



Designing a Motivational Syllabus: Creating a Learning Path for Student Engagement

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Syllabus Checklist

Questions to Consider

Tone

- What is the tone of the syllabus?
- Is it personal and engaging?
- What emotional reaction do you have to this document?
- Do you have a sense of excitement about the course?

Value and Purpose

- Do you see the value of the course and understand its purpose?
- Are the learning outcomes clearly defined?
- Was the purpose of each assignment clearly stated?
- How would you describe this course to someone?

Organization and Clarity

- Do you know what to do to meet with success and how to access help if needed?
- Is it well organized and easy to follow?
- Can you easily see what is expected of you?
- Were enough details on assignments and grading provided?
- Does the syllabus provide you with a clear path to success?
- Were visual tools such as charts used to organize the information and clearly communicate information?

Perception of Professor

- How would you describe the professor based on this syllabus?
- Do you expect to be challenged and supported by the professor?
- Do you think the professor is excited to teach this course?
- Do you think the professor believes in you?
- Would you be likely to take courses offered by this professor?

Perception of the Course

- Would you be likely to register for this course?
- What did you like the most about the syllabus?
- What suggestions do you have to make the syllabus better?

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- Is a diversity statement included?
- Does the professor share their positionality?
- Does the professor share preferred pronouns?
- Is inclusive language used throughout the syllabus?

- Are scholars of diverse racial backgrounds, different genders, and other marginalized populations represented in the readings and other course materials?
- Do the assignments and other learning materials encourage students to connect what they are learning to their lived experiences?

Essential Components

Course Information

- Course name and number
- Course description
- Purpose and value of the course
- Course learning outcomes and connection to program learning outcomes
- Learning objectives for modules, units, or classes
- Overview of course content, including topics
- Location, times, days
- Textbooks and supplemental readings
- Calendar of activities

Instructor and Campus Support Information

- Professor name
- Office location and hours
- Contact information: phone, e-mail address
- Welcome statement, positionality, and teaching philosophy
- Information on available campus resources
- Tips for success

Assignments and Grading Information

- Grading policy and scale and weighting of assignments toward final grade
- Assignments and descriptions
- Rationale for assignments and link back to course learning outcomes
- Grading details and rubrics
- Course outline with due dates

Policy Information

- Late and missed work policy
- Attendance policy
- Academic conduct policy, including academic integrity policy
- Disability policy

Reference:

Harrington, C., & Thomas, M. (2018). *Designing a motivational syllabus: Creating a learning path for student engagement*. Routledge.

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