

SYLLABUS REVIEW
PROGRAM IN PROFESSIONAL WRITING
LAST UPDATED: 8/11/2020

REQUIREMENTS

Basics

- Course rubric, number, title, and number of credits (if differential credit, also indicate)¹
- The Instructor's name, office location, and contact information¹
- A brief description of the course, ideally one that expands on the catalog description¹
- Notation of any pre-requisites, as well as requirements course meets (Gen Ed, major/minor requirement, other)¹
- Notation of frequency and duration of class meetings (e.g., MWF 10:00-10:50 AM, TR 8:00-9:15 AM)¹
- A list of required and, if applicable, recommended course texts with complete information such as author(s), publisher, date of publication, plus where to obtain texts (including any found online)¹

Grades & Activities

- A Course Calendar that includes course topics, daily readings and assignments, and due dates; a brief list of projected topics is also helpful to include.¹
- Course grading policies and breakdown of final grade (e.g., Papers 40%, Exams 40%, Group Presentation 20%); **a brief description of major assignments is also helpful to include.** (This makes it easier for students to get credit if and when they transfer to another institution).¹
- Include a description of what will count as part of Participation. Participation is usually limited to 5%-10% unless it includes collected homework. High-stakes assignments should account for 70%-80% of the final course grade.²
- Include estimated page lengths for major writing assignments. BTW 250, BTW 261, or BTW 263 must meet/exceed the Advanced Composition requirements, which includes the creation of 20-30 pages of original composition. (This also makes it easier for students to get credit if and when they transfer, and for accreditors to track advanced comp). Indicate use of multiple drafts, and analysis and synthesis of the course content for BTW 250, BTW 261, or BTW 263 to demonstrate the course meets Advanced Composition requirements.^{1 2}
- A course attendance policy, including instructor's policies on late work, makeup exams, etc. Sample policy statements can be found at <https://odos.illinois.edu/community-of->

¹ "Requirements for LAS Course Syllabi," University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign 2017, <https://las.illinois.edu/system/files/inline-files/LASSyllabiRequirementsNov2017.pdf>.

[care/resources/faculty/](#) for policies on missed classes and exams. See <https://studentcode.illinois.edu/article1/part5/1-501/>.^{1 2}

- Religious Observance Accommodation statement²
 - **PPW Language:** The Religious Observance Accommodation Request form is available at http://odos.odosdev.illinois.edu/studentassistance/absence/letter_students.asp. Submit the form to the instructor and to the Office of the Dean of Students (helpdean@illinois.edu) by the end of the second week of the course; in the case of exams or assignments scheduled after this period, students should submit the form to the instructor and to the Office of the Dean of Students as soon as possible.
- Draft and revision policy, which might include peer review, conferences, informal feedback, and revision.²
- A statement on Academic Integrity^{1 2}
 - **PPW Language:** According to the Student Code, ‘It is the responsibility of each student to refrain from infractions of academic integrity, from conduct that may lead to suspicion of such infractions, and from conduct that aids others in such infractions.’ Please know that it is my responsibility as an instructor to uphold the academic integrity policy of the University, which can be found [Article 1, Part 4 of the University Student Code](#).
 - Provide specific instruction in what constitutes cheating and plagiarism and clearly state your class expectations. Be careful not to state absolute sanctions coupled with specific infractions, per the College of LAS. If you suspect a student of cheating or plagiarism, consult with your program director or the departmental officer; do not accuse a student of cheating outside of the FAIR (Faculty Academic Integrity Report) system. The departmental officers on FAIR are the Director of Undergraduate Studies and the Rhetoric Director.³

Student Protections

- Disability Accommodations statement¹
 - **PPW Language:** To obtain disability-related academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact me and the Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) as soon as possible. To contact DRES, you may visit 1207 S. Oak St., Champaign, call 333-4603, e-mail disability@illinois.edu or go to the [DRES website](#). If you are concerned you have a disability-related condition that is impacting your academic progress, there are academic screening appointments available on campus that can help diagnosis a previously undiagnosed disability by visiting the DRES website and selecting “Sign-Up for an Academic Screening” at the bottom of the page.
- Sexual Misconduct statement^{2 4}
 - **PPW Language:** The University of Illinois is committed to combating sexual misconduct. I am required to report any instances of sexual misconduct to the

² “GEB General Education Syllabi Requirements,” University of Illinois General Education Board, 2018, https://provost.illinois.edu/files/2018/05/GEB_gen-ed-syllabi-requirements.pdf.

³ “Requirements for English Department Instructors,” University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2020.

⁴ “Creating a Syllabus,” Center for Innovation in Teaching & Learning, <https://citl.illinois.edu/citl-101/teaching-learning/resources/teaching-strategies/creating-a-syllabus>.

University's Title IX and Disability Office. In turn, an individual with the Title IX and Disability Office will provide information about rights and options, including accommodations, support services, the campus disciplinary process, and law enforcement options. A list of the designated University employees who, as counselors, confidential advisors, and medical professionals, do not have this reporting responsibility and can maintain confidentiality, can be found here:

<https://wecare.illinois.edu/resources/students/#confidential>. Other information about resources and reporting is available here: wecare.illinois.edu.

Support Resources for Community of Care^{2 4}

- **Example:** As members of the Illinois community, we each have a responsibility to express care and concern for one another. If you come across a classmate whose behavior concerns you, whether in regards to their well-being or yours, we encourage you to refer this behavior to the Student Assistance Center (1-217-333-0050) or online at <https://odos.illinois.edu/community-of-care/referral/>. Based upon your report, staff in the Student Assistance Center reaches out to students to make sure they have the support they need to be healthy and safe. Further, as a Community of Care, we want to support you in your overall wellness. We know that students sometimes face challenges that can impact academic performance (examples include mental health concerns, food insecurity, homelessness, personal emergencies). Should you find that you are managing such a challenge and that it is interfering with your coursework, you are encouraged to contact the Student Assistance Center (SAC) in the Office of the Dean of Students for support and referrals to campus and/or community resources. The SAC has a Dean on Duty available to see students who walk in, call, or email the office during business hours. For mental health emergencies, you can call 911 or contact the Counseling Center.

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) statement^{2 4}

- **PPW Language:** Any student who has suppressed their directory information pursuant to Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) should self-identify themselves to me to ensure protection of the privacy of your attendance in this course. See <https://registrar.illinois.edu/academic-records/ferpa/> for more information on FERPA.

Emergency Response statement²

- **PPW Language:** Emergency response recommendations can be found at the following website: <https://police.illinois.edu/emergency-preparedness/>. I encourage you to review this website and the campus building floor plans website within the first 10 days of class. <https://police.illinois.edu/emergency-preparedness/building-emergency-action-plans/>.

RECOMMENDED

Tips for Success policy⁴

Communication or Netiquette policy⁴

Inclusivity statement⁴

- Example: The effectiveness of this course is dependent upon the creation of an encouraging and safe environment. Exclusionary, offensive or harmful speech (such as racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, etc.) will not be tolerated and in some cases subject to University harassment procedures. We are all responsible for creating a positive and safe environment that allows all students equal respect and comfort. I expect each of you to help establish and maintain an environment where you and your peers can contribute without fear of ridicule or intolerant or offensive language.

Syllabus modification statement²

- Example: This syllabus is subject to modification. Modifications will not increase the workload, but may be made in order to better address the unique needs of each class. Students are responsible for staying current with the syllabus, even if a student does not attend the class during which a modification was announced. The most up-to-date version of the course syllabus will be available on Moodle.

Assignments and turn-around time should be reasonable for the course level and timing. There should be enough time for the instructor to provide feedback before the next major assignment.²

Policies should be clear, accessible, and kind. Policies should be specific enough for students to follow, including the ability to calculate their own final course grade.²

Disruptive Behavior statement

- Example: Behavior that persistently or grossly interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior and may be subject to disciplinary action. Such behavior inhibits other students' ability to learn and an instructor's ability to teach. A student responsible for disruptive behavior may be required to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem and may be reported to the Office for Student Conflict Resolution for disciplinary action.²

ONLINE/COVID-19⁵

Consider including language in your syllabus regarding new or different practices in response to shifting to an online format or dealing with COVID-19.

- Training and compliance with COVID-19 regulations. Specific policies and more language can be viewed at <https://covid19.illinois.edu/covid-19-classroom-management-info/>.
 - Example: Following University policy, all students are required to engage in appropriate behavior to protect the health and safety of the community, including wearing a facial covering properly, maintaining social distance (at least 6 feet from others at all times), disinfecting the immediate seating area, and using hand sanitizer. Students are also required to follow the campus COVID-19 testing protocol.

Students who feel ill must not come to class. In addition, students who test positive for COVID-19 or have had an exposure that requires testing and/or quarantine must not attend class. The University will provide information to the instructor, in a manner that complies with privacy laws, about students in these latter categories. These students are judged to have excused absences for the class period and should contact the instructor via email about making up the work.

Students who fail to abide by these rules will first be asked to comply; if they refuse, they will be required to leave the classroom immediately. If a student is asked to leave the classroom, the non-compliant student will be judged to have an unexcused absence and reported to the Office for Student Conflict Resolution for disciplinary action. Accumulation of non-compliance complaints against a student may result in dismissal from the University.

- **Campus:** Schedule complies with the new Fall 2020 Academic Calendar:
 - August 24 – First day of classes
 - September 7 – Labor Day, no classes
 - November 3 – Election Day, no classes (per Illinois Statute)
 - November 20 – final day of face-to-face instruction
 - November 23-27 – Fall Break
 - November 30 – begin remote instruction
 - December 10 – Reading Day
 - December 11-18 – Final exams

⁵ “COVID-19 Classroom Management Info,” University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, July 31, 2020, <https://covid19.illinois.edu/covid-19-classroom-management-info/>.