Syllabus of Record Guidelines

Purpose

The syllabus of record (SOR) serves five audiences:

1. **Faculty** are expected to use the SOR as a blueprint for designing course syllabi. Faculty are free to add to the content in the SOR, but the required course objectives, topics, and methods of evaluation in the SOR must be included in the course syllabus.
2. **Students** can use the SOR to determine the skills and content they can expect to have learned upon successful completion of a course.
3. **Other institutions** can use the SOR to determine transfer equivalency credit.
4. **Faculty governance** (e.g., units, CCCs, UCC) use the SOR when evaluating course change and new course proposals.
5. **Accreditation bodies** may use the SOR to view the content taught in courses within a given program.

The SOR is a blueprint for building a course. It provides details on the minimum structure and content for the course so that units can ensure knowledge is structured throughout the curriculum. It is not necessarily meant to articulate every aspect of each week of a course. Therefore, when constructing an SOR, careful attention must be paid to what it contains. If a unit wishes to propose a course in which content is quite rigid and fixed, then the various sections of the SOR would reflect that. On the other hand, if a unit wishes to propose a course with content to be selected from a range of specified possibilities and/or a course with little fixed content with the bulk of the content being determined by the specific instructor, then the SOR would indicate that.

Content

The SOR is a forward-facing document which should be grammatically and typographically correct. All acronyms/abbreviations must be defined on their first usage. The SOR reflects the standard definition of a semester which is 15 weeks (14 weeks of instruction and a final week culminating assessment/experience).

The SOR must contain the following elements (the six starred (*) items are loaded directly from the course proposal in Sail and are not part of the SOR input process):

* Program Code and Course Number
* Title of Course (official catalog title)
* Credit hours
* Prerequisites and/or corequisites (if any)
* Description (official catalog description)
* Additional course information (if any)
Course Objectives

Topics
Methods of evaluation
Sample sources of information

Course Objectives

List the educational objectives that students will achieve regardless of which section, semester, year, or instructor teaches the course (i.e., "common objectives"). All course syllabi must include the course objectives from the SOR; individual course sections may also include discretionary objectives. All course objectives must be student-centered, specific, and assessable, although the level of specificity may vary depending on the nature of the course, discipline, and needs of the proposing unit.

1. Ensure course objectives relate to the course description and title.
2. Ensure course objectives are relevant to the field of study/discipline and are contextual for a given course. Avoid using course objectives which are generic enough to apply to multiple fields.
3. Course objectives must complete the sentence "Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to..." and therefore should begin with an action verb relevant to the appropriate domain (cognitive, affective, psychomotor) to identify what is being assessed.
   a. Do not type into the objective the verb selected from the dropdown list in Sail or it will appear twice in the SOR.
   b. Avoid multiple active verbs within one objective. Break it into two objectives or select the more appropriate, higher-level verb.
   c. Limit the use of "Demonstrate knowledge" or "Demonstrate understanding," instead providing a specific action which better represents the intent of the objective. The verb "understand" should be limited to language use. The verb "demonstrate" should be limited to courses requiring students to provide a practical exhibition or proof.
4. For dual listed courses, course objectives should be broad enough to be assessed at both undergraduate and graduate levels (or include graduate specific objectives).

Topics

1. List the class topics which reflect the course description and field of study/discipline and are expected to be covered in all sections of the course regardless of semester, year, or instructor teaching the course (i.e., "common topics").
   a. Ensure the course objectives are reflected in the topic coverage. All course objectives should be addressed by one or more of the course topics.
   b. Minimize the use of vague topics that could apply to any course.

  c. Group similar topics to provide a reasonable amount of topic coverage within the allotted course structure.

  d. Verify the topic list does not contain non-topic activities (for example: exams, presentations, semester review, etc.).

2. Additional topics beyond those required of each section may be specified for informational purposes and should be labeled as such (e.g., "discretionary topics").

3. Provide the approximate amount of coverage devoted to each topic or group of topics. Coverage can be a specific percentage of time or number of weeks, or a range assuming a 14-week instructional semester. If a course is never offered in a 14-week semester format, utilize percentages to allocate topic coverage within the course.

  a. Verify coverage adds up to 100% or 14 weeks.

  b. If ranges are used, the sum of the minimum coverage should be less than 100% or 14 weeks and the sum of the maximum coverage should be greater than 100% or 14 weeks.

  c. If discretionary topics are provided, the minimum coverage of common topics must be less than 100% or 14 weeks to accommodate those discretionary topics.

  d. Time allotted for discretionary topics is not required.

4. Courses containing a lab component should distinguish lab topics from lecture topics.

Methods of Evaluation (MOEs)

1. List the common methods of evaluation that will be used to assess students in their meeting of the course objectives, regardless of which section, semester, year, or instructor teaches the course (e.g., exams, papers).

  a. The methods of evaluation should be consistent with the action verb in the course objectives. For instance, exams are not an appropriate method of assessing whether a student can "demonstrate" a skill.

  b. Provide MOEs that reflect the level of the course; especially those for graduate credit in dual listed courses.

  c. Ensure that MOEs are general enough to be used by all faculty teaching the course.

2. Additional evaluation techniques beyond those required of each section may be specified for informational purposes and should be labeled as such (e.g., "discretionary methods of evaluation").

3. The SOR does not require percentages (weights) for each method of evaluation.

  a. If the proposers believe percentages are necessary, they must sum to 100%.

  b. If ranges are used, the sum of the minimum values should be less than 100% and the sum of the maximum values should be greater than 100%.

  c. If discretionary MOEs are provided, the sum of the minimum values of common MOEs must be less than 100%.

  d. Discretionary MOEs do not require percentages.

Primary Source(s) of Information

1. Provide a list of representative sources that are appropriate for the course and may be used for student learning (e.g., textbooks, course packs, online resources, representative journals in the field, etc.) .
2. List sources that are reasonably up to date within the context of the discipline.
3. Use the same citation format for all listed sources (e.g., MLA, APA, AMA, Chicago).