

MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 8, 2018

TO: All University of Arizona Faculty

FROM: Neel Ghosh, Chair, Undergraduate Council (UGC)
Celeste Pardee, Assistant Director for Academic Policies/Organizations

RE: **Undergraduate Course Syllabus Policy and Template Revisions**

Effective in Spring 2019, all new and continuing undergraduate courses should conform to the revised Course Syllabus Policy, which focuses on the separation and clarification of Course Objectives and Expected Learning Outcomes—items #3 and #4 below. Revisions to the Policy and the Syllabus Template were made with input from Undergraduate Council and College Academic Administrators Council and approved by the Faculty Senate on 11/5/18.

Reminder: The 18 items listed in the Syllabus Policy (see the table with explanations and links) should be addressed in all undergraduate course syllabi, and additional topics are recommended, depending on the course content and delivery. The recommended (optional) items are included in the accompanying Syllabus Template that may be customized as appropriate for a specific course.

Changes to the [Undergraduate Course Syllabus Policy](#) and Syllabus Template:

3. <i>Course objectives</i>	<i>List what the instructor plans to cover in the course; the objectives should align with the Course Catalog description.</i>
4. <i>Expected learning outcomes</i>	<i>List what the student should learn or be able to do upon completing the course. Learning outcomes should be stated in measurable terms and should be aligned with the learning outcomes for the program (e.g., Major, Minor, General Education).</i> <i>Resource: OIA learning outcome guide</i>

Changes to the Syllabus Template (see link at the end of the Syllabus Policy page)—in addition to the Policy changes include:

Absence and Class Participation

Recommended language: *[This may be edited to fit a particular course. Note, however, that faculty may not require students to provide documentation of health-related issues in order to have an absence excused.]* Participating in the course and attending lectures and other course events are vital to the learning process. As such, attendance is required at all lectures and discussion section meetings. Absences may affect a student's final course grade. If you anticipate being absent, are unexpectedly absent, or are unable to participate in class online activities, please contact me as soon as possible. *To request a disability-related accommodation to this attendance policy, please contact the Disability Resource Center at (520) 621-3268 or drc-info@email.arizona.edu.* If you are experiencing unexpected barriers to your success in your courses, the Dean of Students Office is a central support resource for all students and may be helpful. The Dean of Students Office is located in the Robert L. Nugent Building, room 100, or call 520-621-7057.

Accessibility and Accommodations

Recommended language is provided on the Disability Resource Center website: <http://drc.arizona.edu/instructors/syllabus-statement>.

Justification for these revisions to the Syllabus Policy and Template:

- Course Objectives and Expected Learning Outcomes. Instructors' confusion over the difference between objectives and outcomes, along with a tendency to address one or the other in a syllabus, prompted the College Academic Administrators Council to propose listing these items separately with more precise descriptions.
- Absence and Class Participation. The Office of Institutional Equity, Disability Resource Center, Dean of Students, and Campus Health all recommended removing the request for students to provide medical documentation when they miss class due to health-related issues. Multiple reasons were given, such as the University's inability to request disability-related information except to facilitate accommodations, the lack of medical treatments for most cases of cold/flu, the inability of Campus Health to keep up with the demand for documentation during cold/flu season, etc. Instead of asking students for medical documentation, instructors should simply ask students for advance notification when they will be absent or cannot participate in class for any reason.
- Accessibility and Accommodations. The Disability Resource Center periodically updates the recommended language on its website. It's more efficient for instructors to link to the DRC page than to provide a statement that may be outdated in a year or two.

Management of Syllabus Changes:

- Instructors should review the syllabus for each class they offer (in Spring 2019 and beyond) and should make revisions as necessary to comply with the new Syllabus Policy (i.e., course objectives and expected learning outcomes) and recommended statements regarding class absences/participation and accessibility/accommodations.
- Department curriculum committees should examine the syllabi accompanying new course proposals and course modifications to ensure that they satisfy the revised Syllabus Policy and Template recommendations.

Undergraduate Course Syllabus Policy/Template questions may be addressed to the Office of Academic/Curricular Affairs: Abbie Sorg, at 520-621-4052 or asorg@email.arizona.edu.