

**COMMITTEE REPORT OF ADOPTION OF POLICY RECOMMENDATION**

**DATE:** March 2, 2015  
**TO:** Adam Swenson, Acting Faculty President  
**FROM:** Educational Policies Committee and Graduate Studies Committee  
**BY:** Elizabeth T. Adams and Crist Khachikian

**Name of proposed policy: CSUN Syllabus Policy**

At its meeting on May 7, 2014, the Educational Policies Committee (EPC) adopted a policy recommendation by passing the following motion:

**MSP: To approve the revised syllabus policy.**

At its meeting on May 13, 2014, the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) approved the same policy recommendation.

At their first spring 2015 meetings, EPC and GSC each approved additional changes (reflected in this memo) based on feedback received from the Faculty Senate.

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**OLD policy (2003) for undergraduate courses:**

WRITTEN SYLLABI FOR ALL UNDERGRADUATE COURSES  
(Approved 5/8/01; modified 3/25/03)

To better inform students about the requirements, content and methodology of the university's undergraduate curricula, all faculty teaching undergraduate courses will distribute a written syllabus to each student in the course and/or post it on-line no later than the second week of classes.

The syllabus should contain the following information:

- Course objective(s).
- A brief list or summary of topics or projects covered.

- Course requirements and methods of evaluation.
- Grading criteria including whether or not the plus/minus system will be used.
- Contact information (instructor's name, office hours, office location, and campus phone number).
- For a General Education course, the syllabus should describe how it meets the currently approved goals of the General Education section in which it resides.
- For an upper-division General Education course, the syllabus should include a statement that informs students that the course is an upper-division General Education course and that it requires completion of writing assignments totaling a minimum of 2,500 words.

### **OLD undergraduate policy showing REVISIONS:**

#### ~~Written Syllabi for All Undergraduate Courses~~ CSUN Syllabus Policy

To better inform students about the requirements, content, and methodology of the university's ~~undergraduate~~ curricula, all faculty teaching ~~undergraduate courses~~ classes will distribute a written syllabus to each student in the ~~course~~ class and/or post it ~~on-line~~ online no later than the ~~second week of classes~~ first class meeting.

The written syllabus ~~should~~ must be readily printable as a single document, and must contain the following information:

1. Course description.
2. Course objective(s) or student learning outcomes.
3. A brief list or summary of topics or projects covered.
4. Course requirements, including and methods of evaluation and tentative due dates for major assignments and/or exams.
5. Grading criteria including whether or not the plus/minus system will be used.
6. Contact information including
  - Instructor's name
  - Office hours and Office location
  - CSUN email address
  - Campus phone number if applicable

7. If the syllabus is revised after the first class meeting, date(s) of revision(s).

For a General Education course, the syllabus should describe how it meets the currently must list the relevant Student Learning Outcomes approved goals of the General Education section in which it resides.

For a Writing Intensive course—that is, an upper-division General Education course, ~~the syllabus should describe how it meets the currently~~ must list the Writing Intensive Student Learning Outcomes. ~~a statement that informing students that the course is writing intensive and that it requires completion of writing assignments totaling a minimum of 2,500 words.~~

If the course satisfies the Information Competence requirement, the syllabus must list the Student Learning Outcomes for Information Competence.

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**The OLD graduate syllabus policy:**

To better inform students about the requirements, content and methodology of the University's graduate curricula, all faculty teaching graduate courses will distribute a written syllabus to each student in the course and/or post it online no later than the second week of classes. The syllabus should contain at least the following information:

- Course objective(s).
  - A brief list or summary of topics or projects covered.
  - Course requirements and methods of evaluation.
  - Grading criteria, including whether or not the plus/minus system will be used.
  - Contact information (instructor's name, office hours, office location and campus phone number).
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**The OLD graduate policy showing REVISIONS:**

To better inform students about the requirements, content, and methodology of the University's graduate curricula, all faculty teaching graduate courses classes will distribute a written syllabus to each student in the course class and/or post it online no later than the second week of classes first class meeting.

The written syllabus ~~should~~ must be readily printable as a single document, and must contain ~~at least~~ the following information:

1. Course description.
2. Course objective(s) or student learning outcomes.
3. A brief list or summary of topics or projects covered.
4. Course requirements, including and methods of evaluation and tentative due dates for major assignments and/or exams.
5. Grading criteria, including whether ~~or not~~ the plus/minus system will be used.
6. Contact information including

  - I(nstructor's name
  - O(office hours, and office location and
  - CSUN email address
  - C(ampus phone number) if applicable

7. If the syllabus is revised after the first class meeting, date(s) of revision(s).

For a General Education course, the syllabus must list the relevant Student Learning Outcomes of the General Education section in which it resides.

For a Writing Intensive course—that is, an upper-division General Education course—the syllabus must list the Writing Intensive Student Learning Outcomes.

If the course satisfies the Information Competence requirement, the syllabus must list the Student Learning Outcomes for Information Competence.

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**Clean copy of the new unified graduate & undergraduate policy:**

### CSUN Syllabus Policy

To better inform students about the requirements, content, and methodology of the university's curricula, all faculty teaching classes will distribute a written syllabus to each student in the class and/or post it online no later than the first class meeting.

The written syllabus must be readily printable as a single document, and must contain the following information:

1. Course description.
2. Course objective(s) or student learning outcomes.
3. A brief list or summary of topics or projects covered.
4. Course requirements, including methods of evaluation and tentative due dates for major assignments and/or exams.
5. Grading criteria including whether the plus/minus system will be used.
6. Contact information including
  - Instructor's name
  - Office hours and location
  - CSUN email address
  - Campus phone number if applicable
7. If the syllabus is revised after the first class meeting, date(s) of revision(s).

For a General Education course, the syllabus must list the relevant Student Learning Outcomes of the General Education section in which it resides.

For a Writing Intensive course—that is, an upper-division General Education course—the syllabus must list the Writing Intensive Student Learning Outcomes.

If the course satisfies the Information Competence requirement, the syllabus must list the Student Learning Outcomes for Information Competence.

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### **Rationale for proposed changes:**

It is simpler to have a single syllabus policy for all classes (both graduate and undergraduate). The policy applies to all teaching faculty.

When the syllabus is made available no later than the first class meeting, students will be able to gauge more quickly what will be required of them, and will be better prepared to determine whether to drop or add each course. Faculty will benefit from having a written plan in place to support teaching and learning beginning with the first class meeting.

Requiring that the syllabus be printable as a single document makes it more likely that students and colleagues will be readily able to discern the content and pacing of the course.

In general, the proposed changes will provide greater clarity for students with respect to course content, requirements, and expectations (items 1-5 in the numbered list).

The inclusion of tentative due dates for major assignments (item 4) helps students manage their time through the semester.

Including additional faculty contact information will make it easier for students to reach faculty (item 6 in the numbered list). Email is the designated mode for official university communication. Not all faculty offices have phones. Of those that do, not all are equipped with messaging capability.

Adding dates of revision when the syllabus changes (item 7) will protect both students and faculty in the case of a grade appeal.

In response to suggestions from Senator Ron McIntyre at the November 2014 meeting of the faculty senate, we clarified the references to the faculty in the first paragraph of the policy you saw at that first reading. The faculty to whom the policy applies are the faculty teaching classes.