

# MSU Syllabus Checklist

The [Code of Teaching Responsibility](#)<sup>1</sup> requires that instructors distribute a course syllabus (either in person or in electronic form) at the beginning of the semester. This checklist is intended to serve as a guide for instructors developing syllabi at Michigan State University. *The items in red are required elements of the syllabus per the Code of Teaching Responsibility.* Other items are suggested based upon the nature of the course. A well-designed course syllabus has multiple uses, for both students and instructors as it:

- Allows students to plan their time with regard to attendance, homework assignments, readings, examinations, and papers.
- Informs students about how they will be evaluated and how grades will be determined.
- May be an important document for teaching portfolios, promotion and tenure applications, annual reviews, etc.
- Provides a mechanism where you can clearly outline expectations for students in your class, which may prevent classroom disruptions, late submissions, confusion, and student grievances.

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**General Course Information**

- Course Title
- Course Number
- Credit Hours
- Course Meeting Days and Times
- Course Location
- Course website address
- Course modality
- Term and Year

- Course Description:** *instructors shall be responsible for ensuring that the content of the courses they teach is consistent with the course descriptions approved by the University Committee on Curriculum and the University Council. Instructors shall direct class activities toward the fulfillment of course objectives and shall evaluate student performance in a manner consistent with these objectives.*

**Contact Information for Instructor and TAs as applicable:**

- Instructor Name
- Preferred pronouns
- Office Location**
- Office hours and how appointments can be made outside of office hours**
- Phone number**
- Email address**
- Website

- Course Overview:** This is an opportunity to expand on the course description, and give students a glimpse into what the course will be like. You may discuss course format (lecture, seminar, lab, studio, etc.), relevance to students' academic and professional goals, and major deliverables (final paper, project, exam, etc.).

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<sup>1</sup> The [Code of Teaching Responsibility](#) outlines basic responsibilities for all instructors at MSU. It includes both syllabus and instructional criteria. Students may submit a grievance on these student rights, and issues. You are encouraged to review the Code of Teaching Responsibility, and you can contact the Office of the University Ombudsperson with any questions.

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- Instructional Objectives:** These must align with the course description (see first page). You can contact the [Academic Advancement Network](#) for additional information in developing measurable learning objectives.
- Required and Recommended course materials** *to be purchased, including textbooks and supplies.*
- Course prerequisites.**
- Attendance Policy**, *if different from the university attendance policy and especially when that attendance policy affects student grades.* You can find information regarding MSU's attendance policies on the website for the [Office of the University Ombudsperson](#).
- Grading criteria and methods used to determine final grades:** the syllabus must make clear how students will be evaluated, and specifically how final grades will be determined. This can be in the form of a rubric or chart. Grade percentages must be provided so that students may understand how their final grade will be calculated. If a grading curve is used, this must be shared, and instructors must let students know how the curve will be calculated.
- Any required proctoring arrangements to which students must adhere:** this includes location or login restrictions, lockdown browsers, or software requirements necessary for proctored exams or assignments.
- Applicable policies, syllabus statements, and resources for students:**
  - [Spartan Code of Honor](#)
  - [Academic Integrity](#)
  - [OIE Information for Mandatory Reporters](#)
  - [Model Statements for Disability Inclusion \(from RCPD\)](#)
  - [Mental Health Support \(Developed by CAPS\)](#)
  - [Religious Observance Policy](#)
  - [TurnItIn Syllabus Statement](#)
  - Student Athletes
  - Use of Technology in the Classroom
  - Pronoun preference
- Information helpful for the use of required software, including D2L:** Include information on how to navigate necessary software, expectations, instructions on how to access course material, and where to find technical assistance.
- Other classroom expectations:** Can include policies around tardiness, late submissions, cell phones and electronic devices, communication policies and expectations, language around syllabus changes.
- Assignment descriptions:** Assignments should be aligned with course goals and the course description. The syllabus should include information on how assignments will be graded including grading rubrics when applicable. Be clear about assignment and submission deadlines.
- Course Schedule:** *This must include the date of the final examination and tentative dates of required assignments, quizzes, and tests if applicable.*