on Teaching at Ohio State**.
Scroll to Section VI. COURSE PREPARATION, subsection F. The Syllabus.

1. Relevant information about the course and instructor.

Information to include: current year and quarter, name and number of the course as well as meeting time (with days of the week), and location. This portion of the syllabus should also include the instructor’s name, phone number, the location of the instructor’s office, and the times of his or her office hours.

NOTE: Departments in Columbus or here on our Lima Campus may have a set number of office hours for lecturers and tenure-faculty. Please check on this. If there are no set standards, please establish office hours appropriate for the class, taking into account amount and difficulty of material as well as class enrollment.

NOTE: This information is usually placed at the beginning of the syllabus.

2. A clear statement of course objectives / learning outcomes.

The course objectives and learning outcomes should be as clear as possible and should describe what the students will be expected to know at the end of the quarter, rather than what the instructor *plans to do*. Departments may already have stated course objectives or learning outcomes. Please check with your department when constructing your syllabus.

3. A description of the means (or activities) for approaching the course objectives/learning outcomes.

Possible items include field trips, guest lecturers, discussions with active participation, problem-solving groups, assignments, use of audiovisual materials, etc. The amount of student time required for each activity may be estimated.

4. A list of the resources to be obtained by the students.

Most important here are the required text(s), course packs, and reading assignments. Indicate where these resources are available for purchase or loan, and also the expected cost for purchase or fees. (It is important to check that the bookstore or library will have the text on the shelves before students are sent to find it!) It might also be explained if materials other than text(s) are required of students. Any supplemental materials such as lecture tapes, sample projects, or past tests that are available can be mentioned. A clear explanation as to how students may access resources on OhioLink might be useful if primary literature is assigned.

5. A statement of grading criteria.

This will explain the grading criteria, the components of the final grade, the weighting of various grades, the relationship of class participation and attendance to the final grade, and other relevant information. The number of tests each quarter might be included, along with a description of each test. The numerical equivalent of letter grades can be provided, or the “ranges” of each grade.

A more complete explanation of the concept of grading can be found in the *UCAT* chapter on Assessment: <http://ucat.osu.edu/>.

Click on purple box on lower left of webpage: **Handbook on Teaching at Ohio State**. Scroll to Section IX. EVALUATING LEARNING.

6. A statement of course policies.

This is best expressed in a clear, non-threatening form. Policies should be set for contingencies such as missing an exam, turning in a late assignment, missing class, requesting an extension, and reporting illness. It is a good idea to go on record with a fairly stringent policy that can be informally tempered at a later date, if and where circumstances so warrant. Absolutes are always more trouble than they are worth. There can also be a short statement defining academic misconduct in one’s individual subject. Note that a more detailed description of academic misconduct is available to students on the *Guidelines for Students* (<http://lima.osu.edu/students/guidelines.php>) document on our campus website. The syllabus may reference this document.

NOTE: Instructors should indicate that they will follow University Rule 3335-31-02, which requires that “Each instructor shall report to the committee on academic misconduct all instances of what he or she believes may be academic misconduct.”

7. Disability statement.

An important part of the syllabus is a statement that informs students with disabilities that materials are available in alternate form and that accommodations will be made. The Office for Disability Services proposes the following as a good example statement:

“Any student who feels he/she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at 614-292-3307 in 150 Pomerene Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.”

From our *Guidelines for Students* (<http://lima.osu.edu/students/guidelines.php>): Students who feel that they need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, should either contact their course instructor as early as possible in the course or contact the Coordinator of Disability Services to receive the appropriate assessment and make arrangements. Karen Meyer is the Coordinator of Disability Services at Ohio State Lima. Her office is located in 148 Public Services Building, and she is available for appointments by calling 419-995-8453. Her e-mail address is meyer.193@osu.edu.

8. A schedule.

If each class hour is mapped out in detail, this will doubtless be the longest and most time-consuming segment of the syllabus to prepare, although it will be a good investment in a well-organized class. The syllabus should, as a minimum, contain dates with the corresponding sequence of class or lab topics, the preparations that are required or suggested, and the assignment that will be due. The instructor should note holidays and the date and time of any midterms, as well as the final examination. It is up to the instructor to weigh student need for structure and expectations against instructor need for freedom and flexibility.

A more complete description of syllabus development can be found on the *UCAT* website at: <http://ucat.osu.edu/>.

Click on purple box on lower left of webpage: **Handbook on Teaching at Ohio State**. Scroll to Section VI. COURSE PREPARATION, subsection F. The Syllabus.

