

Syllabus Checklist (Revised 2019)

Please use the following “checklist” to prepare a syllabus for each course that you teach.

✓ **Contact Details and Office Hours:**

Instructor’s office telephone number, email address, website, office address and office hours.

✓ **Course Description and Objectives:**

Short description of the course and the context in which it is taught. Address teaching methodology and general expectations of students, including the expectation that students will expend three hours of out of class effort (e.g., reading, writing papers, completing problemsets, studying for exams, etc.) for each hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction. Consider adding this statement to your syllabus: Success in this four-credit course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 9 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (readings, papers, discussion sections, preparation for exams, etc.)

✓ **Learning Goals:**

Describe the knowledge, skills, and/or outlooks which you would like the students to learn or be able to demonstrate because of this course. Consider using action verbs.

✓ **Prerequisites:**

Explanation of the level at which the course is pitched, list of courses that are formal prerequisites (must correspond to official list; consult department office or Brandeis University Bulletin if in doubt): This section might also mention topics or skills with which students should be familiar.

✓ **Course Plan:**

This is the heart of the syllabus—a detailed list of topics for the semester, perhaps accompanied by a statement that these topics may be amended with student input during the term. Consider including an entry for each class session with projected topics and readings. The [Academic Calendar](#) is online on the Registrar’s website; please remember “Brandeis Mondays,” etc. Some instructors also choose to include in this section brief objectives for sessions and/or questions for study and discussion.

✓ **Evaluation:**

[Explanation of grading](#), including percentages allocated to elements such as class participation, exams, homework, papers, projects. Normally, these percentages should not change once the course starts. All students in a course must be evaluated the same way (this may include giving all students the same option, e.g., paper vs. exam). It is useful to also announce your policy for missed exams or deadlines (e.g., do you require documentation of the excuse?). If you are going to penalize students who do not attend a certain number of classes, this should be stated explicitly here.

✓ **Disabilities:**

Every syllabus must contain the following paragraph:

“Brandeis seeks to welcome and include all students. If you are a student who needs accommodations as outlined in an accommodations letter, please talk with me and present your letter of accommodation as soon as you can. I want to support you. In order to provide test accommodations, I need the letter more than 48 hours in advance. I want to provide your accommodations but cannot do so retroactively. If you have questions about documenting a disability or requesting accommodations, please contact Student Accessibility Support (SAS) at 781.736.3470 or access@brandeis.edu.”

✓ **Academic Integrity:**

The Director of Academic Integrity advises that every syllabus include a paragraph on academic integrity, such as the following: You are expected to be honest in all your academic work. Please consult Brandeis University [Rights and Responsibilities](#) for all policies and procedures related to academic integrity. Students may be required to submit work to Turnitin.com software to verify originality. Allegations of alleged academic dishonesty will be forwarded to the Director of Academic Integrity. Sanctions for academic dishonesty can include failing grades and/or suspension from the university. Citation and research assistance can be found at [LTS - Library guides](#).

✓ **Privacy:**

If you are using online tools that would expose student coursework to parties outside the class, then you must include a statement like the following and provide appropriate safeguards:

"This class requires the use of tools that may disclose your coursework and identity to parties outside the class. To protect your privacy, you may choose to use a pseudonym/alias rather than your name in submitting such work. You must share the pseudonym/alias with me and any teaching assistants as needed. Alternatively, with prior consultation, you may submit such work directly to me."

✓ **Communications:**

Details of class mailing lists, class websites and other links, if appropriate. Explain how syllabus changes, including accommodations for "snow days" through [Course Winterization](#) will be communicated, and how students should keep themselves informed.

✓ **Course Materials:**

Materials recommended for purchase, including textbooks, case packets and online materials. The costs of textbooks and other course materials can present financial challenges for many of our students. Please consider ways you can reduce costs for your students and promote student success while complying with copyright law.

- **Submit Course Reserve Requests:** Course Reserves help ensure that all students have access to materials. If you have extra copies of any course texts, we encourage you to place these on Reserve at the Library for the semester.
- **Explore Open Educational Resources (OER) and affordable materials with a librarian:** OER are learning resources such as articles, books, audio recordings, images, video, software, and digital tools that instructors can reuse, revise, and redistribute. Contact Laura Hibbler, Associate University Librarian for Research & Instruction, to discuss possibilities for reducing the expense of course materials for your students using OER and materials available through Library subscriptions.

✓ **Critical Dates:**

The plan should include dates for exams, homework assignments, papers, projects, and presentations. It is important to identify the date of the final exam, if any, which should be in the time slot the University assigns for that block. Any mandatory exercises outside of scheduled times must also be listed. The Undergraduate Curriculum Committee recommends that in-class graded exercises not be scheduled during the last week of classes. Whenever possible, final exams should be held during the official examination period, and other exams, take-home exams or quizzes should be completed before the last week of classes begins. In planning dates, faculty should be sensitive to the [religious obligations](#) of their students.

✓ **Workload Statement:**

Add this statement to your syllabus:

"Success in this four-credit course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 9 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (readings, papers, discussion sections, preparation for exams, etc.)"

NOTE: For a Module class, "four-credit" should be replaced with "two-credit."