

Course syllabi

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A. Class planning and the course syllabus

The course syllabus is an important teaching document. A syllabus represents a formal agreement between an instructor and the students. It provides both students and instructors with a framework within which to work. A good syllabus presents students with a clear delineation of course objectives and rationale. It details course requirements, goals, learning objectives/outcomes and expectations. It explains grading criteria and methodology in a straightforward manner. Faculty are required to inform students in writing via a syllabus the following information at the first class session: course outline and objectives, number of scheduled examinations, quizzes (scheduled and unscheduled) or other assessments, grading practices (method of evaluation), attendance policy, office hours, special requirements, textbooks and other course materials, written and other assignments.

By providing a detailed syllabus at the start of the semester, the instructor ensures that each student has a written statement of policy. If questions regarding grading, course schedule, or requirements arise, the instructor can refer the student to the syllabus. From an administrative standpoint, the syllabus provides a basis upon which to resolve any student/faculty misunderstandings.

A copy of the course syllabus for every section taught should be submitted by the faculty member to the Department Secretary and the Dean. The Dean's Office will submit a copy to the Library Archives.

B. Attendance Policy

Students are required to observe attendance policies for their classes as announced by instructors at the first meeting. Faculty members should include the attendance policy in each course syllabus.

C. Religious Holidays

Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 10a.-50. Absence of students due to religious beliefs.

No person shall be expelled from or refused admission as a student to an institution of higher education for the reason that he is unable, because the tenets of his religion forbid secular activity on a particular day or days or at a particular time of day, to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study or work requirements on such particular day or days or at such time of day. Any student in an institution of higher education who is unable, because of such reason, to attend classes on a particular day or days or at a particular time of day shall be excused from any examination or any study or work assignments on such particular day or days or at such particular time of day. It shall be the responsibility of the faculty

and of the administrative officials of each institution of higher education to make available to each student who is absent from school because of such reason an equivalent opportunity to make up any examination, study or work requirements which he has missed because of such absence on any particular day or days or at any particular time of day. No special fees of any kind shall be charged to the student for making available to such student such equivalent opportunity. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to any student because of his availing himself of the provisions of this section. For the purposes of this section, "institution of higher education" shall mean any of the schools comprising the state system of higher education, as defined in section 10a-1.

D. Credit hour compliance

Senate Bill 13/14-16. ECSU Policy on the Definition of a Student Credit Hour

Preamble: For several decades, the federal government has relied on credits as a measure of student academic engagement as a basis of awarding financial aid (NEASC/CIHE Policy on Credits and Degrees)¹. NEASC accreditation requires that the university has policies in place to ensure compliance with the federal guidelines on credit hours.

Bill Text: Consistent with the federal definition (set forth in the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations), a credit hour will be defined as not less than one clock hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two clock hours of out of class student work each week for approximately 15 weeks for one semester, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time.

At least the equivalent amount of work will be required for other credit-bearing academic activities, including studio, laboratory work, internships, practica, independent studies, and other academic work lending to the award of student credit hours.

Example: A 3-credit course would require students to complete the equivalent of 45 hours of in-class work and 90 hours of out-of-class work, per semester.

E. Course materials

A course syllabus should indicate what course materials (books or supplies) are required and/or recommended for a class. It is not necessary to tell students that they must buy these in the Eastern bookstore but it not consistent with the university's agreement with Barnes and Noble for students to be directed to another source. The university's contract with Barnes and Noble stipulates:

1.1. Bookstore Service

1.1.1. In order to meet the needs of Eastern, B&N shall operate the bookstore facility as an independent contractor and shall be Eastern's exclusive, on-campus and internet seller of all required, recommended or suggested textbooks, and course materials.

The university Senate approved a textbook adoption deadline policy to ensure that the bookstore has the books and materials you will require for students: *Continuing faculty will be required to inform the Bookstore of their orders for the following semester by November 1 in the fall and April 7 in the spring. The Vice President for Academic Affairs will be responsible for notifying faculty of the deadline each semester.*

Course recording policy and statement:

- a. Classroom Recording by Students with accommodation from the Office of Accessibility Services: Classroom recording may be an appropriate academic adjustment, auxiliary aid, and/or service for a student with documented permanent and temporary disabilities. Eastern's Office of AccessAbility Services (OAS) determines if classroom recording is appropriate for a student. When that determination is made the following statement is printed on the Letter of Accommodation from OAS that grants a student use of a recording device in the classroom:
"Student understands that faculty members have copyright interest in their class lectures and he/she agrees not to infringe on this right in any way. Student will use these recordings only for personal academic use during this course and will not upload, broadcast, transcribe, share or release all or any part of these recordings, in accordance with federal copyright laws. Student understands that the faculty member and students in the class have privacy rights and agrees he/she will not violate those rights by using the tape recordings for any reason other than that of his/her own personal study. Student agrees to destroy all recordings at the end of the current semester. Failure to comply with recording guidelines may result in disciplinary action."
- b. Classroom Recording by Students: Instructors have the sole discretion to determine if recording will be allowed in the classroom. Before giving permission an instructor may want to ask other students if they agree to be recorded. It is recommended that if permission to record is granted, the student who will record should agree in writing to whatever conditions the instructor wants to impose. These might include using the recording for private use only, not posting it in any public forum, or deleting it after the semester is over.

Students who record a class without receiving faculty permission will be in violation of Part D, section 7 of the student code of conduct and may be subject to disciplinary action.

Recommended syllabus statement: Recording this class without permission of the instructor or the Office of Accessibility Services is a violation of Part D, section 7 of the CSU Student Code of Conduct.

F. Office of Accessibility Services Sample Syllabus Statement

Eastern Connecticut State University is committed to following the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you are a student with a disability (or think you may have a disability), and require adaptations or accommodations, or assistance evacuating a building in the case of an emergency, please contact the Office of AccessAbility Services (OAS) at 860-465-0189 to discuss your request further. Any student registered with the OAS should contact the instructor as soon as possible for assistance with classroom accommodations. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and must be communicated through a Letter of Accommodation which is drafted by the OAS.

G. Academic Services Center Statement

Students are encouraged to use the support services offered by the Academic Services Center (ASC) located on the ground floor of the Library. Advising Services and tutoring in math, writing, and other subjects, including supplementary instruction (SI), are available. The ASC also offers assistance in study techniques, time management and understanding learning styles. For further information call 465-4310 or check the ASC website at <http://www.easternct.edu/asc/>

H. Academic Misconduct Statement

At Eastern Connecticut State University, we value personal integrity as fundamental to our interactions with each other. We place special weight on academic honesty in all of our intellectual pursuits because it is a value fundamental to academic life and scholarly practice. All members of the University community are obligated to uphold high standards of academic honesty in their scholarship and learning, and this obligation extends to students.

Instructor's Role: Instructors should inform their students in the course syllabus and during class time of course-specific requirements and the penalties the faculty will impose for academic misconduct as informed by their professional judgment. Instructors should also refer students to the definition of academic misconduct in the CSU Student Code of Conduct.

Student's Role: (Recommended syllabus statement)

Students are expected to take personal responsibility for their intellectual work and to respect and acknowledge the ideas of others. Academic honesty means doing one's own work and giving proper credit to others whose work and thought are drawn upon. It is the responsibility of each student to become familiar with what constitutes academic dishonesty and plagiarism, and to avoid all forms of cheating and plagiarism. Students may not engage in any form of academic misconduct, and are responsible for learning how to present the ideas of others in their own work, and avoid all other forms of academic misconduct. For current documentation practices, consult the instructor or a style manual (e.g., APA, MLA).