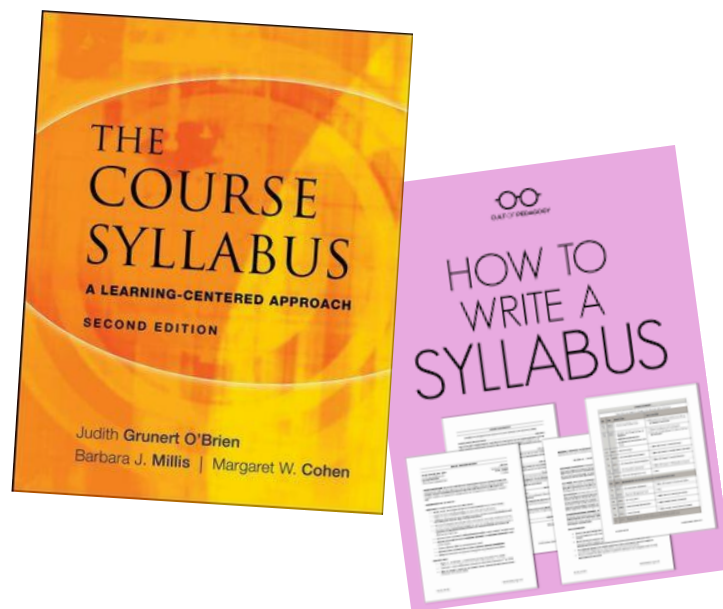


CONTENTS

Due date

Part One: General instructions

Part Two: Course syllabus instructions



TEACHING PHILOSOPHY AND COURSE SYLLABUS ASSIGNMENT INSTRUCTIONS

(May be subject to change, but with advance notice)

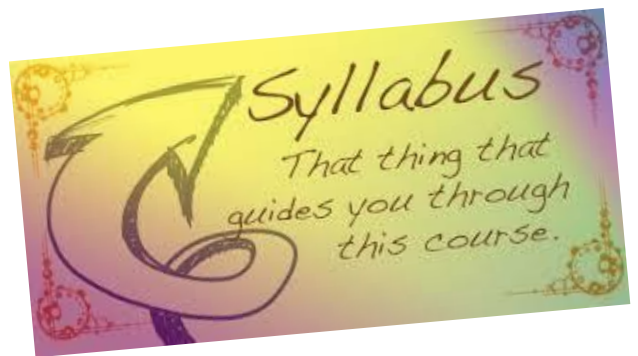
DUE DATE

Due Date for this two-part assignment is December 6th, 2021. Thereafter, a penalty will be assigned for each day the assignment is late. (See below.)

Please, go through all instructions in this document with a fine toothcomb! Yes, it is a tedious assignment, but a very necessary one. (Most things in life tend to be tedious. Yes?)

PART ONE General Instructions

1. About the syllabus: This assignment requires you to prepare an **ideal syllabus for an ideal course**.
2. Do not plagiarize anything (see policy on this issue as indicated in the syllabus).
3. **Length:** *single-spaced* pages—as many as needed, but the more the better (excluding the cover page and bibliography).
4. Make sure you go through materials available via *Online Course Materials*—as well accessing the relevant course readings (and other materials you may come across)—for ideas in doing this assignment.
5. Keep a copy on your computer of all materials you hand in.
6. Penalty for handing in this assignment late: a half a grade level each day the assignment is late.
7. All prose must adhere to the usual rules of grammar, style, spelling, etc.
8. Citations for this assignment must appear in explanatory *footnotes*.
9. Citations/bibliographic style: In-text APA citations, and bibliographic style. (Requests to use an alternative style will be denied.)
10. Do not directly refer to anything I have written; instead, find alternative sources for the same thing (no, my ego is not that big. 😊) On the other hand, once you start teaching an actual course, sometime in the future, you are welcome to plagiarize anything I have written for my classes—excluding published material—so long as it is exclusively for your classroom use. Incidentally, how many of you have had the courage to take a peek at my brief chronology of U.S. history—the link appears just below that for the Online Course Glossary at www.elegantbrain.com)
11. **Super-important:** You must provide appropriate *explanatory footnotes and citations* for all sections of **this assignment**. ← Read this again.
12. You must have a cover page—*this is separate from the syllabus cover page, see below*—indicating your name as it appears in official school records, course number, semester and year, and name of assignment.
13. All required sections **with appropriate headings as indicated below** must be present in your completed syllabus
14. The text *but not the headings* of this assignment must be submitted in **single space 12 pt Garamond** font/typeface, with 1 inch margins all-around. (**Note:** the instructions below, for example, are in 12 pt Garamond single-spaced—except for the headings.)



15. Fonts/typefaces for all headings must be in *bolded UPPER CASE* and subheadings in *unbolded lower case* in **14 pt Arial** font. (If the organizational hierarchy of your text goes down further to sub-subheadings then they should be in italicized 12 pt *Garamond*.)
16. Leave a space between each paragraph.
17. All pages must be numbered at the bottom of the margin in a style identical to the one at the bottom of this page.

PART TWO

Course Syllabus Instructions

- 1) First, determine what course you will be teaching by going through the 100 and 200 level course titles in the department's internal course catalog, which is available [here](#) (African American Studies) and [here](#) (American Studies).
- 2) This syllabus assignment must have, at the minimum, the parts and sections indicated below *with appropriate headings and content*. **← Read this sentence again.**
- 3) Where appropriate, use bulleting or numbering. Your syllabus must have a “clean” look to it. How your syllabus is organized also indicates how organized your course will be (not to mention the fact it may enhance or deter readability). Reminder: the syllabus is also a major component of that bag of tricks that helps to establish your classroom authority as a teacher.
- 4) The descriptions of your rationale or justification concerning particular parts of your syllabus (especially the course requirements; outcomes/assessment; and the course administrative aspects of the course) **must** also include in the footnotes references to the online class readings for this course. *This is really, really important!* Repeat: It is in the footnotes where you will be telling me why you have constructed the syllabus—in terms of all its components—the way you have. In fact, the first thing I will do is go through your footnotes.
- 5) Your syllabus must have a *syllabus cover page*.

Syllabus Cover Page

- Indicate at the top of the page the typical course-related information: *Semester, course number and title, room number, department name, your name, office hours, etc.*
- Provide a listing of the contents of your syllabus.
- **NOTE:** Grade points I have allocated for this part of your assignment: 100.

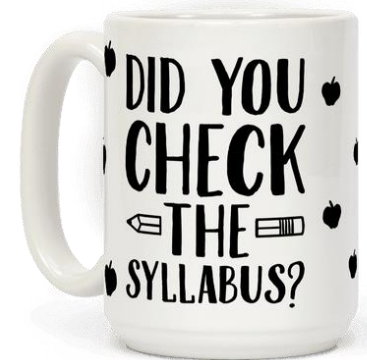


Course Description

- Indicate what your course is about by providing a detailed course description suitable for a 100 or 200 level undergraduate course.
- The course description must also indicate several relevant *key concepts* that are to be covered in the course.

Pedagogy

- Indicate how you will teach your course; meaning, what methods, approaches, etc. you will be using.

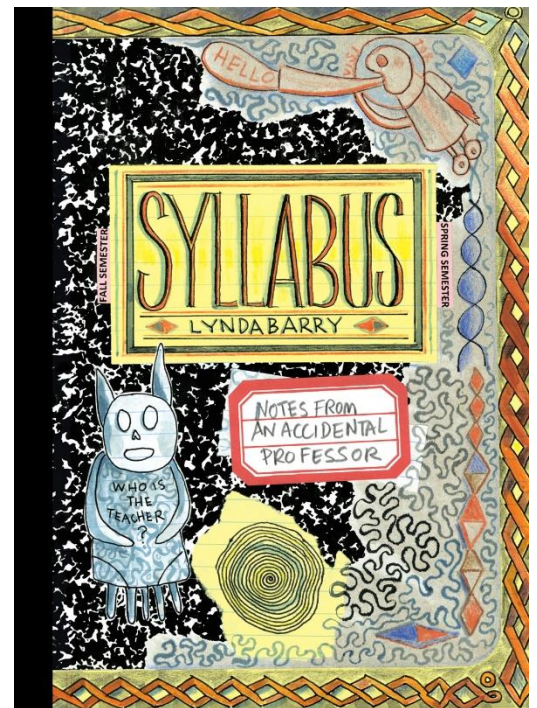


Learning Outcomes and Assessment

- *Using the appropriate class readings as a guide*, provide key learning *outcomes* and how you intend to *assess* them.
- Learning outcomes are not the same thing as learning objectives! Learning outcomes are much more specific than objectives.
- They should be indicated in a tabular format.
- The difficult part of this section is coming up with a practicable assessment strategy for each outcome. Our school requires this approach. (NOTE: In practice I have tended to neglect this approach (see my course syllabus) **but YOU are not permitted this option.**)

Course Requirements

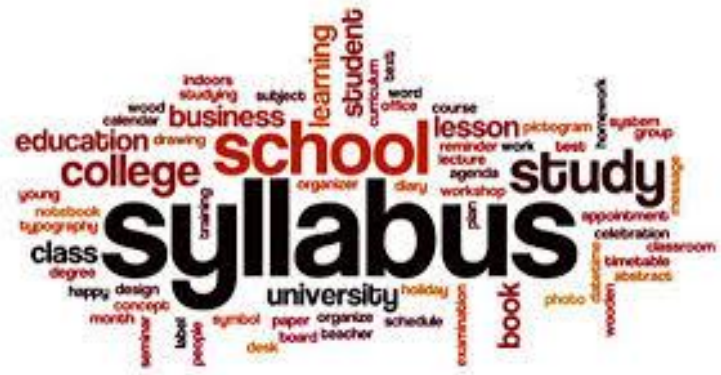
- Indicate *required* textbook(s) you will be using (make sure that the book(s) is/are available on the market) and provide key details (e.g. book title, author, edition, year of publication, etc., and really, really, important the appropriate ISBN number).
- Indicate other requirements (e.g. term paper, tests, quizzes, final exam, etc.)
- Indicate percentage weighting of the various requirements in the determination of the final course grade.



Topics/Readings/Tests Schedule

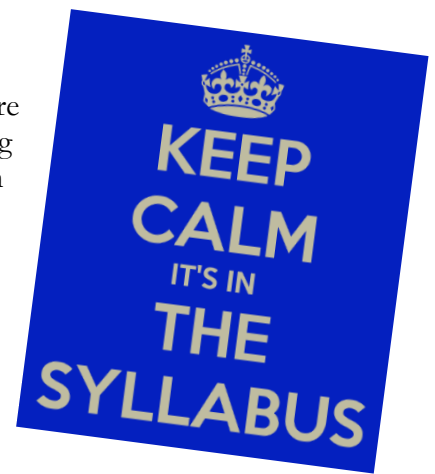
- Assume that you will be teaching three days a week (Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays).

- Indicate a week by week, and day by day, coverage of MAIN topics.
- Indicate test/quiz dates.
- For each course topic covered in your class proceedings schedule indicate immediately below the topic the appropriate concept (s) you will also cover. This may involve reference to the concept(s) more than once. (Reminder: In every course you teach, students must come away with an analytical toolbox of concepts and theoretical approaches that will stay with them, hopefully, for life!)



SYLLABUS APPENDICES

- Because students these days tend to come from backgrounds where they were often coddled, they are unnecessarily intimidated by long syllabi (irrespective of its necessity, given the essential information it must include); consequently, you must have two appendices which can be made available to your students at a later date.
- The first appendix would indicate instructions on how various tasks/assignments must be completed, while Appendix Two would provide information on what I call “course administrative policies.”



Appendix I of Course Syllabus

- This purpose of this appendix is to provide instructions for accomplishment of the various tasks/requirements, etc. of the course.
- Use the headings below for this syllabus appendix.

Key Concepts

- **IMPORTANT:** for each concept you will be covering in your course provide a definition of two-three paragraphs length (but no more than one third of a page).

Class Notes

- If you will be using their class notes as a basis for assessment of learning out comes you must specify instructions to your students on how they should take class notes.

Term Paper

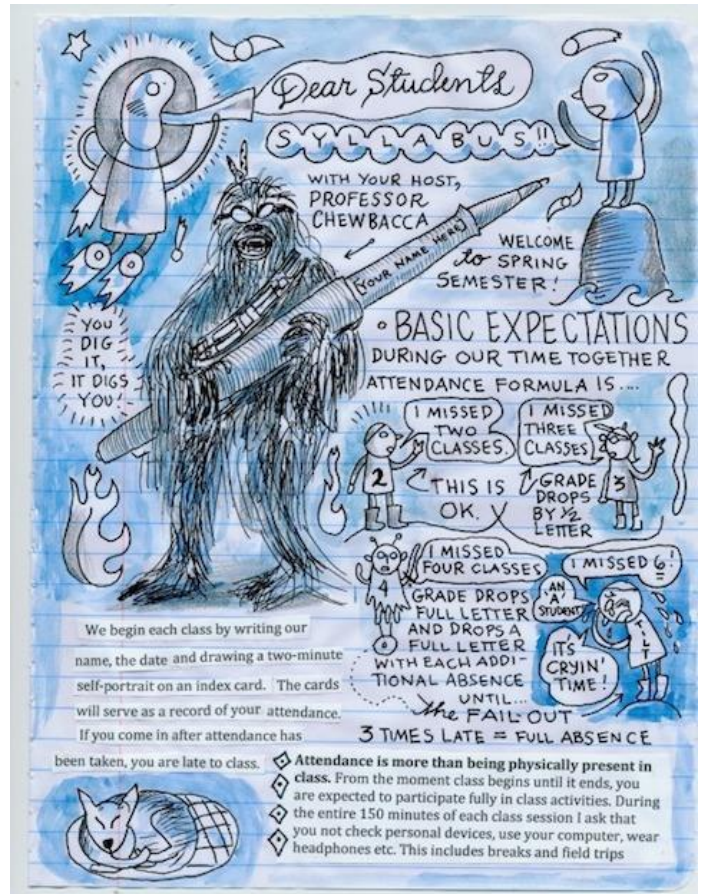
- There must be clear instructions to the student on how a term paper you have assigned should be written from the perspective of style/organization/etc. (Writing term papers

in the correct way is one of the most important skills we can provide to our students.) What about a rubric? You need to have one.

- Indicate how they should do the research for the term paper using the available library-based resources—the students need to know that “Googling” is not a panacea for everything—and who they should see for research help (typically a librarian).

Class Participation

- Clearly indicate what you will consider as participation. What about a rubric? You need to have one, however, do not make it so elaborate that it becomes impractical to use.



Reading Assignments

- Since readings are an important component of your course, there must be instructions for the student on how to approach the readings (see my policy on readings specified in the appendix to your syllabus for an example). The same applies to other requirements.

AV Materials

- **IMPORTANT:** identify appropriate AV materials you will be using and provide a brief description.
- What assessment method will you use to ensure that the students do not consider them as “blow-off” course fillers? AV materials require a more careful approach in terms of academic rigor (compared to, say textbook readings), not least because of their historically-rooted association with mass entertainment.

Appendix II of Course Syllabus

- In this appendix indicate your course administrative policies under the headings below.
- Where appropriate, you may *judiciously* copy verbatim *extracts* of relevant university policies (e.g. in relation to classroom etiquette, academic, freedom, sexual harassment, disability, and so on).
- You must indicate sources for your policies.
- If you would like to indicate other policies not included here, you are welcome to do so.

University Policy on Classroom Etiquette

Complaints Policy

Academic Freedom Policy

Methods of Communicating with the Instructor, and Policy on E-mails.

Policy on Electronic Devices (phones, portable computers, etc.).

Policy on Classroom Sitting Arrangement.

- Optional, though experience tells me that it's worth including it in your syllabus.

Policy Concerning Academic Dishonesty.

Policy Concerning Discrimination, and Sexual Harassment.

Grading Policy

- Includes specifying what each letter grade is worth in terms of points.

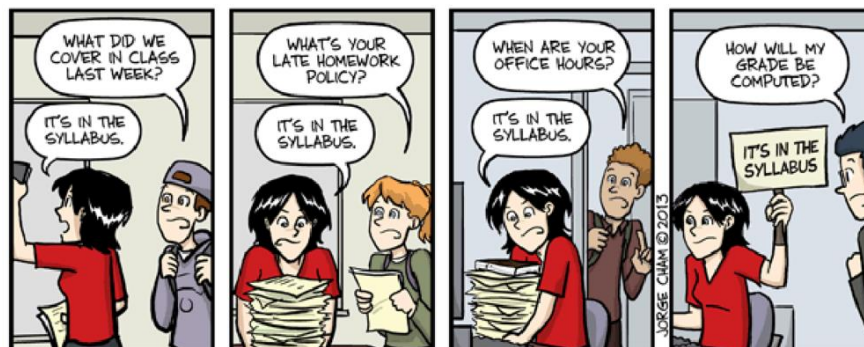
Policy on Disability.

Policy on Attendance and Missed Work.

Policy on Incompletes.

Policy on Coverage of Course Content.

- Optional, though experience tells me that it's worth including it in your syllabus. Some kid will come up and complain that you didn't cover such and such a topic indicated in your syllabus.



IT'S IN THE SYLLABUS

This message brought to you by every instructor that ever lived.