



**To:** Mathematics Department Faculty Teaching W24 Semester

**From:** Esther Billings, Chair

**Re:** Winter 2024 Syllabus Requirements

**Date:** 12 December 2023, updated 21-12-23 ([link](#) to google doc version of memo)

The purpose of this memo is to provide information about required syllabus components you must include and to provide additional resources/information to help you plan for the semester. Use the information and checklist provided to double check you have included all required information in your syllabus. For the following foundations courses (MTH 108, 109, 110, 122, 123, and 124), use the syllabus template provided by the course coordinator. The template should incorporate all required components; fill in your personalized course information.

**Email a copy of your syllabus directly to Gabriella** ([barajaga@gvsu.edu](mailto:barajaga@gvsu.edu)) that includes all these syllabus requirements **no later than Thursday, January 11 (5pm)**. *If for some reason you update your syllabus, be sure to send the updated version to Gabriella.* Thank you in advance for providing clear and required information in your syllabus.

**Overview of Syllabus Requirements<sup>1</sup>:** Faculty members should review this list each semester and familiarize themselves with the various GVSU policies listed. According to the Faculty Handbook, SG3.04C students should be provided with a course syllabus containing at least the following information:

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 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.** The following statement should appear on the syllabus: "This course is subject to the GVSU policies listed at <http://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies/>." In addition, include important academic calendar dates (see next page).

---

<sup>1</sup> **Syllabus Checklist of Required Information:** To provide clarity about what is expected as you incorporate these 6 areas of information into your syllabus, I created an expanded checklist (see pp. 3-6) and provided links to relevant university documents that provide guidance/syllabus language.

## Additional Information/Resources to Guide your Syllabus Planning this Semester:

- **FTLC Syllabus Resources:** Your syllabi should clearly describe your expectations of students. The Pew FTLC website offers information on [Syllabus Design](#) as well as [Syllabus Statement Examples](#). The provost also requests we incorporate low stakes assessments and early feedback in our courses.
- Grand Valley maintains a [Religious Inclusion Policy \(SLT 9.6\)](#) that commits the University to accommodate religious and faith observances and holidays for students, faculty and staff members. Please review the [Multifaith Calendar](#) before scheduling exams or similar course events. There is an [online form](#) students should fill out to a religious accomodation; students are asked to submit the form within the first two weeks of the semester, or as soon as reasonably possible.
- *Include information about what students should expect in the event they need to transition to remote instruction for a class period or longer (e.g., in the case of severe weather).* We have a [remote instruction](#) policy, and I received clarity from the Provost's Office you may include [minimum technology requirements for online/hybrid courses](#) as part of the required materials for F2F courses so you have the flexibility to implement a contingency plan if for some reason you need to transition to online instruction and/or for them to access virtual office hours. Do not require more than the minimum requirement.
- Given the possibility of continued Covid, other respiratory infections, and other illnesses and circumstances, it is likely some students will miss class. Please plan your course in ways to offer flexibility so students can reasonably make up missed work for excused absences. (See University catalog's [normal attendance policy](#)).
- Please consult the Provost's website [Teaching FAQ](#) page.
- **Health:** The Community Health Advisory Team (CHAT) will oversee public health disease prevention and mitigation starting F23. The [CHAT website](#) has Covid-19 guidance and provides information about [face covering policies](#), next steps for Covid exposure or positive Covid test, etc. Note: GVSU no longer has a vaccine mandate (see [link](#)).
- **Mental Health Resources:** The University Counseling Center has compiled a [Mental Health Communications Toolkit](#) and it provides relevant mental health information to students.

## W24 Academic Calendar<sup>2</sup> (individualized link to W24 calendar):

January 8	Classes Begin
January 12	Last Day to Add (5pm) ( <a href="#">Registrar page</a> for overall deadlines; this <a href="#">page</a> for drop/add refund schedule; and <a href="#">searchable course schedule</a> shows withdrawal deadlines for part-of-term courses.)
January 12	Last day to Drop (5pm) for 100% refund for full semester classes
January 15	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Recess (no classes)
February 2	Last day for CR/NC Changes (5pm) (See this Registrar <a href="#">page</a> for online form)
February 19-23	Mid-term Evaluations
February 27	Mid-term Grades due (noon)
March 3-10	Spring Break (no classes)
March 22	Withdrawal Deadline (5pm)-- <i>after this date, student must have <b>extenuating circumstances</b> (see Registrar <a href="#">page</a> for general info and <a href="#">this one with dates</a> and CLAS <a href="#">process</a> for more info—including a <a href="#">decision tree</a>)</i>
April 20	Classes End
April 20-27	Final Exams (see Registrar <a href="#">page</a> for W24 schedule)
April 27	Last day of semester
April 29	Grades due (midnight)--CLAS deadline

<sup>2</sup> Note: Faculty must specify a last date of academic activity (LDAA) for students who earn a grade of Incomplete (in addition to those who earn a grade of NC or F).

## CHECKLIST FOR KEY FEATURES OF SYLLABI

### ❑ General Course Information:

- State your name and contact information including email address and office phone number.
- State the course number, name, and section, meeting times and location (room or zoom link/information on how to meet if meeting synchronously online).  
*Example: MTH 304 – 01, Analysis of Differential Equations, MWF 11 – 11:50 PM in MAK A-2-167*  
*MTH 122-23, College Algebra, MWF 12-12:50 meet online at this link:*

### ❑ State all required/recommended resources such as texts and technology.

- State the required text/learning materials/technologies.
- List any additional recommended access to technologies/texts/learning materials. (Please be mindful of cost, too.)
- If your class is F2F, you may require that students should have access to some/all of these [technology requirements for online/hybrid classes](#) which you should list or provide a link, even if the class is F2F, in order to have the capacity to teach remotely (i.e., snow causes a remote day, you have Covid and can't come to campus but you still want to hold class synchronously rather than cancel, etc.).

### ❑ Office Hours (Student Hours): [SG 3.04D](#) states instructors should be accessible to students for a **minimum of one hour per week for every three credits taught**. [FTLC provides resources/tips](#) for virtual office hours, including renaming them as "student hours".

- You may offer F2F, virtual or a combination of F2F and virtual office hours.
- State the time and location of a reasonable number of scheduled student (office) hours which may be a combination of F2F or virtual office hours. Include a link or directions on how to access online office hours.
- Identify specific times, don't just list "Student (Office) Hours by Appointment" but you may certainly add "Additional student (office) hours available by appointment" to your syllabus.

*Example: Virtual Student (Office) Hours (click this link): MW 9-10 am and T 3-5 pm or by appointment; In Person Student (Office) Hours in MAK A2-178: TR 1-2pm or by appointment*

### ❑ Course Description or List of Topics Verbatim. Include verbatim either the course description from the [current online catalog](#) (without prerequisite information) OR the list of topics from the Syllabus of Record (SOR)<sup>3</sup>.

*Example (option 1): 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.*

*Example (option 2): MTH 304: List of 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)

---

<sup>3</sup> To access the SOR, go to the "Syllabi of Record" Bb site (under "My Organizations" listed under "Organizations where you are: Participant"). Click on "Syllabi of Record" in the menu on the left. Then, click on CLAS to open the CLAS folder. Find MTH, click on it to locate all of our official SORs. Find the SOR of the course you're teaching, open it, copy and paste the "List of Topics" and/or "Course Description" or "Objectives." This site is updated regularly.

- ❑ **List of Objectives:** Include verbatim and in the same order, the list of student learning objectives from the Syllabus of Record (SOR)<sup>3</sup>. You may add objectives (list them after the SOR objectives), but don't 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.*

- ❑ **List of Activities/Assessments:** Provide a list of types of assessments/activities used for grading purposes. I recommend you include a statement that assignments are subject to change at the instructor's discretion.

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

Final exam: Here is the Registrar [calendar](#) to find the exam schedule. The provost's office provides specific instructions about the format of your final exam. Synchronous online classes should hold the final exam during the scheduled exam time. Asynchronous classes may have an online exam window of 24-48 hours (see [link](#)).

Attendance: Use guidance of our regular university [class attendance policy](#) for determining your course attendance policies.

- ❑ **Course specific policies:** List/highlight any specific policies relevant to your course; with highlighted suggestions below..

- **Clear Professor Expectations:** The syllabi should clearly describe the professor's expectations of students. For example, what expectations do you have for class participation,, netiquette, class attendance and/or participation, working in groups, etc. Suggested content and wording can be found at the [Pew FTLC Syllabus Statement Examples](#) website. Statements include language around topics such as caring for students, financial hardship, inclusive equitable learning environment, mental health, synchronous class session privacy, use of respondus lockdown browser/monitor, etc.
- **Final Exams (April 22-26):** As outlined in *Shared Governance Policies*(SG 3.04.F), instructors are expected to provide a culminating experience for each course during Examination Week. This experience should occur at the special time scheduled during Examination Week, which can be found on the [Registrar's site](#). (*Any exceptions must be approved by the appropriate academic dean.*) Final examinations should be given during the scheduled exam time unless that time is being used for another activity, such as presentations.

- **Class Attendance Policy ([link](#)):** Clearly state any class attendance policies you have. Your policy should be in line with the [university policy](#). As stated in the university policy “faculty members will make reasonable accommodations for students when an absence is excused.” Such accommodations would depend on the course.
- **Contingency Plan: Faculty Absences/Switching to Remote Format:** Communicate clearly in your syllabus about what to expect if you are absent or the university transitions to remote status and outline procedures/expectations.

I haven’t seen a policy about faculty absences, beyond the general [policy](#). Academic continuity is a high priority and as a department we want to minimize disruptions to students’ learning. Have plans in place ahead of time for what students will do if you need to be absent -- and include information in your syllabus. You might plan to meet your class via Zoom during the scheduled class period. Or, another option includes an assignment for students to do in lieu of class such as an asynchronous activity.

One of the university's operational status categories includes “remote” ([SLT6.3](#)), which says in part “*Remote: The most common reason to shift to remote status would be for weather related reasons. Classes will shift to remote delivery whenever feasible. Classes that cannot be delivered remotely will not be held.*” The Provost’s Office gives guidelines ([link](#)) “Depending on timing of the announcement and appropriateness for the course, class should be conducted in a manner appropriate for the circumstances (e.g. synchronous online, asynchronous online, etc.). Faculty will communicate to students the expectations for courses during the remote status timeframe. Students are expected to meet course expectations during this time.” Include relevant information for how students would participate/access class if we need to go “remote” for any reason. University guidelines for course delivery can be found [here](#). You may include [minimum technology requirements for online/hybrid courses](#) as part of the required materials for your F2F course so you have the flexibility to implement a contingency plan if for some reason you need to transition to a remote (synchronous online) delivery. However, please do not require more than the minimum requirement and make it clear what is required in your required resources/materials section of the syllabus.

- **General Education Course 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, 126, 131, or 201 OR Issues – Information, Innovation, and Technology for MTH 312).
- **Math Tutoring Center:** For any courses served by the Math Tutoring Center (MTH 108, 109, 110, 122, 123, 124, 125, 180, 201, 202, 203, 225), please include a [link to the Math Center](#) (there is an automatic link built into your Bb site).

*Here is a blurb, from Marcia, that you can include in your syllabus:*

**Math Tutoring Center:** GVSU’s Math Tutoring Center offers both in-person and online drop-in tutoring this semester, starting Wednesday, January 10. You can access the most up-to-date information on our website at <http://gvsu.edu/tutoring/math/>. There you will find our current hours, information on how to access online tutoring with Discord Voice and a schedule of when you can find tutors to help with your specific course. Bring questions to any center about using technology (calculator or Desmos),

on methods and concepts, or on specific problems. All Math Center tutoring is FREE, so stop by early and often.

The Math Tutoring Center offers:

- in-person tutoring on the Allendale campus (MAK A-2-601): Monday – Thursday 10am – 5pm and Friday 10am – 2pm
- in-person tutoring on the Pew campus (EC 608): Monday – Thursday 1pm – 5pm ([check website](#), hours may change)
- online tutoring via Discord Voice: Sunday – Thursday 5pm – 9pm

To access virtual drop-in tutoring, you can use the link in your Blackboard course called Math Tutoring Center or visit our website. Then you will need to click on the “Online Math Tutoring Center” button, which will require a GVSU login. We ask that when you enter our Discord server, please change your username to your first and last name so we can get you signed in and connected with a tutor.

**Tutoring and Reading Center Appointments:** GVSU’s Tutoring and Reading Center offers appointment tutoring both in-person and virtually. You can sign up for 50-minute tutoring appointments for many Math courses. Request a tutor at <https://www.gvsu.edu/trc/> or schedule directly on [Navigate](#).

#### ❏ University Policies applying to all courses:

- **List of Policies.** It is a requirement that you 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/>.”
- **Academic Integrity Policies.** Please familiarize yourself with our student code-updated in 2021 and again in 2022 (see [link](#)) and include syllabus language around academic integrity. [Sections 5 and 6 of the student code](#) define academic misconduct policy and procedures. Visit the OSCCR [website](#) (instructor resources on academic misconduct [page](#) for a host of information).

*Sample Syllabus Language:* There is [sample syllabus language](#) at the OSCCR site referencing the academic misconduct policy. In addition, the [FTLC syllabi statement example page](#) also has example language for academic integrity and plagiarism.

- **Other Policies:**
  - *DSR:* Include a statement about [Disability Support Services](#). See [FTLC page](#) for syllabus language.
  - *Religious Accommodation:* Consider including a statement about religious accommodation and provide the [link for religious accommodation form](#).

*Sample Syllabus Language:* In accordance with the [Religious Inclusion Policy](#), GVSU will provide reasonable accommodations for faculty, staff and students to observe their religious beliefs, except where accommodating the request would result in undue hardship on the University in its mission, operation or in meeting its academic standards. If you would like to request a reasonable accommodation, please complete this [form](#) and submit it to your professor within the first two weeks of each semester or as soon as reasonably possible.

- *Classroom and Campus Safety:* I consider classroom and campus safety our shared responsibility. Please familiarize yourself with the classroom emergency



placard, which contains important information that could prove useful should an emergency arise. Emergency situations could include a fire alarm, tornado warning, medical emergency, or hostile intruder, and our response might consist of evacuating MAK Hall in an orderly manner, moving as a group to a different location in the building, rendering assistance to a class member, or staying put and locking the classroom door. In all cases, I will provide clear instructions as to what you should do. Please make sure to have your primary mobile number listed in Banner so that you will automatically receive any campus alerts. Should you receive an emergency notification in class, notify me immediately.

Additional information about campus safety can be found at the following sites:

- Directions for enabling additional contact means to the campus alert system: [www.gvsu.edu/gvsualert](http://www.gvsu.edu/gvsualert)
  - Emergency alert information: <https://www.gvsu.edu/emergency/>
  - List of campus tornado safety locations: <https://www.gvsu.edu/emergency/tornado-safety-location-2.htm>
  - [Medical emergencies](#) and [campus AED locations](#):
  - Active shooter response: <https://www.gvsu.edu/dps/active-shooter-response-85.htm>
- 
- *Other Relevant Policies:* The FTLC syllabi statement [examples](#) provide sample language for additional general policies such as mental health, emergency preparedness, etc.
  - *General Statement:* Consider including a general statement that allows for modification to the syllabus such as “I reserve the right to adjust this syllabus as needed and will notify you of any changes through Blackboard.”