

Brandeis University

Recommended Guidelines: Syllabus Checklist

Contact Details and Office Hours: instructor's office telephone number, e-mail address, website, office address and office hours.

Course Description and Objectives: short description of the course and the context in which it is taught. Could address teaching methodology and general expectations of students. It would be helpful to describe the knowledge, skills, and/or outlooks which you would like the students to learn or be able to demonstrate as a result of this course.

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:

"If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately."

Academic Integrity: The Office of Student Development and Conduct advises that every syllabus include a paragraph on academic integrity, such as the following:

"You are expected to be familiar with and to follow the University's policies on academic integrity (see <http://www.brandeis.edu/studentlife/sdc/ai>). Faculty may refer any suspected instances of alleged dishonesty to the Office of Student Development and Conduct. Instances of academic dishonesty may result in sanctions including but not limited to, failing grades being issued, educational programs, and other consequences."

Communications: details of class mailing lists, WebCT, class websites and other links, if appropriate. Explain how syllabus changes will be communicated and how students should keep themselves informed.

Course Materials: materials recommended for purchase, including textbooks, case packets and online materials.

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.