

**To:** Mathematics Department Faculty Teaching in the 2018-19 AY  
**From:** Karen Novotny, Chair  
 Esther Billings and Robert Talbert, Assistant Chairs  
**Re:** Syllabus Requirements  
**Date:** August 12, 2018



The purpose of this memo is to provide information about requirements for your syllabi. In order to comply with new university policy, you will now have to submit your syllabus for approval before distributing to students. This memo outlines the process and syllabus requirements. Thank you in advance for your timely participation in this new university requirement.

### Syllabus Review Process:

1. Use the information and checklist provided to double check you have included all required information in your syllabus. For foundations courses (MTH 097, 110, 122, 123, 124, 125, and 131), use the **syllabus template** provided by the course coordinator. The template incorporates all required components; fill in your personalized course information.
2. Email a copy of your syllabus directly to Sandee Snyder at: [snydersa@gvsu.edu](mailto:snydersa@gvsu.edu) that includes all the requirements at least 3 business days prior to the start of classes. (In Fall 2018, by **8AM on Wednesday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>**.) Earlier submissions are appreciated.
3. Office staff (Sandee or a student worker) will review your syllabus to ensure all of the necessary components from the checklist are included and will respond via email to you within 24 hours of its receipt with its approval or a list of changes to be made. If any checklist criteria are in question, the syllabus will be forwarded to an assistant chair to review.
4. Once final approval for your syllabus is received, a copy will be saved by Sandee for departmental records. Office staff will use information from your syllabus to post your schedule including office hours on your office door before the end of the first week of classes.
5. Once you receive final approval of your syllabus, it **MUST** be posted on your course Bb site for easy student access.

### Syllabus Requirements:

1. According to the *Faculty Handbook*, [Section 3.03](#), students should be provided with a course syllabus, in paper or electronic form, containing at least the following information:

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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 <http://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies/>."

2. Departments must set up a policy and procedures to verify that faculty are including all the required information in their syllabi. In order to provide clarity about what is expected as you incorporate these 6 areas of information into your syllabus, we have created a checklist.

## Here is a checklist of information that **MUST** be included in your syllabus:

### General Course Information:

- ✓ State your name and contact information including email address and office phone number.
- ✓ State the course number, name, and section, as well as the meeting times and rooms.  
*Example:* MTH 304 – 01, Analysis of Differential Equations, MWF 12 – 12:50 PM in MAK A-2-167
- ✓ State all required resources such as texts and graphing calculators.
- ✓ State the time and location of a **reasonable** number of **scheduled** office hours (at least 2 – 3 hours per week). You may NOT just list “Office Hours by Appointment” on the syllabus, but you may certainly add “Additional office hours available by appointment” to your syllabus.

*Example:* Office Hours (in MAK C-2-412): MW 9-10 am and T 3-4 pm or by appointment

- ✓ Include verbatim either the **course description** from the [current online catalog](#) (without the prerequisite information) **OR** the **list of topics** from the Syllabus of Record (SOR)<sup>1</sup>.

*Example (MTH 304):* **Course Description:** Solution methods for first order and second order linear equations (including power series and numerical methods). The linear algebra of linear systems and their solutions. Qualitative analysis of linear and nonlinear systems: phase plane; existence and uniqueness; stability, and applications in physical, biological, and social sciences.

- OR **Topics**
1. First order differential equations (2-3 Weeks)
  2. Systems of linear differential equations (4-5 Weeks)
  3. Inhomogeneous systems of linear differential equations (4-5 Weeks)
  4. Nonlinear systems of differential equations (2-3 Weeks)

- ✓ **List of Objectives:** Include, verbatim and in the same order, the list of **student learning objectives from the Syllabus of Record (SOR)**<sup>1</sup>. You may add objectives (list them after the SOR objectives), but **DO NOT** change or eliminate any.

*Example (MTH 304):* **Objectives -- After successful completion of the course, students will be able to...**

1. Analyze first order differential equations using slope fields.
2. Solve certain first order differential equations analytically.
3. Analyze autonomous systems of linear first order differential equations using direction fields and linear algebra.
4. Analyze higher-order linear differential equations (or a linear system of differential equations) with constant coefficients (both homogeneous and non-homogeneous) using linear algebra.
5. Qualitatively analyze a first order nonlinear autonomous system of differential equations.

- ✓ **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.
- ✓ **Grading scheme:** Provide a basic grading scheme for assigning final grades and the relative importance of different assessments.

### Course specific policies:

- ✓ All general education courses should provide a link to the [General Education Homepage](#) and list the category for the course (e.g., Mathematical Sciences Foundations for MTH 122, 123, 124, 125, 131, 221, or 201 OR Issues – Information, Innovation, and Technology for MTH 312).
- ✓ For any courses served by the Math Tutoring Center, please include a link to the [Math Center](#) and give its location (MAK A-2-601) and phone number (616-331-2084).
- ✓ **University Policies applying to all courses:** Direct students to the University's list of policies that apply to all courses. Recommended wording: “This course is subject to the GVSU policies listed at <http://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies/>.”

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<sup>1</sup> Access the SOR List of Topics and/or Objectives one of two ways (and then cut and paste the information):

- **Math Department Policies, Procedures, and Resources website:** Use this compiled list of SOR Objectives/Topics/Course Descriptions for Mathematics Courses available under the Heading, “Teaching and Advising,” titled: “SOR Descriptions for Faculty.”
- **Blackboard:** Go to the “Syllabi of Record” Bb site (under “My Organizations” listings under “Organizations where you are: Participant”). Click on *Syllabi of Record* in the menu on the left to access the SORs. Then, click on CLAS to open the CLAS folder. Find MTH and click on it to locate all of our official SORs. Finally find the SOR of the course you’re teaching, open it, copy the “List of Topics” and/or “Course Description” or “Objectives.”