

Syllabi, Textbooks, and Required Course Materials

Policy# AA004

Responsible Administrator: Vice President for Academic Affairs

Responsible Office: Academic Affairs

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Policy Statement

An effective syllabus is an important teaching document. It can motivate students and help communicate the instructor's teaching philosophy. The syllabus describes the structure of a course, which assists students in effective time management and course planning. Policies, standards, and requirements that are clearly stated in the syllabus help resolve disputes between students and instructors. Clearly framed syllabi are also associated with positive student outcomes and serve as important tools for assessment and accreditation.

This policy will help faculty gather information to meet documentation standards of accrediting bodies that require instructors to communicate course requirements to students via course syllabi. This policy will also help facilitate clear communication between faculty and students regarding the schedule of topics, activities, and learning outcomes intended by each course.

This policy also addresses registration of textbook information and required course materials, which along with syllabi, is key information students need at or before the beginning of a course in order to fully prepare for study and determine their cost of attendance.

Reason for the Policy

New York State Education Department (NYSED) regulations require that "[a]cademic policies applicable to each course, including learning objectives and methods of assessing student achievement, shall be made explicit by the instructor at the beginning of each term." 8 N.Y.C.R.R. § 52.2(e)(4). Additionally, the Middle States Commission of Higher Education (MSCHE) standards and related compliance review requirements include institutional assessment and assessment of student learning, which are evaluated by reviewing learning outcomes articulated in course syllabi. Thus, faculty must develop a course syllabus for each offering of a course and communicate the syllabus to enrolled students. This policy provides guidance on articulating course expectations in a timely way and in a manner relatively consistent across different offerings of the same course, while ensuring individual faculty have appropriate discretion with the syllabus. Finally, providing information on textbooks and required materials in online course schedules and at affiliated college bookstores is required by the Higher Education Opportunity Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1015b.

Who is Responsible for this Policy

- Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Deans
- Department Chairpersons

Who is Affected by this Policy

- All faculty
- Deans
- Students
- Department Chairpersons

Definitions

- **Syllabus Management System:** Digital tool provided by FIT to aid in the creation, consistency, centralization, and access of course syllabi
- **Textbook and Course Materials Management System:** An online tool that enables students to plan and budget for the costs associated with textbooks and course materials

Principles

- A syllabus for each course section shall be available to students and to the appropriate department chairperson preferably before, but no later than, the first class meeting in the term in which the course is offered.
- Should revisions to syllabi occur after the first class meeting, faculty must distribute the most recent version to their respective department chairperson.

Responsibilities

○ Faculty

Faculty are responsible for preparing and distributing syllabi pursuant to the required content set forth in this policy and for making syllabi available to students, and their respective department chairperson preferably before, but no later than, the first class meeting. For online sections, course syllabi are to be made available one week prior to the start of the online class.

Faculty may use the campus's digital syllabus management system to create and disseminate their syllabi and ensure compliance with this policy. Faculty who opt not to use the digital syllabus management system are still responsible for compliance with this policy.

Early notification to students on required textbooks/materials and associated costs is essential. Designed with input from the faculty, and developed by Barnes & Noble the Textbook and Course Materials Management System allows faculty to research and select textbooks and courses materials for classes each semester.

Faculty must provide information about required and recommended college textbooks and supplemental materials for each course preferably by the start of student class registration each semester.

- **Department Chairpersons**

Department chairpersons, or their appointed designee, ensure that course syllabi in their department are complete, current, consistent with regard to learning outcomes, and submitted in a timely manner. Department chairpersons are also responsible for ensuring records of course syllabi are maintained as deemed necessary to comply with any applicable requirements imposed by accrediting bodies, law, and FIT policy, including the Records Retention and Disposition policy.

Department chairpersons also ensure required or recommended textbooks and/or supplemental course materials have been uploaded to the Textbook and Course Materials Management System by their faculty by the start of student class registration each semester.

- **Deans**

Each respective dean ensures that course syllabi in their school are complete, current, consistent with regard to learning outcomes, and submitted in a timely manner.

Deans are also responsible for oversight of chairpersons to ensure compliance with the submission of textbooks and/or supplemental course materials by the start of student class registration each semester.

- **Academic Affairs**

Academic Affairs is responsible for general oversight of compliance with this policy, as well as its implementation.

Procedures

Faculty may contact the Center for Excellence in Teaching (CET) at any time for assistance with syllabus development, particularly if using the digital syllabus management system. The following provides the framework for the content that must be included in course syllabi per NYSED, MSCHE, and/or FIT Policy:

- **Minimum Syllabus Content**

- Course information:

- Course Title
 - Course Number
 - Section Number
 - Number of Credits
 - Number of Contact Hours
 - Required prerequisites (if applicable)
 - Course Description (to be obtained directly from Undergraduate or Graduate Catalog for the current academic year)

- **Instructor Information**

- Name
 - Contact Information/FIT Email Address
 - Office Hours

- **Learning Outcomes and Assessments**
 - Course learning outcomes: statements about knowledge, skills, and abilities that students are expected to demonstrate following instruction
 - Methods of assessing student achievement of learning outcomes: should clearly articulate how student learning success will be evaluated and should include the assessment rubrics at the course and project/assignment levels, where applicable
- **Student Assignments**
 - All assignments and activities upon which students will be graded to demonstrate achievement of course and learning outcomes
- **Final Grade Calculation**
 - Details on how the final grade will be calculated (in percentages or points) as indicated for the Methods of Assessment in the Course of Study
- **Course Details**
 - Course readings, textbooks, equipment, supplies, or other materials necessary to effectively complete the course
 - Schedule of class meeting times, which must meet the New York State and MSCHE minimum requirements for seat-time per credit hour and follow the FIT Academic Calendar; faculty teaching online courses should outline expectations for completing the minimum credit-hour requirement
 - Attendance policy for the course, as deemed appropriate by the instructor
- **Resources**
 - Library information and links to other resources relevant to the course
- **Technical Requirements**
 - Software and hardware requirements
 - Faculty teaching online courses should specify the level of internet access and technological skills required to complete the course
- **FIT Syllabus Content**

FIT requires that all syllabi include reference to certain FIT resources, departments, and pertinent policies. This ensures that students are aware of not only their options and rights, but also their responsibilities in academic courses.

The following language has been developed to effectively and efficiently convey the information, but at a minimum, syllabi must contain reference to each of the resources and policies listed below:

- **FIT Resources and Policies**

Various resources at FIT exist to support students' academic work. These include:

- FIT-ABLE, for information about disability accommodations and support. Students who wish to request academic accommodations due to a disability must register with FIT-ABLE and are encouraged to do so as soon as possible, as accommodations cannot be provided retroactively.
 - Academic Advisement Center, which provides resources to help students complete requirements for individual majors.
 - FIT Writing Studio, for assistance with any writing or speaking project at FIT.
 - FIT Counseling Services, for confidential assistance with personal and academic concerns.
 - Academic Skills Tutoring Center, for necessary resources to promote student academic success.
 - Dean of Students Office, for general support in academic or other issues.
 - Technical Support for Blackboard with Open SUNY Help Desk
 - Academic Honor Code, governing plagiarism and collaboration policies
 - All FIT policies apply both inside and outside of the classroom. Policies are published in FIT's Policy Library, to which each syllabus should include a direct link.
- **Textbooks and Required Materials**
- The following information should be made available through the Textbook and Course Materials Management System preferably before, but no later than, the first class meeting:
- ISBN (or, if not available, the author, title, publisher, and copyright date of the material)
 - Any supplemental materials or supplies necessary for successful completion of the course.
- **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**
- AI refers to any artificial intelligence applications that produce human-like content including, but not limited to text, images, audio, video, and any other data and information. Ethical considerations are of the utmost significance when using AI in the classroom. FIT faculty are requested to include language in the syllabus on acceptable AI use in the course.

Faculty should select one of the statements below to include in the syllabus—or may craft a unique statement—to clearly define acceptable AI use in the course:

- **Option 1: Discouraged use of AI**
Due to our commitment to authenticity in this course, the use of AI to complete coursework is discouraged. All work presented by you for a grade in this course must be of your own work.
- **Option 2: Limited use of AI with permission**
The use of AI is allowed in this course with the following limitations:
 1. The use of AI in this course is allowed for specified tasks, such as assistive research, brainstorming, improvement of evaluation, critique,

and analytical skills. Specific instructions or limitations may be posted in the prompts of individual assignments.

2. All materials obtained using generative AI must be fully cited and referenced following the style guidelines.

■ **Option 3: Open Use of AI**

Responsible use of AI is allowed in research and projects to enhance creativity; however, all AI-generated materials must be accurately cited and referenced following the style guidelines.

Violations

N/A

Related Policies

- [Academic Integrity](#)
- [Assignment of Credit Hours](#)
- [Academic Standing](#)
- [Intellectual Property](#)

Related Documents

- [Undergraduate Catalog](#)
- [Graduate Catalog](#)
- [Middle States Commission of Higher Education \(MSCHE\) Standards for Accreditation and Requirements for Affiliation](#)
- [Middle States Commission for Higher Education \(MSCHE\) Credit Hour Policy](#)
- [New York State Education Department 52.2 Standard for the Registration of Undergraduate and Graduate Curricula](#)
- [Digital Syllabus Setup Guide \(for Syllabus Management System\)](#)
- [Syllabus and Student Learning Outcomes](#)

Contacts

- **Academic Affairs**
Feldman Center, Room C913
(212) 217-4040
- **Center for Excellence in Teaching (CET)**
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