

# MSU Syllabus Checklist

(revised by the Council for Undergraduate Education Deans on June 1, 2020 for fall semester 2020 courses that will be online and hybrid and for courses that must shift to an online format after November 25)

The [Code of Teaching Responsibility](#) requires that instructors distribute a course syllabus (either in person or in electronic form) at the beginning of the semester. This checklist is intended to serve as a guide for instructors developing syllabi at Michigan State University. **The items in green, which are also prefixed with \*\*\*Required\*\*\*, are required elements of the syllabus per the Code of Teaching Responsibility.** Other items are suggested based upon the nature of the course. A well-designed course syllabus has multiple uses, for both students and instructors as it:

- Allows students to plan their time with regard to attendance, homework assignments, readings, examinations, and papers.
  - Informs students about how they will be evaluated and how grades will be determined.
  - May be an important document for teaching portfolios, promotion and tenure applications, annual reviews, etc.
  - Provides a mechanism where you can clearly outline expectations for students in your class, which may prevent classroom disruptions, late submissions, confusion, and student grievances.
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## PART 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

### A. Course Information

- **Course Title**
- **Course Number**
- **Credit Credits**
- **Course Hours and Meeting Days:** Is the online (or portion of the online) course synchronous with set times or asynchronous with no set times? Or is it a hybrid with some asynchronous elements and some required meeting times? Specify all times (indicate Eastern Standard Time) students are expected to be present. *If students must be present at particular times, the times must not be different from what is in the Schedule of Courses. Note that the course must be held for the entirety of the semester and cannot end early unless designated as a special session course.*
- **Course Location:** Specify the platform the online version or portion of the course will take place on. Examples: Zoom, Teams, and D2L.
- **Course website address**
- **Course modality**
- **Term and Year**
- **Course Prerequisites and Co-requisites**

### B. Contact Information

- **Instructor Name / Graduate Teaching Assistant Name**
- **Pronouns**

- **\*\*\*Required\*\*\* Office Location:** not necessary for FS20 since office hours will be conducted remotely.
  - **\*\*\*Required\*\*\* Office Hours:** In FS20, all office hours should be via computer or telephone. No matter what the modality of the course, instructors are required to hold the number of office hours specified by their college. Indicate the platform office hours will be held on and how appointments can be made outside office hours. Be explicit about communication channels and expectations, e.g. if you'll need 24 hours to reply to student emails. We suggest [Zoom meetings](#) and the use of a [Zoom waiting room](#).
  - **\*\*\*Required\*\*\* Phone Number:** Specify if the office phone will be [forwarded to the instructor's personal phone](#) or if some other means of communication is to be used.
  - **\*\*\*Required\*\*\* E-mail**
  - **Website**
- C. **\*\*\*Required\*\*\* Course Description:** Instructors are responsible for ensuring that the content of the courses they teach remains consistent with the course descriptions approved by the University Committee on Curriculum and the University Council. Instructors shall direct class activities toward the fulfillment of course objectives and shall evaluate student performance in a manner consistent with these objectives. Instructors should construct online and hybrid courses or portions of courses to meet learning objectives and specify how they will evaluate student performance when not meeting face-to-face in a classroom.
- D. **Course Overview:** This is an opportunity to expand on the course description and give students details about the course modality or modalities and how course objectives will be met. You may discuss course format (recorded lectures, live lectures, a mix of recorded sessions and live discussions, etc.), relevance to students' academic and professional goals, and the nature of major deliverables in an online modality (final paper, project, exam, etc.)
- E. **\*\*\*Required\*\*\* Required Textbooks and Course Materials:** List required course textbooks. Include detail such as the full title of each textbook, author, edition, ISBN, description (if desired), and where it can be purchased. If a required text is available online, indicate where it can be accessed. Specify any additional materials, including software and hardware, that students must purchase for the course. *State if any hardware is required for assessment (e.g. a webcam).* In selecting/preparing materials abide by the [MSU Accessibility Policies](#).
- F. **\*\*\*Required\*\*\* Recommended Texts & Other Readings:** How and where to expect access to these materials, especially for online courses.
- G. **Course Platforms/Structure:** Include information about the online course management system you will use. For example, D2L.
- H. **Technical Assistance:** Include information on how to navigate necessary software, expectations, instructions on how to access course material, and where to find technical assistance. For example: If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem you can:
- Visit the MSU Help site at <http://help.msu.edu>
  - Visit the Desire2Learn Help Site at <http://help.d2l.msu.edu>
  - Call the MSU IT Service Desk at (517)432-6200, (844)678-6200, or e-mail at [ithelp@msu.edu](mailto:ithelp@msu.edu)

- Request assistance navigating and requesting instructional design help: <https://tech.msu.edu/service-catalog/teaching/instructional-design-development/>

## **Part 2. \*\*\*Required\*\*\* INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES**

- Objectives:** Whether the course is online, hybrid, or in-person, these must align with the course description, though how you achieve the objectives may be adapted to the course modality. You should list your objectives.
- Assignment descriptions:** Assignments in all course modalities should be aligned with course goals and the course description. The syllabus should include information on how assignments will be graded in all modalities including grading rubrics when applicable. Be clear about assignment and submission deadlines and methods, particularly in the online version or portion of the course.

## **Part 3. \*\*\*Required\*\*\* COURSE SCHEDULE**

**This must include the date of the final examination and tentative dates of required assignments, quizzes, and tests if applicable.** Should be arranged in a list by date or week.

## **Part 4. \*\*\*Required\*\*\* GRADING POLICY**

The syllabus must make clear how students will be evaluated, and specifically how final grades will be determined. This can be in the form of a detailed and complete rubric or chart. Grade percentages must be provided so that students may understand how their final grade will be calculated. If a grading curve is used, this must be shared, and instructors must let students know how the curve will be calculated. *Include any information about required proctoring, and particularly in an online course; this includes proctoring sites, lockdown browsers, and software requirements necessary for proctored exams or assignments.*

## **Part 5. Course Policies, Syllabus Statements, and Resources for Students**

- **\*\*\*Required\*\*\* Attendance Policy, if different from the [university attendance policy](#) and especially when that attendance policy affects student grades.** *Specify what attendance means in an online course. Indicate if students are expected to be present at particular online sessions.*
- [Spartan Code of Honor](#)
- **Academic Integrity:** *Include information about how you will design online exams, tests, quizzes, etc. to minimize the possibility of academic dishonesty. Assessment mechanisms appropriate for an in-person modality may not be appropriate for an online modality.*
- [RVSM Limits to Confidentiality](#)
- [RCPD Disability Accommodations Statement](#)
- [Mental Health](#)
- [Tolerance and civility](#)
- [Religious Observance Policy](#)
- [Student Athletes](#)
- **Use of Technology in the Classroom:** For example, do you allow the use of laptops and other electronic devices in the classroom?
- [Pronouns](#)

- **MSU Final Exam Policy:** Essential to include in syllabus if you will enforce this policy.
- **Internet Access:** *Not all students have access to reliable internet. Specify your expectations if students encounter difficulties—including outages—during synchronous sessions, exams, etc.*
- **Statement on ADA Compliance:** *This is your opportunity to describe what efforts you have made to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act for the online version or portion of the course and how people with disabilities can contact you and RCPD if aspects of the course are not accessible due to a disability.*
- **Commercialized Lecture Notes:** Commercialization of lecture notes and university-provided course materials is [permitted or not permitted] in this course. Note: The Code of Teaching Responsibility requires instructors who permit students to commercialize their class lecture notes to include a statement in their course syllabi that gives such permission. Absent such permission, students may not do so.
- **Other classroom expectations:** Can include policies around tardiness, late submissions, cell phones, language around syllabus changes.