

Resources for Syllabuses and Teaching

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Please send suggestions or corrections to Brent Donnellan (mbdonnellan@tamu.edu). Thanks to Mindy Bergman and Rachel Smallman for suggestions and edits.

1. How to Upload a Syllabus via Howdy (Must be logged in):

<https://howdy.tamu.edu/Inside/TAMU/Advisor/howtouploadsyllabusinstr.pdf>

2. Minimum Syllabus Requirements and Related Links:

Note: Syllabus must be provided no later than the first day of class (see second sentence here:

<http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07>)

Information from the Registrar's Website (Click on Links for Specific Information and Additional Resources): <http://registrar.tamu.edu/Our-Services/Curricular-Services/Curricular-Approvals/Course-Approvals#1-MinimumSyllabusRequirements>

See Also: <http://registrar.tamu.edu/Registrar/media/Curricular-Services/Curricular%20Approvals/Course%20Approvals/CourseSubmissionChecklist.pdf>

3. Required ADA Statement (Updated Starting Spring of 2016):

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services, currently located in the Disability Services building at the Student Services at White Creek complex on west campus or call 979-845-1637. For additional information, visit <http://disability.tamu.edu>.

4. Required Statement about Learning Outcomes (College Requirement):

Texas A&M University has identified student learning outcomes that describe our institutional commitment to your educational goals. These include the ability to demonstrate critical thinking, effective communication, and social, cultural, and global competence. Please see:

http://provost.tamu.edu/essentials/pdfs/copy_of_UndergraduateLearningOutcomesFinal.pdf

5. Possible Statements Affirming Diversity and Promoting a Civil and Inclusive Classroom (Departmental Suggestions):

Respect for Diversity (by Belem Lopez and Adrienne Crowell; adapted from Rachel Hull)

It is my intent that ALL students, regardless of backgrounds or perspectives, are well-served by this course. I view the diversity that different students bring to the class as a resource, strength, and benefit to the ideals of a university education. Therefore, our classroom is a designated safe zone of respect, including toward diversity in gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability, age, socio-economic status, ethnicity, race, culture, political views, etc. Please let me know if you have suggestions about how to improve the value of diversity in this course; your comments will be welcomed.

Respect for Diversity (by Mindy B.)

To make this environment comfortable for everyone, please remember that there are many students with different experiences and needs in one room. This class does not tolerate remarks that are sexist, racist, homophobic, or otherwise ridicule people.

Respectful environment:

There are a number of topics during the semester that can make some people uncomfortable. To make this environment comfortable for everyone, please remember that there are many students with different experiences and needs in one room and these diverse experiences and backgrounds are not always obvious to the casual observer. Whereas it is 100% OK to disagree with someone, you must state your disagreements about the issue (and not the other person) and in a way that is respectful (i.e., does not belittle people or groups). This class does not tolerate remarks that are sexist, racist, homophobic, or otherwise ridicule people.

6. Statement on Limits to Confidentiality:

Texas A&M University and the Department of Psychology are committed to fostering a learning environment that is safe and productive for all. University policies and federal and state laws provide guidance for achieving such an environment. Although class materials are generally considered confidential pursuant to student record policies and laws, University employees—including instructors—cannot maintain confidentiality when it conflicts with their responsibility to report certain issues that jeopardize the health and safety of our community. As the instructor, I must report the following information to other University offices if you share it with me, even if you do not want the disclosed information to be shared:

- Allegations of sexual assault, sexual discrimination, or sexual harassment when they involve TAMU students, faculty, or staff.
- Credible threats of harm to oneself, to others, or to university property

These reports may trigger contact from a campus official who will want to talk with you about the incident that you have shared. In many cases, it will be your decision whether or not you wish to speak with that individual.

If you would like to talk about these events in a more confidential setting, you are encouraged to make an appointment with the Student Counseling Service (<https://scs.tamu.edu>). Students can report concerning, non-emergency behavior at <http://tellsomebody.tamu.edu>.

7. Information about Student Learning Objectives

Syllabi should contain student learning objectives. Some faculty members are out of compliance on this requirement because they list course objectives. Student learning objectives should reflect what successful students will know/be able to do by the end of the course.

Details are here:

http://assessmentconference.tamu.edu/resources/writing_student_learning_outcomes.html

This link provides a pdf of Bloom's taxonomy verbs. These can be helpful in constructing the learning objectives. <http://www.fresnostate.edu/academics/oie/documents/assesments/Blooms%20Level.pdf>

Below is an example of the wrong way to list objectives and a corresponding right way to list them!

BAD: The course objectives are to: 1) provide an overview of the literature (theory, empirical studies) in a sampling of major content areas, 2) develop critical thinking, reading, and writing skills, 3) develop research skills through reviewing and analyzing literature, and 4) stimulate ideas for research projects.

BETTER: By the end of this course, the successful student should be able to:

- Describe the major content areas and contemporary questions in the field
- Discuss classic and contemporary literature in the field
- Critically analyze empirical and theoretical work
- Compare and contrast methods as well as theories
- Write a research proposal for a novel research question that contributes meaningfully to the psychological literature

8. Information on Religious Holidays:

Religious Holy Days: <http://dof.tamu.edu/Rules/Religious-Observance>

Quick List for 2016: <http://www.interfaithcalendar.org/2016.htm>

9. Information on the Personalized Instructor Course Appraisal System (PICA)

Note: The Department will use PICA for all course evaluations starting in Fall of 2016. This move is environmentally responsible (no paper forms) and will facilitate faster and more informative

evaluations. The system also allows you to solicit early feedback during the 5th week of instructor and to customize your evaluation questions for your own professional development.

Information about PICA (<http://assessment.tamu.edu/Course-Evaluation>).

FAQ about PICA for students (<https://pica.tamu.edu/pica/SystemFAQ.aspx>)

Reasons for using PICA (<http://assessment.tamu.edu/assessment/media/Course-Evaluation/Seven-Reasons-to-use-PICA-06-16-2016.pdf>)

Tips to increase your evaluations (<http://assessment.tamu.edu/assessment/media/Course-Evaluation/Increasing-ratings.pdf>)

10. Links and Resources for Classroom Management and Dealing with Behavior Issues:

Concerning Behavior Response Guide: <http://tellsomebody.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/2015-2016-TAMU-ResponseGuide-folder.pdf>

Information on Classroom Management: <http://cte.tamu.edu/Faculty-Teaching-Resource/Classroom-Management>

Tell Somebody (Dealing with Students and Other Individuals in Crisis):
<http://tellsomebody.tamu.edu/resources>

11. Final Exam Schedule: <http://registrar.tamu.edu/general/finalschedule.aspx>

12. Academic Calendar (Take Note of Redefined Days): <http://registrar.tamu.edu/Catalogs,-Policies-Procedures/Academic-Calendar>

13. Additional Links and Resources:

Faculty Handbook: http://dof.tamu.edu/dof/media/PITO-DOF/Documents/Guidelines/handbooks/tamu_faculty_handbook.pdf

Helpful Tips about Teaching: <http://cte.tamu.edu/Faculty-Teaching-Resource/Teaching>

Rules and Policies from the Dean of Faculties: <http://dof.tamu.edu/Rules>