



TO: New GVSU Faculty

FROM: Maria Cimitile, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs

SUBJECT: University Policy on Course Syllabi

Welcome to Grand Valley State University. As you develop your course syllabi and prepare for the first day of your classes, please be sure to convey to students the following critical information, as required by our policies and procedures (Chapter Three of the *Faculty Handbook*).

Information to be Given at First Class Meeting

Students should be provided with a course syllabus, in paper or electronic form, containing at least the following:

1. General course information. Instructor name, contact information, office hours, and required resources such as textbooks should all be specified. Prerequisite courses listed in the catalog need not be reproduced but if specific prerequisite skills or knowledge are necessary they should be pointed out to students here.
2. Learning objectives. The student learning objectives listed in the syllabus of record must all be represented in the objectives listed in the course syllabus, though the course syllabus may be more specific and may include additional objectives.
3. Kinds of activities and assessments to be used. This need not be a detailed list but should give students a clear idea of the kinds of work to be expected: projects, papers, in-class exams, field trip reports, etc.
4. Grading scheme. This section should give students a clear idea of the relative importance of different kinds of assessments and the basic scheme that will be used to assign final grades.
5. Course specific policies. The syllabus should describe the instructor's policies that apply to this particular course on topics such as attendance, makeup mechanisms for missed work, late assignments, handling of academic misconduct, etc. If the course is subject to particular GVSU requirements (for example, those for SWS or General Education courses) pointers to those requirements should be given.
6. A pointer to the University's list of policies that apply to all courses. Recommended: "This course is subject to the GVSU policies listed at www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies."

I recommend that for all syllabi you also include these two additional items on your syllabi:

1. The deadline for withdrawing from a class (see [Important Dates](#), Registrar's Office)
2. And the following statement concerning students with disabilities:

“If you are in need of accommodations due to a learning, physical, or other disability you must present a memo to me from Disability Support Resources (DSR), indicating the existence of a disability and the suggested reasonable accommodations. If you have not already done so, please contact the Disability Support Resources office (4015 JHZ) by calling 331-2490 or email to dsrgvsu@gvsu.edu. Please note that I cannot provide accommodations based upon disability until I have received a copy of the DSR issued memo. All discussions will remain confidential.

Furthermore, if you have a physical disability and think you will need assistance evacuating this classroom and/or building in an emergency situation, please make me aware so I can develop a plan to assist you.”

I also recommend that you consult the Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center's [Syllabus Statement Examples](#) site for additional optional information to include in your course syllabi.