

August 8, 2014

Colleagues:

As you should be aware the Faculty Senate, at its April meeting, passed a revision to the Handbook requiring that **all** courses have syllabi available to students from the beginning of the semester and include specific elements within them. The Board of Trustees adopted this change at its May meeting. That Handbook language is:

310.1.2 Course Outlines and Syllabi. Faculty members are required to prepare course outlines or syllabi for their courses. Two (2) or more faculty teaching the same course may use the same outline or syllabus. An outline of each course shall be available to students from the beginning of each term. Course outlines and syllabi should be published and accessible to students throughout the term. Faculty are expected to inform students of revisions to the information provided in course outlines and syllabi when they are made.

310.1.2.1 Required Elements. Each outline and syllabus shall provide information that facilitates communication and promotes student success. This shall include: University contact information for the faculty member and the department in which the course is offered; faculty office hours; a list of required course texts and materials and how they will be used in the course; an explanation of how course grades will be determined; and an explanation for assignments requiring more than two weeks for grading. Faculty are encouraged to review department and College guidelines for preparation of course outlines and syllabi.

310.1.2.2 College and Departmental Required Elements. Colleges and/or departments may establish additional required elements on course outlines and syllabi through appropriate governance processes.

As you prepare your syllabi for the Fall semester, please read and understand each of these requirements. So that you may understand the thinking of the Senate when it adopted these requirements, we are including a clause-by-clause interpretation.

310.1.2 Requires

- a) Syllabi for each course, including independent study and thesis/dissertation hours.
- b) That syllabi be available “from” the beginning of the term which means that it is available at the beginning and available during the term as well. This can be accomplished by posting the syllabus on a Blackboard page or linked to a departmental web page.
- c) Any revisions to the syllabus must be provided to the student as soon as possible.

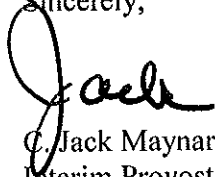
310.1.2.1 Requires that the syllabus include

- a) The faculty member's office location, office phone number and email address. Inclusion of other contact information is optional.
- b) The faculty office hours. There is no minimum number in the Handbook. These are subject to departmental and college guidelines and expectations.
- c) A list of required materials and texts. The "how they will be used" aspect can be accomplished with a calendar indicating the readings/use of materials, or in any other way the faculty member desires.
- d) An explanation of how course grades will be determined so that if a student wishes to use their graded assignments to estimate their current grade, they can do so. Clarity here will also forestall and/or resolve grade appeals based on grade calculation.
- e) Some notation and explanation of assignments/assessments that will not be returned within two weeks. By default this creates a two-week deadline for the return of these tests/papers/etc. The faculty member need only specify which ones will take longer than two weeks and why.

310.1.2.2 Allows departments and colleges to augment the list of required elements but those must flow through appropriate department/college governance. That is, a Dean or Chair cannot simply insist on a required element, but a departmental or college governing body may.

Thank you for your cooperation. We believe these changes will greatly impact the success of our students.

Sincerely,



C. Jack Maynard
Interim Provost and Vice President
for Academic Affairs



Robert Guell
Chairperson, Faculty Senate

CJM/RG/kc