Survey your Syllabus

We know that you have limited time to design or redesign a course and craft a syllabus. Although all of the following items may be important to you, we encourage you to assess your priorities and really focus on assessing those aspects that are most important to you. Each of the criteria is categorized under an aspect of course development and aligned with one or more of four pedagogical frameworks. Each of these frameworks is linked to a two-page resource so that you can explore in order to more deeply understand each of these may support your goals for teaching.

Learning Objectives and Content

Criteria	Learner-Centered	Accessible	Transparent	Inclusive
Learning goals are evident	x		x	?
Learning goals are articulated in ways that are clearly achievable	x	x	x	x
Learning objectives address and integrate diverse and inclusive knowledge, skills, or attitudes.				x
Describes how learning goals may appeal to a wide range of student interests	x	x		x
Provides a vision or goal statement for the course	x	x		
Course materials are authored by people from diverse backgrounds and with multiple perspectives.				x
Provides rationale for course design decisions	x	x	x	
Clearly states knowledge and skills that are presupposed rather than taught in the class.	x	x	x	x

Frame, Tone and Format

Criteria	Learner-Centered	Accessible	Transparent	Inclusive
Tone is positive, friendly, respectful, inviting	x			x
Fosters positive motivation, describes value of course, and promotes content as a vehicle for learning	x			
Communicates high expectations and projects confidence of student success	x			x
Syllabus is well organized, easy to navigate, and helps students succeed in the course	x	x	x	
Meets accessibility guidelines (digital format, uses headers and alt-text for images, accessible colors and font size)		x		✓
Provides contact information for student support services on campus (with hyperlinks)		x		x
Provides information about how to contact you/establish meetings with you		x	x	
Describes course materials that are available in a range of formats (digital, hard-copy, auditory)		x		
Invites students to provide pronouns and names	x			x
Communicates openness to students with multiple perspectives, talents, and identities.	x			x
Provides information about how you (as the instructor) want to be addressed by students			x	
Course description appeals to students with a variety of perspectives and interests.	x	x		x

Indicates how you will handle differences of opinion or position			x	x

Teaching and Learning Activities

Criteria	Learner-Centered	Accessible	Transparent	Inclusive
Course schedule is clearly articulated with assignments and due dates	x	x	x	
Classroom activities, assessments, and course goals are aligned	x			
Learning activities are likely to actively engage students	x			✓
Describes the teaching approaches that you will employ (e.g., lecture, team-based learning, role-play, debate, community engaged learning)	x	x	x	
Indicates points of flexibility in the course design, goals, and/or assignments	x	x	x	
Provides a timeline of course activities grouped by topic		x		
Invites students to generate additional course materials/resources	x	x		
Provides a norms statement for classroom dynamics and behaviors (e.g., cell phone/laptop use, communication standards, academic integrity)			x	
Provides a list of required readings and course materials		x	x	x
Clearly articulates expectations for attendance as well as missed or late work		x	x	
Includes learning activities that promote cooperative learning.	x			x

Criteria			
Flexibility of timing is built into syllabus schedule to allow faculty member to take advantage of important learning opportunities.	x		x

Assessment

Criteria	Learner-Centered	Accessible	Transparent	Inclusive
Goals and assessments are clearly aligned	x			
Major assessments are clearly defined	x		x	
Indication of frequent formative assessment with means for immediate feedback	x			
Assessments are paced and scaffolded	x			✓
Grading standards (including policy on grade adjustments) are included, aligned with objectives, and separate from assessment criteria	x	x	x	
Offers students a variety of ways to show what they know.	x	x		x

Resources:

Brantmeier, E., Broscheid, A., & Moore., C.S. Inclusion by design: Survey your syllabus and course design.

Helmer, K. (2018). Six principles of an inclusive syllabus. The Institute for Teaching Excellence and Faculty Development, University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Palmer, Bach, & Steifer. Measuring the promise: A valid and reliable syllabus rubric.

Richmond, A.S. (2016). Constructing a learner-centered syllabus: One professor's journey. IDEA Paper #6

Universal Syllabus Design http://enact.sonoma.edu/c.php?g=789377&p=5650618 0.