

The Colleges of the Arts and Sciences Syllabus Template Guidelines

DRAFT for CCI discussion

When submitting a course proposal via the Electronic Course Approval system, in addition to filling out the form (www.eca.osu.edu) please attach a **syllabus template document** that adheres to the following standards as approved by the ASC Committee on Curriculum and Instruction [approval pending]:

Rationale: This template was created in order to provide course developers with clear guidelines when creating courses and to make transparent ASC faculty curricular committee expectations for course approval. The guidelines are also intended to increase the expediency of the course approval process by streamlining the content and order in which committees and administrators see and enter course-related data.

Items in italics are required only for operational syllabi (i.e. those distributed to students), but not for the syllabus template. However, please feel free to include this information in the template if it is available. Items not in italics **must** be included in the syllabus template document. If you have an existing operational syllabus that includes all the elements below, you may submit that document in lieu of this template.

Syllabus Template Elements:

1. *A space for the instructor's contact information, including name, office location, phone, e-mail, and office hours*
2. *A space for the name and contact information for the course coordinator, if the syllabus is standard for several sections*
3. *A space for meeting days and times, and classroom location*
4. Course number and title
5. Student Learning Goals and Objectives - required for all GEC courses, recommended for others
 - a. **If the course is a GEC course**, it must include the following:
 - i. the GEC category or categories it fulfills (e.g. Category 2. Breadth, C. Arts and Humanities, (3) Cultures and Ideas)
 - ii. the "GEC Learning Goals and Objectives" boiler plate language pertaining to the appropriate area(s) – [see document below – in the final version this will be a hyperlink and an Operations Manual page reference to this document]
 - iii. a statement beneath these that explains how the course will satisfy the stated Learning Goals and Objectives
6. A description of the course
7. A list of required texts and other course materials, and information on where they are available
8. Information about the length, format, and due dates of all papers, homework, laboratory assignments, and examinations

9. Attendance and grading policy information, indicating the percentages assigned to various requirements [suggestion for CCI: final version can include a hyperlink and Operations Manual page reference to “Good Practice in Course Grading” – see document below]
10. *Information about the scheduling and format of examinations*
11. *A class attendance policy*
12. *A space for a grading scale*
13. A weekly topical outline of course meetings, including topics to be covered, readings, film screenings, and homework. (The committee wants a sense of how much work is required of students.)
14. The following statement on academic misconduct:

“It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/info_for_students/csc.asp).”

15. The following statement about disability services (recommended 16 point font):

“Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.”

COLLEGES OF THE ARTS AND SCIENCES (ASC) GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM LEARNING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In the Program of General Education, students will take coursework in several areas of study to achieve basic skills, competencies, and breadth of knowledge expected of an Arts and Sciences college-educated graduate. Learning outcomes students should achieve through coursework in various categories of the General Education Curriculum (GEC) are described below.

SKILLS

Writing and Related Skills coursework across disciplines develops students' skills in writing, reading, critical thinking, and oral expression. Expected outcomes are:

- Students apply basic skills in expository writing.
- Students demonstrate critical thinking through written and oral expression.
- Students retrieve and use written information analytically and effectively.

Quantitative and Logical Skills coursework develops students' quantitative literacy and logical reasoning, including the ability to identify valid arguments, use mathematical models, draw conclusions, and critically evaluate results based on data. Expected outcomes are:

- Basic Computational Skills. Students demonstrate computational skills and familiarity with algebra and geometry, and can apply these skills to practical problems.
- Mathematical and Logical Analysis. Students comprehend mathematical concepts and methods adequate to construct valid arguments, and understand inductive and deductive reasoning, scientific inference, and general problem solving.
- Data Analysis. Students understand basic concepts of statistics and probability, comprehend and use common statistical methods for analyzing data, recognize the role of statistics in designing and reporting research, and make and critically evaluate statistical conclusions.

Foreign Language coursework develops students' skills in communication across ethnic, cultural, ideological, and national boundaries, and helps students develop an understanding of other cultures and patterns of thought. Expected outcomes are:

- Students demonstrate basic skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing in a language other than their native language.
- Students describe cultural differences in countries other than their own, and demonstrate an appreciation of these differences.

BREADTH

Natural Science coursework fosters students' understanding of the principles, theories and methods of modern science, the relationship between science and technology, and the effects of science and technology on the environment. Expected outcomes are:

- Students understand the basic facts, principles, theories and methods of modern science.
- Students learn key events in the history of science.
- Students provide examples of the inter-dependence of scientific and technological developments.
- Students discuss social and philosophical implications of scientific discoveries and understand the potential of science and technology to address problems of the contemporary world.

Social Science coursework helps students understand human behavior and cognition, and the structures of human societies, cultures and institutions. Expected outcomes are:

- Students understand the theories and methods of scientific inquiry as they are applied to the studies of individuals, groups, organizations, and societies.
- Students comprehend human differences and similarities in various psychological, social, cultural, economic, geographic, and political contexts.
- Students develop abilities to comprehend and assess individual and social values, and recognize their importance in social problem solving and policy making.

Arts and Humanities coursework develops students' capacities to evaluate significant writing and works of art, and for aesthetic response and judgment; interpretation and evaluation; critical listening, reading, seeing, thinking, and writing; and experiencing the arts and reflecting on that experience. Expected outcomes are:

- Students develop abilities to be enlightened observers or active participants in the visual, spatial, musical, theatrical, rhetorical, or written arts.
- Students describe and interpret achievement in the arts and literature.
- Students explain how works of art and literature express social and cultural issues.

HISTORICAL STUDY

Historical Study coursework develops students' knowledge of how past events influence today's society and help them understand how humans view themselves. Expected outcomes are:

- Students acquire a perspective on history and an understanding of the factors that shape human activity.
- Students display knowledge about the origins and nature of contemporary issues and develop a foundation for future comparative understanding.
- Students think, speak, and write critically about primary and secondary historical sources by examining diverse interpretations of past events and ideas in their historical contexts.

DIVERSITY

Social Diversity in the United States coursework fosters students' understanding of the pluralistic nature of institutions, society, and culture in the United States. Expected outcomes are:

- Students describe the roles of such categories as race, gender, class, ethnicity, and religion in the institutions and cultures of the United States.
- Students recognize the role of social diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values.

International Issues coursework help students become educated, productive, and principled citizens of their nation and the world. Expected outcomes are:

- Students exhibit an understanding of political, economic, cultural, physical, and social differences among the nations of the world, including a specific examination of non-Western culture.

CAPSTONE

Issues of the Contemporary World thematic upper-division course work, drawing upon multiple disciplines, enriches students' experiences of the contemporary world. Expected outcomes are:

- Students synthesize and apply knowledge from diverse disciplines to contemporary issues.
- Students write about or conduct research on the contemporary world.

Good Practice in Course Grading

The process of determining course grades begins with the concept of how grades should be determined. Examples of grading concepts include the following:

- **Norm based grades** – typically referred to as “the curve”, judges students in comparison to others in the class, or sometimes historically in comparison with students in previous offerings of the course.
- **Criterion referenced grades** – judge students against an external set of performance criteria, irrespective of the performance of other students.
- **Mastery** – this is a subset of criterion referenced grading, with a minimum level of performance used to assess the achievement of “mastery”. S/U is the typical grade set used for this concept.
- **Contract grading** –the instructor and student negotiate the criteria for differing levels of achievement and corresponding grade.

Implementing any of these concepts is a two-step process consisting of measuring student performance and assigning letter grades.

Factors to consider in achieving “good” grading:

1. **align** student evaluations with the content and learning objectives of the course – test what you really care that they learn
2. choose **evaluation methods** [exams, papers, problem sets, presentations, performances, demonstrations] which are appropriate for the content and the level of the course
3. provide **timely feedback** to students on their performance
4. design a **scheme for aggregation** of individual assessments to obtain an overall grade, with appropriate weighting
5. course letter grades should map individual student performance into the full range of available letter grades, **differentiating** levels of performance
6. **simple** [easy to understand] and **efficient** [easy to execute] methods are preferred
7. **equity** [same situation, same grade] is the overarching principle in judging the fairness of a grading process
8. **workload** required to perform satisfactorily on the measurement events should be aligned with the course credit hours and level of the course
9. **target** in the range of letter grades for “average” performance should be commonly understood and considered by the instructors who assign course grades

See http://ftad.osu.edu/read/teaching/evaluating/evaluating_gradingcalculating.html for a more detailed discussion of grading concepts and issues.