



How to Get the Most Out of Your University Syllabus

Your course syllabus is one of the most important documents you will receive. Not only does it give you an overview of the course, policies, and due dates but it can also be an amazing tool for getting the most academically out of your course. All syllabi follow a template – but there will be some differences between them depending on the professor.

Course Information

The first section of every syllabus will contain basic course information, such as the name and contact information for your professor. Take note of this because your professor is always the first person you should contact with questions about your course. Knowing their email, extension, or office hours, are important tools for connecting with them.

Course Description

The course description is a very brief summary of the subject matter of the course.

Learning Outcomes

Perhaps the most important section for getting the most out of your course, Learning Outcomes is a wealth of information. This is written by the professor, and will vary even between sections of the same course. The professor here is conveying, in a succinct manner, all the information they want to cover, reading this with a critical eye can aid you throughout the course.

1. The first and most obvious is that this is the information the professor wants you to know about the course, it gives you an opportunity to glimpse into the mind of the professor in order to better understand the direction of the course.
2. Knowing the outcomes can help with studying for tests, but especially the final exam as it is the culmination of everything you have learned, so naturally there is a relation between the outcomes and the exam. Using these outcomes can help focus your studies and answers to the professor's specific requirements.
3. Often times in courses you may have one major assignment that requires you to draw on specific areas of study within the course. Using the learning outcomes can help you choose an appropriate topic and guide your research.

Required Texts & Materials

All required texts listed here will be available in the bookstore. If a professor has decided that this text/book/reading should be mandatory, then be sure to purchase it. Not only are these excellent resources for your assignments, but often class discussion will be based around readings.

Something else to keep in mind, the required texts themselves will often have lengthy bibliographies in them. Use the bibliographies of your required texts to aid your research when writing papers or completing assignments.

Supplementary Texts [Optional Section]

Not all syllabi will have this section but if your professor added it be sure to read it over because it could provide resources for a final paper or assignment.

Course Outline

This section is very important. It gives you a week by week break down of every lecture, its topics, the readings you need to complete for the class and the assignments.

Be sure to note all assignment due dates and when readings are expected to be done.

Evaluation & Assignments

This section breaks down every assignment for you and what percentage of your grade they are worth. Take note of assignments that are worth more than others and then be sure to divide your time accordingly.

Policy

Attendance

Every professor has the prerogative to create their own attendance policy so you should never assume that this is the same policy as the one in the Academic Calendar. Be sure to read this section and note the attendance policy your professor has determined for their course.

Communication & Course Webpage

Email: The professor here is reminding you of their email and how responsive they will be. All your communication must come through your myTyndale account.

Classes.Tyndale.ca (Moodle): On this webpage you will find a page for every course you are registered in. Professors can add additional readings or other relevant information you will want to keep an eye on. Be sure to check in on the Moodle page often.

Commuter Hotline: Class cancellations due to inclement weather or illness will be announced/posted on the commuter hotline at 416-226-6620 ext. 7669 (SNOW).

Coursework

Submitting Assignments & Late Policy: Professors can create their own submission and late policy that differs from the Academic Calendar. Please note how your professor requires you to submit assignments (such as in-class submission, email, or through Moodle) and be sure to honour that. The expectation is that students will always meet the syllabus deadline. If there are extenuating circumstances and you require an extension, speak to your professor immediately.

Policies on Extra Credit, Re-writing Assignments, etc. [Optional Section]: This section will only appear if the professor has added the option for all students to receive extra-credit or rewrite an assignment.

Group Work [Optional Section]: This section will only appear if there is a group assignment. It will break down how responsibilities are given out and how the assignment will be graded.

Final Exams [Required – if Applicable]: All final exams will take place during the exam period as scheduled by the Registrar. You are responsible for noting the date, time and location of your final exam. Your professor may also include some information about the form of the exam and possibly even materials that could be covered.

Classroom Conduct

Professionalism [Optional Section]: This optional section outlines things like a late to class policy or classroom etiquette.

Laptops/Electronics: Every professor is free to create their own laptop/electronics policy. However should you require any laptop or electronic device in the classroom for accessibility needs, then the professor is aware that accessibility needs override their own policy.

Tyndale Policy and Resources for Students

Tyndale has a number of policies and resources for students. This is a direct copy from a syllabus and it should appear the same in every syllabus (with the exception of the Bibliography).

Academic Integrity

<https://www.tyndale.ca/university/policy/academic-integrity-policy>

The Centre for Academic Excellence

<https://www.tyndale.ca/academic-excellence>

Accessibility Services

<https://www.tyndale.ca/accessibility-services>

Advising Services

<https://www.tyndale.ca/academic-advising>

Tyndale Grading System & Scale

<https://www.tyndale.ca/university/policy/grading-system-scale>

Course Bibliography: This final section is very valuable to your studies as well. Use these resources when doing research for any assignments. They could also be used as additional sources for studying or sources for a paper.