

# COLLEGE of CHARLESTON

## OFFICIAL POLICY

7.6.10

Policy on Course Syllabi

4/6/2016

### Policy Statement

#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Course syllabi must be created and distributed at the beginning of the enrollment term for every course section at the College of Charleston (hereafter, "College"). Consistent with their professional obligations as teachers and scholars, members of the Instructional Faculty are expected and required to develop and distribute course syllabi to their students. All course syllabi should show evidence of thorough and careful preparation, consistent with the College's commitment to academic rigor. For each course, the syllabus must be constructed so that the course is offered and taught in a fashion consistent with its approval by the Faculty Senate.

This Policy describes those elements of a course syllabus that must be provided for each section of a course offered by an academic unit of the College of Charleston. While significant variations are inevitable and appropriate in syllabus design from one discipline or course to another, some syllabus features should be common to all syllabi distributed at the College.

No element of this Policy shall be interpreted as contravening the College's "Statement of Academic Freedom" published in the *Faculty/Administration Manual* (Art. IV, Sect. C). The Policy on Course Syllabi requires only that Instructional Faculty provide essential course information to students and academic administrators at the onset of the course. The development and distribution of appropriate course syllabi is consistent with each faculty colleague's responsibilities as "an effective teacher and scholar" (Art. IV, Sect. B.2.d.1(b)), as stated in the College's "Statement of Professional Ethics." Further, the existence of syllabi complying with the terms of this Policy provides evidence that the faculty colleague has presented "the subject matter of all courses as announced to students and as approved by the faculty in their collective responsibility for the curriculum" (Art. IV, Sect. B.2.b(11)).

#### 2.0 DISTRIBUTION OF SYLLABI

Course syllabi must be distributed during the first week of class meetings for a face-to-

face or hybrid course section, whether electronically or during a face-to-face class meeting. During a summer term, syllabi for such course must be distributed by the conclusion of the second class meeting. Electronic distribution of syllabi is highly recommended.

Syllabus distribution during or before the first class meeting is encouraged. Students who are absent on a day when syllabi are distributed in class are responsible for securing the course syllabus in a timely fashion.

Faculty must provide all course syllabi for their assigned course sections to their Department Chairs and/or Program Directors during the first week of the enrollment term. Electronic submission of course syllabi to Department Chairs and/or Program Directors is strongly preferred. See below for additional information on syllabi retention.

Course syllabi must be distributed at the beginning of the enrollment term for individual-enrollment and distance-education course sections. Distance education syllabus requirements may also be addressed by divisional policies and procedures maintained by the Office of the Provost.

### **3.0 MANDATORY SYLLABUS CONTENT**

Some content requirements for course syllabi are described in detail in the *Faculty/Administration Manual* (hereafter, "FAM"), in the section titled "Faculty Responsibilities to Students" (Art. VIII, Sect. A).<sup>1</sup> Faculty should review this portion of the FAM when preparing to construct course syllabi, separate from and in addition to reviewing this Policy.

Department Chairs and Program Directors are responsible for assuring that syllabi comply with this Policy. Faculty should produce syllabi with all the required elements and should provide clear explanations of the required elements (e.g., grading policy). If syllabi do not comply with the provisions of this policy, they shall be revised accordingly and redistributed, at the direction of the appropriate supervisor.

A syllabus is a public document that may be posted to various websites and submitted to accreditors or other parties to demonstrate compliance with accreditor expectations, federal and state requirements, legal advice, or institutional policies. As noted in College Policy 9.1.13, "Intellectual Property Policy," course syllabi are the property of the College.

Syllabi that fail to provide the mandatory content should be corrected and redistributed, as appropriate, to students in the relevant course section(s). Syllabi should contain, at a minimum, the following content, with an appropriate level of detail:

#### *2.1 Course Title, Course Number, and Section Number*

---

<sup>1</sup> Several FAM passages are quoted or referenced in this Policy. Subsequent revisions to the FAM or other College policies will not invalidate the terms and provisions of this Policy.

- 2.2 *Course Prerequisites or Co-requisites*
- 2.3 *Semester or Academic Term*
- 2.4 *Faculty Name/Instructor of Record and Contact Information*
- 2.5 *Course Meeting Places and Times*
- 2.6 *Faculty Office Hours*
- 2.7 *Instructional Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes*
- 2.8 *Attendance Policies*
- 2.9 *Grading Policy*
- 2.10 *Required and Optional Textbooks, Equipment, and Technology*
- 2.11 *Accommodations for Students with Disabilities*<sup>2</sup>
- 2.12 *Academic Integrity Statement(s)*<sup>3</sup>
- 2.13 *Program-Specific Elements*

Additional syllabi guidelines may be developed for use in specific undergraduate or graduate academic programs, as long as those guidelines do not violate the provisions of this Policy. Program-specific syllabi guidelines, if any, should be provided to the relevant Dean(s) and are subject to review and determination by the relevant Dean(s) and the Provost. When a conflict exists between a school-, department-, or program-specific syllabus guideline and this Policy, this Policy shall prevail.

#### **4.0 RECOMMENDED SYLLABUS CONTENT**

Relevant institutional policies and procedures for several other possible syllabus elements are published in the FAM, the undergraduate and graduate catalogs, and the *Student Handbook*. Deans, Department Chairs, Program Directors, the Dean of Students, and other administrators may provide additional suggestions for syllabus contents.

Beyond those required elements for syllabi at the College, several other elements may be appropriate for inclusion on many syllabi:

- 3.1 *Teaching Philosophy and Narrative Description of the Course/Course Section*
- 3.2 *Course Schedule*
- 3.3 *Examination and Assignment Due Dates*
- 3.4 *Course Withdrawal Deadline*
- 3.5 *Behavioral Expectations for Students, Including Appropriate Use of Technology*
- 3.6 *College Policy on Religious Holidays*
- 3.7 *Specific Grading Rubrics (if available)*
- 3.8 *Administration Date for Course Evaluations*
- 3.9 *Copyright Notice (if applicable to distributed course materials)*
- 3.10 *Statements of Specific School, Departmental, or Academic Program Policies*

---

<sup>2</sup> Sample accommodation statements for syllabus use will be distributed periodically by the appropriate College office and/or made available in syllabus resource materials maintained by the Academic Affairs Division.

<sup>3</sup> Sample academic integrity statements for syllabus use will be distributed periodically by the appropriate College office and/or made available in syllabus resource materials maintained by the Academic Affairs Division.

- 3.11 *Learning and Tutoring Resources (e.g., Center for Student Learning)*
- 3.12 *Classroom and Laboratory Safety Rules (if relevant)*
- 3.13 *Expected Use of Library Reserves*
- 3.14 *Final Examination Date and Time*

Final examination dates and times are published on the website of the Office of the Registrar. Faculty may not alter the date or time of the final examination.

## **5.0 CROSS-LISTED COURSES**

Separate courses may only be described as cross-listed when cross-listing has been approved by the relevant College Committees and the Faculty Senate. Faculty should check current institutional catalogs to confirm that describing a course as cross-listed is appropriate.

When two undergraduate courses with different program prefixes are cross-listed, a single syllabus may be used for both course sections only when the cross-listed courses share the same course number, course title, course description, and course prerequisites or co-requisites. Separate syllabi are required when any discrepancy exists between the catalog entries for cross-listed undergraduate courses.

When a 400-level undergraduate course is cross-listed with a 500-level graduate course, separate syllabi must be distributed for the undergraduate and graduate versions of the cross-listed courses. Syllabi must be constructed so that cross-listed undergraduate and graduate courses are offered and taught in a fashion consistent with their approval by the Faculty Senate. Further, syllabi must make clear the differences in learning objectives, student learning outcomes, expectations, activities, and reading and other assignments for the undergraduate and graduate versions of cross-listed courses.

Department Chairs and Program Directors are responsible for the uniform application of this Policy in the development of appropriate syllabi for cross-listed courses.

## **6.0 MEETS-WITH COURSES**

As described in College Policy 7.6.9, “meets-with” courses are co-located with other courses that share facilities or other instructional resources, but where course content remains significantly different from one meets-with course to another.

When two or more courses meet with one another, separate syllabi must be produced for each course offering. Course syllabi in such cases must clearly differentiate one course section from another, consistent with the course descriptions approved by the Faculty Senate.

Department Chairs and Program Directors are responsible for the uniform application of this Policy in the development of appropriate syllabi for meets-with courses.

## **7.0 INDIVIDUAL ENROLLMENTS**

Individual enrollment syllabi must be made available to the student at the beginning of the enrollment term, including those syllabi describing internships and externships.

## **8.0 DISTANCE AND CORRESPONDENCE EDUCATION**

For each distance or correspondence education course section, a syllabus must be made available to each enrolled student at the beginning of the enrollment term. Additional information about policies relevant to distance education is found in the divisional "Distance Education Policies" document, as posted on the Academic Affairs website.

## **9.0 SYLLABUS RETENTION**

Faculty must provide all course syllabi for their assigned course sections to their Department Chairs and/or Program Directors during the first week of the enrollment term. Electronic submission of course syllabi to Department Chairs and/or Program Directors is strongly preferred and may be required by the academic unit.

No later than July 1, 2016, the Dean of each Academic School shall have developed and distributed a procedure for the collection and electronic storage of course syllabi for the relevant school. For interdisciplinary programs reporting in some fashion to more than one academic Dean, one school should be designated as the responsible unit for the collection of interdisciplinary syllabi. Notwithstanding the details of School's syllabi procedure, and whenever requested, the relevant School, Department, or Program office must be able to provide syllabi to the Office of the Provost in a timely fashion.

Because syllabi are the property of the College, as noted in College Policy 9.1.13, no employee of the College shall have the option or authority to destroy the file copies of course syllabi. In the event that only paper copies exist for syllabi created more than ten (10) years previously, a Department or Program shall have the option to digitize those syllabi for more efficient storage, or to request their remote storage. The President (or the President's designee) or the Provost (or the Provost's designee) may authorize the destruction of paper or electronic syllabi archives for syllabi created more than twenty-five (25) years prior to the destruction request.

Schools, Departments, and Academic Programs may choose to publish sample syllabi from previous semesters or academic terms on the relevant institutional websites. Such postings may be helpful to students in choosing courses and course sections for enrollment.

## **10.0 REPRESENTATIONS**

A syllabus provides an outline of topics and policies the instructor intends to follow. While syllabi should not be altered or modified without good reason, they are subject to revision by the faculty member or by the College at any time, unless alteration is expressly forbidden by a policy of the College. Course syllabi are always subject to change, even if a faculty member does not indicate the possibility of revision when the syllabus is distributed.

A syllabus is not a contract, and it does not establish a contractual relationship. Nor is a faculty member at the College authorized to bind the College to any contractual relationship, no matter what representations the faculty member might make.

### **11.0 ORDERLY MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION**

Any request to deviate from a provision of this Policy shall be approved only with the written permission of the relevant Dean (or the Dean's designee) and the written permission of the Provost (or the Provost's designee).

Disputes regarding the interpretation and/or application of this Policy may be appealed to the Provost. The decision of the Provost is final.

Nothing in this Policy is intended to prevent faculty submission of a grievance to the Faculty Grievance Committee or the Faculty Hearing Committee, depending on the nature of the claim made by the faculty colleague.

\*\*\*\*\*

---

### **Policy Manager and Responsible Department or Office**

Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs (or Provost's Designee)

---

### **Purpose/Reason for the Policy**

The purpose of this Policy is to provide clear guidance to faculty, staff, administrators, and students on the requirements for the contents of course syllabi at the College of Charleston.

---

### **Departments/Offices Affected by the Policy**

Office of the Provost  
Academic Schools, Departments, and Programs  
Office of the Registrar  
Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning  
Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Information Management  
Academic Advising and Planning Center

---

### **Procedures Related to the Policy**

Institutional procedures related to this Policy may be developed and implemented by the Provost, in consultation with the Academic Deans. School, departmental, and program policies specific to syllabi may be developed and implemented by the relevant academic administrators, in close consultation with the relevant faculty. Department and program syllabus policies must be approved by the relevant academic Dean(s). When any provision of a school, department, or program syllabus policy conflicts with this Policy, the provisions of this Policy shall prevail.

---

### **Related Policies, Documents or Forms**

*Faculty/Administration Manual*  
College Policy 7.6.9, "Course Numbering Policy"  
College Policy 9.1.13, "Intellectual Property Policy"  
Forms Maintained by the Curriculum Committee  
Forms Maintained by the Committee on Graduate Education, Continuing Education and Special Programs  
Handouts Prepared for Use in Faculty Meetings and Faculty Orientations

---

### **Review Schedule**

**Issue Date: 4/6/2016**

**Next Review: 10/01/2020**

**POLICY APPROVAL**

**(For use by the Office of the Board of Trustees or the Office of the President)**

**Policy Number:**

**President or**

**Chairman, Board of Trustees** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_