

 DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY <i>Inspiring Minds</i> Syllabus Policy	<i>Policy Sponsor:</i> Senate	<i>Approval Date:</i> Senate: April 10, 2017 Board of Governors: June 27, 2017
	<i>Responsible Unit:</i> Senate Learning and Teaching Committee	<i>Revisions:</i> Senate: June 14, 2021; May 11, 2026 Board of Governors: June 22, 2021; October 13, 2026

Related Policies: Grading Practices Policy, Student Accommodation Policy A. Classroom Recording Protocol

A. Background & Purpose

The course syllabus provides a permanent record of a course for administrative purposes and should communicate clearly and in writing the responsibilities of instructors and students to themselves, the course and each other. The course syllabus can, however, be more than a set of guidelines or instructions for the course. It can also set a positive tone for learning, open communication and support for student success. It can provide students with a learning guide that focuses on how to study and work successfully in the course/discipline and indicate where and how to seek support and additional assistance when needed, both from the instructor and via campus resources. When an instructor creates and/or modifies a syllabus, it is expected that consideration be given to students' diverse learning needs and that the differences students bring to the class be acknowledged, valued, and respected. The precise wording of a syllabus will change over time in different offerings of the course, as instructors reflect upon their on-going teaching development, student learning, the place of the course within the Department/Faculty curriculum, available resources including technology, and the evolution of the discipline. This Policy identifies a core set of information that Senate has determined needs to be conveyed to students enrolled in a course and also made available to others.

B. Application

This Policy applies to all credit-bearing undergraduate courses at the University. Some credit-bearing graduate courses (e.g., Special Topics, Modules and Directed Studies) are dynamic and may require several changes in a term and also frequently change from offering to offering. This may make compliance to some elements of this Policy difficult. Otherwise, this Policy applies to graduate courses.

C. Definitions

1. In this Policy:

a. "Academic Unit" means the Department, School, College or, in Faculties those units, the Faculty, and "Academic Unit Head" means a Chair, Director, or Dean of the respective Academic Unit;

b. “Course” means a structured series of classes or a sustained period of instruction [traditional (face-to-face), online or blended] that is offered for credit in a particular term, as part of an undergraduate or graduate program at the University;

c. “Course Syllabus Checklist” described in section D3 and E4 of this policy that includes required and recommended Syllabus elements and a link to the Course Syllabus Appendix: Student Supports & University Statements, Policies, and Guidelines.

d. “Instructor” means any faculty member (including part-time and sessional), instructor, or teaching assistant who takes on substantial responsibility for teaching a course, as determined by the Academic Unit Head;

e. “Program” means a series of Courses leading to an undergraduate or graduate degree at the University;

f. “Student” means an individual registered in a Course;

g. “Syllabus/Syllabi” means a course outline that is created by instructors as an administrative requirement associated with teaching a course and that describes the administrative, academic, and assessment components associated with a Course, and includes the components outlined in section D3 of this policy.

D. Policy

1. All courses must distribute a syllabus either in paper or electronic format, or both, on, or before, the first day of the course. At that time, the Instructor will also communicate to students their responsibility to familiarize themselves with the content of the Syllabus. Where a Learning Management System (LMS) is used the Syllabus shall be made available there to Students for the duration of the course.

2. The Syllabus must contain the required administrative, academic, and assessment information for the Course, as well as the required myDal website link to the Course Syllabus Appendix (Student Supports & University Statements, Policies, and Guidelines) The website link to the Course Syllabus Appendix will be made available in the Course Syllabus Checklist, on the Centre for Learning and Teaching (CLT) website, the Syllabus Resources page on the Learning and Teaching myDal site, the homepage of the Learning Management System (LMS), and the Dalhousie Academic Support website.

3. The Course Syllabus Checklist will contain required and recommended Syllabus elements, as well as a required myDal website link to the Course Syllabus Appendix (Student Supports & University Statements, Policies, and Guidelines) that provides a list of student supports, university statements, policies, and guidelines. Required Syllabus elements include the following:

- Administrative components (e.g., course code, credit value)

- Land acknowledgement & African Nova Scotian recognition
- Course information (e.g., course description, learning modality)
- Instructor information
- Instructor communications
- TA information (if applicable)
- Course resources and tools
- Course assessments
- Tentative course schedule
- Link to Course Syllabus Appendix: Student Supports & University Statements, Policies, and Guidelines

4. The Centre for Learning and Teaching shall update the Course Syllabus Checklist at a minimum once per year (as per E4) to ensure the currency of its contents. The Course Syllabus Checklist will be accessible to Instructors via a single web link, with current versions maintained by the CLT on their website and the Syllabus Resources page on the Learning and Teaching myDal site. The Course Syllabus Appendix (Student Supports & University Statements, Policies, and Guidelines) will be available on the CLT website, the Syllabus Resources page on the Learning and Teaching myDal site, the homepage of the Learning Management System (LMS), and the Dalhousie Academic Support website.

5. Recognizing that a Syllabus may be a creative and personal statement of teaching philosophy and style, this Policy does not impose a specific template or organizational framework, although Academic Units responsible for specific educational programs may choose to do so. In addition, this Policy only makes comment on the required elements of a Syllabus. It does not address the many ways Syllabi can be used in the educational context.

6. Academic Units may also specify the inclusion of additional or modified policies or statements in their Syllabi, provided these do not conflict with University policies and regulations and core EDI values, which shall take precedence. Any requirements or altered timelines for pre-approval of Syllabi (e.g. for accredited programs) will also reside within the Academic Unit.

7. Syllabi for current programs will be filed for reference in the Academic Unit for a period of 10 years, or longer if program approved. Subsequently, syllabi will be transferred to the Dalhousie University Archives on a rolling basis where they will be held permanently in a closed repository. Faculty members' intellectual property rights for the syllabi they created will be respected in accordance with the University's and Canadian copyright policies and legislation.

8. Any changes made within a Course after Syllabus submission must not conflict with the calendar description of the approved Course and must be clearly communicated to all Students in accordance with section F4. Changes affecting the relative weight or timing of assessment or examination components must be approved by Students as described in section F5.

9. As noted in the Academic Calendar, "In order to complete a course satisfactorily, a student must fulfill all the requirements as set down in the course outline [Syllabus]." (16.1) Instructors

should draw students' attention to this regulation and encourage students to familiarize themselves with the Syllabus and to abide by the policies and requirements described therein.

E. Administrative Structure

1. Authority: This Policy falls under the authority of Senate.
2. Syllabus Creation and Revision: Course instructors will be responsible for creating or revising their Syllabus prior to each term in which the Course is offered, within the requirements and guidelines specified by the Course Syllabus Checklist and any requirements of the relevant Academic Unit.
3. Assistance and Support: The Centre for Learning and Teaching is available to provide assistance to Instructors in preparing Syllabi, and more broadly to provide support for course design, creation of student learning outcomes, and alignment of course outcomes, activities, and assessment, and inclusion of diversity and equity principles.
4. The Course Syllabus Checklist: The Centre for Learning and Teaching (CLT) will provide and maintain a [Syllabus Resources page](#) on the Learning and Teaching myDal site for Instructors, containing the Course Syllabus Checklist and additional resources. Where possible, persistent URL links will be used so that information is updated automatically. CLT will provide non-substantive updates to the Course Syllabus Checklist at a minimum once per year to ensure the currency of its contents. The Course Syllabus Checklist will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee.
5. Academic Unit Head: The Academic Unit Head is responsible for ensuring that all Instructors within their Academic Unit are in compliance with the Policy.
6. Policy Review and Modification: This Policy will be reviewed every five years or earlier if deemed necessary by the Board of Governors, Senate, or the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee. Any interim non-substantive changes (e.g. update of a website, addition of a website) will be made by the Centre for Learning and Teaching (See E4).

F. Procedures

1. Prior to the creation or revision of a Syllabus for an upcoming Course, the Instructor shall consult with the Course Syllabus Checklist, and any applicable Syllabus elements specified by their Academic Unit, and ensure that all required components are included in the Syllabus. In addition to required administrative, academic and assessment Course Information (Course Syllabus Checklist), all Syllabi should contain a link to the [Course Syllabus Appendix](#) (Student Supports & University Statements, Policies, and Guidelines). (See D3)
2. On or before the first class, the Instructor will provide the Syllabus to all Students, either online (e.g. through the LMS), as a paper copy, or both. Important elements of the Syllabus

should be reviewed during the first class (with explicit reference to academic integrity), including the requirement that Students must read and adhere to the Syllabus (see section D8).

3. Prior to the start of the Course, the Instructor will also send an electronic copy of their Syllabus to the Academic Unit Head. Academic Unit Heads shall be responsible for retaining electronic master copies of Syllabi each term in accordance with Dalhousie Records Management Policy in a Dalhousie approved electronic repository (See Electronic Information Storage Guidelines.) Academic units will transfer Syllabi in the format received from the instructor to the Dalhousie University Archives on a rolling basis, in accordance with records management procedures, after 10 years, once per year. The Dalhousie University Archives will be responsible for retaining a historical record of Dalhousie Syllabi in a closed repository. While in the permanent custody of the Archives, the release of Syllabi will be authorized through the Academic Unit, Faculty, or Registrar's Office. Copies of Syllabi held in this repository will be accessible upon request to a student who has been confirmed to have taken a particular course, or at the request of the Instructor who taught the course, or the Academic Unit which offered the course. Syllabi transferred to the repository cannot be accessed or modified for future academic use.

4. If Instructors need to make alterations to a Course in progress for pedagogical or practical reasons (e.g. changes in topics, schedule, reading lists, etc.), these must be clearly communicated to all Students. The nature of any changes must be compatible with the calendar description of the approved Course, and should not alter the Student learning outcomes. Revised Syllabi should be submitted to the Academic Unit in accordance with F3.

5. In accordance with the Academic Calendar (16.1), "Change to the outline [Syllabus] which affect assessment components, the weight of individual assessment components, or examination requirements with a value of 10 percent or more must have the approval of at least two-thirds of enrolled students in order to be valid." Exceptions to the Course and/or Syllabus for individual student accommodation requirements will follow the Student Accommodation Policy.