

## **Council of Deans Approved Required and Recommended Syllabus Elements**

*Updated April 27, 2016*

*Updated August 9, 2016*

*Updated August 15, 2017*

*Updated July 1, 2018*

*Updated July 1, 2019*

The Council of Deans unanimously decided in September, 2012, that the following seven items are **required** and must appear on every syllabus for every course at Valparaiso University.

1. Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)
  - a) mention any specific knowledge or skills to be obtained
  - b) refer by name/number to stated university SLOs, where appropriate
2. Grading
  - a) include a clear statement on the manner in which student grades will be calculated, including a list of graded elements, total points vs. averaged grades, extra credit, etc.
  - b) outline the grading scale to be used, e.g., A = 93-100, A- = 90-92, B+ = 87-89, etc.
  - c) indicate the weight given to components in the final grade, e.g., tests = 35%, papers = 40%, attendance = 10%
3. Honor Code Statement
  - a) reference the Honor Code and the fact that the course will uphold this code
  - b) define explicitly, for each assignment, if necessary, what is authorized aid and what is not
4. Access and Accommodation statement
  - a) include a statement identifying AARC office and phone number
  - b) VP Farha has provided the following suggested language:

The Access & Accommodations Resource Center (AARC) is the campus office that works with students to provide access and accommodations in cases of diagnosed mental or emotional health issues, attentional or learning disabilities, vision or hearing limitations, chronic diseases, or allergies. You can contact the office at [aarc@valpo.edu](mailto:aarc@valpo.edu) or [219.464.5206](tel:219.464.5206). Students who need, or think they may need, accommodations due to a diagnosis, or who think they have a diagnosis, are invited to contact AARC to arrange a confidential discussion with the AARC office. Further, students who are registered with AARC are required to contact their professor(s) if they wish to exercise the accommodations outlined in their letter from the AARC.

5. Class Cancellation method
  - a) include a statement of means for notifying students systematically of class cancellation, especially if related to inclement weather or an emergency situation
  - b) VP Farha has provided the following suggested language:

Notifications of class cancellations will be made through Blackboard with as much advance notice as

possible. It will be both posted on Blackboard and sent to your Valpo e-mail address. If you don't check your Valpo e-mail account regularly or have it set-up to be forwarded to your preferred e-mail account, you may not get the message. Please check Blackboard and your Valpo e-mail (or the e-mail address it forwards to) before coming to class.

6. If a course is taught in a non-traditional format (e.g. online, hybrid, compressed-time, independent work, short-term study abroad), the syllabus must include an estimate of student time-on-task that matches the SCH for the course. See the Assignment of Credit Hours Policy for details.
7. (added 2019) The following statement is to be include in each syllabus and discussed at the beginning of the term:

EMERGENCIES: VU's Emergency Notification System (ENS) uses multiple forms of communication, including e-mail, building alarms, outdoor sirens, message boards, computer alerts, Twitter, and public address messaging. Please review the specific procedures for this class found in Blackboard. Remember: "Siren inside, GO outside; Siren outside, GO inside." To evacuate, gather your personal belonging quickly and proceed to the nearest exit. Do not use the elevator. To shelter in place, move away from the windows and stay low to the ground; lock or barricade the door if there is a threat of violence.

The Council of Deans has agreed that the following items are **recommended** for inclusion in each syllabus.

8. Course Details
  - a) note course number and general description
  - b) list class meeting days, times, and locations, as appropriate
  - c) list any applicable course prerequisites
9. Instructor Contact Information
  - a) phone number & e-mail address, including contact policy
  - b) office hours and location
10. Content Outline / Course Schedule
  - a) list or outline topics to be considered and/or problems to be addressed
    - consider aligning topics with assigned textbook readings
  - b) provide a weekly or daily schedule, including:
    - dates when assignments are due
    - dates for test and examinations, especially the final exam
    - date for dropping the course (no W); date for withdrawing from the course (W)

Note: While some instructors do not wish to be constrained by a schedule distributed in advance, students generally want to be able to plan their work load and do not like surprises. You can note on your syllabus that the schedule is a general guide and may not be followed strictly. A course schedule can be included in the syllabus or distributed separately.
11. Textbook(s) and Other Readings
  - a) provide full bibliographical reference(s), including ISBN
  - b) indicate explicitly whether readings are required or optional
  - c) indicate source for readings not available in the bookstore, e.g., library reserve, on-line

12. Student Performance Assessments - Project/Papers/Products

- a) types, e.g., tests, quizzes, examinations, exercises, discussions, lectures, labs
- b) type, number, length, content
- c) manner and form for reporting, e.g., written, visual, oral
- d) provide any relevant “professional quality” standards
- e) indicate deadlines and/or due dates explicitly
- f) provide your policy on late work: accepted or not? If so, with or without penalty?

Note: Expectations regarding spelling, grammar, typewritten or computer-generated papers, and other details should be explicitly stated. Requirements for individual projects should be explicitly stated as well.

13. Student Performance Assessments - Tests/Examinations

- a) number & type, e.g., essay, multiple choice, skill performance
- b) content, e.g., materials from text, lectures, readings, etc.
- c) date, time & place, e.g., during class time, unannounced
- e) list your make-up policy for absences, if you allow this

14. Attendance Policy

- a) indicate clearly whether attendance is required or optional
- b) list penalties for non-compliance, if any
- c) state any expectations for in-class participation: graded or not?

15. Academic Support Services

- a) include a statement about where and how students can obtain support for their academic work using language similar to the following:

To get help in this course, the best place to start is to work with your instructor during office hours and ask your professor if there are any Help Sessions or department-level tutoring offered for this course. The next step is to use the Academic Success Center (ASC) online directory ([valpo.edu/academicsuccess](http://valpo.edu/academicsuccess)) or contact the ASC ([academic.success@valpo.edu](mailto:academic.success@valpo.edu)) to help point you in the right direction for academic support resources for this course. Valpo’s learning centers (Writing Center, Language Resource Center, [*Hesse Learning Resource & Assessment Center*] and Academic Success Center) offer a variety of programs and services that provide group and individual learning assistance for many subject areas.

*[Insert any additional statement about Department-level Academic Support here.]*

15. Library Support Services

- a) include a statement about library resources available to students, using one of the following suggested options:

Option 1-for courses with a Blackboard page, but without a research assignment:

The librarian best able to help you navigate information resources for independent research or additional reading is listed on the library research guide for our department. Click the link to Library Guides within the Blackboard table of contents for this course.

Option 2-for courses without a Blackboard page and without a research assignment:

The librarian best able to help you navigate information resources for independent research or additional reading is listed on the library research guide for our department. The guide can be found at

<http://libguides.valpo.edu/> *[last part of the URL]*.

Option 3-for courses with a research assignment:

Our librarian for *[name of department]* is Professor *[name of librarian]*. To help you find and evaluate resources for *[name of research assignment(s)]*, schedule a research consultation with Professor *[last name of librarian]*. His/her contact information can be found on the *[name of department]* research guide at <http://libguides.valpo.edu/> *[last part of the URL]*.

16. Diversity and Inclusion

A resolution was passed at the November 20, 2013 meeting of the Faculty Senate which states:

The Faculty Senate encourages faculty members to craft and include in their syllabi language of respect and inclusion regarding diversity.

17. Title IX statement (added 10/7/2015)

VP Farha has provided the following recommended language:

Valparaiso University strives to provide an environment free of discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual violence, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking). If you have been the victim of sexual misconduct, we encourage you to report the incident. If you report the incident to a University faculty member or instructor, she or he **must notify** the University's Title IX Coordinator about the basic facts of the incident. Disclosures to University faculty or instructors of sexual misconduct incidents are **not confidential** under Title IX. **Confidential** support services available on campus include: Sexual Assault Awareness & Facilitative Education Office "SAAFE" (219-464-6789), Counseling Center (219-464-5002), University Pastors (219-464-5093), and Student Health Center (219-464-5060). For more information, visit <http://www.valpo.edu/titleix/>.

18. Statement on Excused absences by athletes (added 6/1/2018)

Lynnette Rayman, chair of the committee on intercollegiate athletics provided the following language:

Student-athletes are excused from class for university-sponsored competition but are not exempt from completing course work missed during those absences. The manner in which work will be made up is at the discretion of the instructors, and students are responsible for obtaining any class notes or other course material. Student-athletes are to provide the Class Excuse form to all faculty members for the courses in which they are enrolled during the first week of classes or as soon as schedules are set. Student-athletes may not be penalized solely for missed class time due to excused absences.