Guidelines for Syllabus Preparation
Revised May 2012

Course syllabi are the responsibility of the **Course Directors and their Department Chairs**. To ensure that each syllabus achieves its intended purposes and also takes its place as part of a thoroughly integrated curriculum, the College maintains a list of required elements to be included in every syllabus.

A standardized syllabus format ensures the inclusion of required information such as the course title and number, credit hours, grade type, director’s e-mail and phone, course description, goals and objectives, attendance, textbooks, last day to withdraw, how students are evaluated, required information on retesting and course evaluations, etc., in each syllabus. The current form, supplied to all course directors, is to be used in lieu of any prior form without altering its contents or format.

**Course Title, Course Number, Credit Hours and Grade Type**

The Curriculum Committee approves the **course title**, the **number of credit hours** (based on the total clock hours), and the **grade type** (Letter Grade or Pass/Fail). The Registrar assigns a **Course Number**, distinguishing it from similar courses in past years. These are found in the Curriculum Committee’s document, supplied to all faculty Chairs. **This must be used to update a syllabus.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Same as in the Catalog. Do not alter the course title.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Department:</td>
<td>The department to which the course is assigned. It is also reflected in the prefix of the course number. The department name should be used consistently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revised Date</td>
<td>Date of current revision for the upcoming semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Director</td>
<td>These are needed in order to enable students to contact the course director. Please make sure they are accurate. If no consistent pattern of availability by day can be stated, select “Days vary”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director’s Campus Phone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director’s e-mail</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Office Days/Hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Course Description:**

DO NOT WRITE A COURSE DESCRIPTION FOR THE SYLLABUS!

For each course, a **Course Description** (also called Catalog Description), written by the Course Director and/or Department Chair and approved by the Curriculum Committee, is published in the College **Catalog**. It is available electronically and should be pasted directly into the course syllabus. Do NOT substantially change a course description without Curriculum Committee approval.

**Suggestions for writing a new Course Description when needed (e.g., a new course):** The description briefly states the nature and purpose of the course, what students can expect to learn, and the types of learning activities (lecture, laboratory, demonstrations, clinical tasks, etc.). It should NOT refer to the semester, day of the week or hour, or faculty members. Nor should it make reference to “the following objectives”, “in this syllabus” because it is going to be published in the **Catalog**.

**Course Goals; Specific Learning Objectives:**

**Goals** are the broadest purposes of the course. **Learning objectives** are specific learning tasks (cognitive, affective and/or psychomotor) to achieve the goals. They are stated as a brief list of concrete, measurable competencies that the students should master by the end of the course. A lengthy, highly detailed list of objectives, if used, is appropriate as a series of lecture handouts.
The sum total of all learning objectives over the four years, stated as measurable competencies, in appropriate order, defines the integrated curriculum qualifying a student for the DPM degree.

Required Text(s), assigned reading and audiovisuals:
“Required texts” are only those that the student is expected to use throughout the course. The list of required textbooks is published at least a month in advance of the semester’s syllabi, via the Intranet. Students may be assigned to read chapters of other books, articles, online resources, etc. and course directors need to ensure their availability (such as placing a book on Reserve or checking an online resource) before assigning them. Those not required fall into the “recommended” category. Course Directors and Chairs should always verify that a textbook is in print and available, at least a month in advance of the beginning of the semester, before making it the required textbook.

Required equipment:
Again, only the items of equipment the student is required to buy and own, or rent as applicable, such as microscopes, medical instruments, lab or clinic attire, etc.

Recommended books, materials, media, equipment:
Any that are not required but will enhance learning.

NOTE THAT THERE ARE “COURSE-SPECIFIC” POLICIES. WE CANNOT AVOID STATING THEM BY SAYING “SEE STUDENT HANDBOOK” OR “INSTITUTIONAL POLICY”. IF THEY ARE COURSE-SPECIFIC THEY ARE NOT IN THE HANDBOOK.

Attendance policy for this course:
Each syllabus for a didactic course must state how the institutional attendance policy (published in the Student Handbook) is carried out for that course, e.g., if and how unannounced quizzes will be used during the course (Do not say how many! Some students will stop attending after the last quiz), how they will impact the final grade, and that there is no make-up, and if what allowance is made for unavoidable absence. For labs and rotations, summarize how lost time must be made up.

Last day to withdraw:
A student may withdraw without penalty (grade of W) up to a limit date. (This prevents students from making a last-minute withdrawal to “duck the bullet”.) This limit is two-thirds of the total course hours (see Student Handbook for details), and should come after at least one exam. It should be an actual calendar date, NOT “after 2/3 of the lectures”, leaving the students to try to interpret it.

Evaluation of student performance:
Evaluation methods must be appropriate to the objectives being evaluated. State how quizzes, exams and other evaluations are used to evaluate performance. This is a qualitative statement.

Final grade computation:
This refers to the mathematics of exactly how the potential grade of 100% is calculated from quizzes, midterm, final exam, attendance and any other factors. Once stated, it must be adhered to because students take this statement literally. This is a quantitative statement, distinct from the preceding topic. The same formula must be given to those responsible for computer calculation of grades.

Missed evaluations:
There is some freedom as to how missed evaluations are made up, and how this relates to excused vs. unexcused absences. A course-specific policy needs to be stated and then followed. (In a course with many evaluations it is not reasonable to assume that no student will ever miss one.)
Method of examination review:
This will vary from course to course. Students are entitled to know what to expect, including how they will be helped to identify their mistakes and correct their understanding of the material. Whatever method is stated must be adhered to.

Procedure in the event of Remediation: This topic applies only to clinical rotations and has been pre-typed into the syllabus form. Additional course-specific explanation can be added. It needs to be deleted from each didactic syllabus with the policy for that.

The following is pre-typed in the syllabus form for didactic syllabi. It must be deleted, including the bold title, for clinical syllabi to which it does not apply. It may be copied and pasted from here.

Retesting:
In the event of an initial grade of F, students eligible for retesting are offered a retest in the failed subject(s) according to the retesting schedule, in order to demonstrate the required competencies and earn a minimal passing grade. Students are expected to study prior to the retest to strengthen deficient knowledge and competencies. Students should consult with appropriate academic departments during their preparation for retesting exams. If the retest is passed, the resulting final course grade will be “FC-“. A student who fails the retest receives a final grade of F. In many cases the study and retesting period coincides with recess time available to those students who have passed all courses. Students are advised not to make prior commitments (especially financial) on the presumption of free time which may not occur.

Students are expected to be aware of the numbers of retests they are eligible to take per semester/year and the consequences of failing numbers of courses greater than the number of retests permitted according to current policies.

Additional Rules, Procedures and Requirements Specific to This Course:
If any, they go here. If there are none, write “None.”

(The mandatory course evaluation applies to all courses and must be stated as shown here. It is pre-typed below and in the current syllabus format for convenience so no one has to insert it.)

Additional Required Procedure for All Courses: Mandatory Course Evaluation
All students are required to complete the online, anonymous student evaluation for each course within 5 days after the end of the course (final exam or other assignment) in order to have the earned grade entered on their academic record. After 5 days any students who have not done so will receive a grade of INC until they do so. The INC grade expires after 30 days and becomes an F, subject to all applicable policies including remediation, which will consist of completion of the evaluation.

Course Schedule and Assignments
(Under this title, add the calendar of sessions and reading/learning assignments, exams, etc.)
This guides the students and instructor(s) chronologically through the course. (Use Week 1, week 2, etc. rather than calendar dates.) Topics are linked to course objectives, scheduled evaluations, etc., all scheduled for dates in the upcoming semester. Readings and other resources related to each topic should be identified. This is revised annually along with the rest of the syllabus as needed. Even though there is
a Revised Date on the front page of the syllabus, the schedule should also identify the academic year. There have been instances where schedules were published in a syllabus with a prior year’s schedule by mistake, precisely because the schedule was not labeled by year.

Summary of Course Director’s/Chair’s Decisions in a Course Syllabus

The following items represent decisions by the course director (and/or department Chair) for each specific course. These decisions cannot be delegated to staff. Do not say “per Institutional Policy” which does not define these.

- The required textbook(s), and/or other materials if any.
- The details of the course-specific or department-specific attendance policy, consistent with the Institutional Policy.
- The last date to withdraw with a W grade. It should be set as a calendar date about 2/3 of the way through course and after at least one significant evaluation. Do NOT say “after 2/3 of the lectures”.
- The methods of evaluation of student performance, and the policy in the event of a missed test or evaluation; any other course- or department-specific policies related to this.
- The computation of the final grade (a mathematical statement), including the impact of attendance.

Responsibility for Maintenance of Course Syllabi

Department Chairs are responsible to maintain their current departmental syllabi two ways:

1. in their own computer as a Word file (not merely in the secretary’s computer);
2. in a hard copy syllabus file.

The Chair must have direct access to the document at all times. Course Directors and any faculty needing to see a syllabus should ask their Chair and no one else and should be able to receive the required syllabus immediately. Course Directors should save the latest revisions of their department’s syllabi for their own use in the future as well.

When a syllabus has been updated and corrected, a copy of that version must be saved by the Chair both electronically and in hard copy; it also needs to be sent to the Course Director for future use. It has occurred on various occasions that after correction, the correct version of the syllabus does not reach the Course Director, who then goes on using obsolete/incorrect information in the future.

Submitting Syllabi

Syllabi should be submitted electronically, in MS Word. If tables are used for schedules they should be Word tables. Page setup should include margins of at least 0.5” (1 inch all around is a good standard). Review whole document and make sure the same font is used throughout. Do not submit a syllabus in pdf format nor place it within the body of an e-mail message. It must be a Word ATTACHMENT.

Syllabi are published ONLY on the Intranet in a folder for each semester. They are not to be printed as handouts nor e-mailed to students as separate documents. The master schedule for all courses in the semester is printed for the students.

Due dates for revised syllabi are set so that after correction, they can be posted well in advance of the start of the semester.