Mercer University
College of Liberal Arts Syllabus Policy

1. Faculty members within the College of Liberal Arts must prepare syllabi for all of their courses each term.

2. Copies of course syllabi must be distributed to students at the first class meeting of each term, and to students who enroll late to the class.

3. Copies of all course syllabi each term must be placed in departmental files and in the Dean’s office. Departments are also encouraged to post all syllabi on their Web pages.

   Note: Do not deviate from the specified policy without negotiating or discussing changes with the entire class. An amended syllabus must be submitted to the students, the department chair, and the Associate Dean’s office.

4. If you are offering a course with a service-learning component, please review the Service Learning Syllabus Checklist on the fifth page of this document.

5. Although the specific arrangement of the content of syllabi may vary, syllabi must contain the following essential elements:

   a. Name and number of course, number of section, meeting place, days, times.

   b. Name of instructor, location and phone number of office, statement of regular office hours, availability (if any) at other times.

   c. Prerequisites (if any) for enrollment in course.

   d. Essential knowledge, skills, abilities students must possess in order to learn the course material (e.g., read at college level, perform mathematical operations through a specified level, capacity to grasp and analyze and manipulate abstract concepts, ability to differentiate between musical pitches, etc.)

   e. Student Learning Outcomes: What (generally) the student is expected to learn and be able to do at the conclusion of the course (e.g., discuss orally and in writing the novel as a literary genre, citing X works as references; recapitulate the key antecedents of World War I and two or three leading interpretations of its origins, with specific course citations; perform algebraic operations through quadratic equations; perform qualitative and quantitative analysis of Y unknowns; complete a well researched, cogently argued, fluent term paper as assigned, etc.).

For General Education courses: syllabi for GenEd courses must display the student learning outcomes for that specific literacy block endorsed by the faculty in 2014. In addition, these syllabi must contain this FERPA Disclaimer for Assessment: The College of Liberal Arts is keenly interested in assuring the quality and integrity of its General Education Program. Every semester, randomly-selected students from each General Education course will be required to submit samples of their work to an independent and objective assessment by faculty. No personally identifiable information about any student will be used for the purposes of this assessment, and assessment results will have no bearing whatsoever on student grades.
f. Tentative schedule of class sessions, assignments, and (briefly) how these relate to course objectives.

g. Assigned text(s).

h. How the course grade will be derived: Specify the weight (percentage) that each type of graded course component (exams, homework assignments, projects, laboratory reports, in-class participation, final examination, etc.) will carry in the determination of the course grade.

i. Attendance policy.

j. Policies as to late, extra-credit, make-up, and “perfectible” work.

k. Statement that the College’s academic misconduct policy (Honor Code) will be followed, for example:

   All suspected violations of the University Honor Code will be forwarded to the Honor Council.

l. Notice that any student who receives failing grades during the course is urged to arrange to meet with the instructor and discuss the work/assignment(s) in question.

m. Electronic Submission of Assignments:

   Students bear sole responsibility for ensuring that papers or assignments submitted electronically to a professor are received in a timely manner and in the electronic format(s) specified by the professor. Students are therefore obliged to have their e-mail client issue a receipt verifying that the document has been received. Students are also strongly advised to retain a copy of the dated submission on a separate disk. Faculty members are encouraged, but not required, to acknowledge receipt of the assignment.

n. Cell Phone and Pager Usage:

   Out of courtesy for all those participating in the learning experience, all cell phones and pagers must be turned off before entering any classroom, lab, or formal academic or performance event.

o. Notice that all requests for reasonable accommodation from students with disabilities will be welcomed.

Mercer University Faculty Guide to ACCESS and Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2009 (ADAAA), “otherwise qualified” students with disabilities are protected from discrimination and may be entitled to “reasonable accommodations” intended to ensure equal access to all courses, programs and services without a change of curriculum. Examples of accommodations include: testing accommodations, providing alternative format textbooks and tests, notetaking support, and modifications of policies or procedures. Equal Access may require moving a class or event to a physically accessible room, making websites accessible to screen readers, providing sign language interpreters and captioning videos. All students requesting to be recognized as a student with a disability or requiring accommodations must first self-identify by registering with the designated ACCESS Coordinator for their campus or program by providing appropriate medical documentation that supports the need for the requested accommodations.
Faculty Responsibilities

- Include the “Disability Syllabus Statement” in each syllabus (see below).
- Meet privately with each student when discussing his or her disability. Be sensitive to the student’s rights under HIPAA concerning confidential medical information and be respectful of disclosing their status in front of others.
- Please do not provide academic accommodations without first obtaining a “Faculty Accommodation Form” from the student or from the ACCESS Coordinator. This is obtained from the ACCESS and Accommodation Office on the main campus or the ACCESS Coordinator for other campuses or programs and lists approved accommodations specific to each student which are determined on a case-by-case basis.
- Discuss the approved accommodations in private. Plan with the student regarding where, when and by whom the accommodations will be provided. The student should reaffirm this plan prior to each test.
- Sign the “Faculty Accommodation Form” to indicate that you have discussed the accommodations with the student. If you require assistance with test administration, send the student to the ACCESS Coordinator to schedule the exams. If given less than a week’s notice of a test date by the student, The Coordinator may be unable to administer the test at the ACCESS office and other arrangements may need to be made.
- Discuss any concerns or questions regarding accommodations with the Disability Services Coordinator.

Disability Syllabus Statement for Macon (including RAC), Eastman, and Savannah Campuses

“Students requiring accommodations or modifications for a disability should inform the instructor at the close of the first class meeting or as soon as possible. The instructor will refer you to the ACCESS and Accommodation Office to document your disability, determine eligibility for accommodations under the ADAAA/Section 504 and to request a Faculty Accommodation Form. Disability accommodations or status will not be indicated on academic transcripts. In order to receive accommodations in a class, students with sensory, learning, psychological, physical or medical disabilities must provide their instructor with a Faculty Accommodation Form to sign. Students must return the signed form to the ACCESS Director. A new form must be requested each semester. Students with a history of a disability perceived as having a disability or with a current disability who does not wish to use academic accommodations are also strongly encouraged to register with the ACCESS and Accommodation Office and request a Faculty Accommodation Form each semester. For further information, please contact Katie Johnson, Director and ADA/504 Coordinator, at 301-2778 or visit the ACCESS and Accommodation Office website at http://www.mercer.edu/disabilityservices.”

Where necessary, you should also include one or more of the following statements:

Chemical sensitivity statement: This course includes the handling of chemicals, and the reasonable accommodation policy also applies to any chemical sensitivity, allergy, or other physical or medical condition that might limit a student’s ability to participate in the required course activities. In these cases, the instructor may require a physician’s documentation of the student’s condition before arranging accommodation. If the instructor determines that the student’s condition cannot be reasonably accommodated, then the student will be asked to select an alternative course.
Physical limitations statement: This course includes significant physical activity, and the reasonable accommodation policy also applies to any physical or medical condition that might limit a student’s ability to participate in the required course activities. In these cases, the instructor may require a physician’s documentation of the student’s condition before arranging accommodation. If the instructor determines that the student’s condition cannot be reasonably accommodated, then the student will be asked to select an alternative course.

Safety statement: This course includes activities for which there are certain risks as well as established safety procedures to minimize these risks. The instructor will explain both the risks and the prescribed safety measures. Students enrolled in this course are required to document in writing their awareness of the reasonable risks inherent in the course activities and their agreement to follow the safety procedures specified by the instructor. If a student cannot meet these terms, then the student will be asked to select an alternative course.
Service-Learning Syllabus Checklist

In order to provide students with full information to be successful and safe in completing community engagement, faculty should use the checklist below in formulating service learning syllabi and should distribute this essential information to students. Each school or college should distribute the guidelines and be responsible for insuring their use.

These guidelines have been developed by the university Community Engagement and Scholarship Council and meet best practices as outlined by the Carnegie Classification in Community Engagement.

Faculty:

Please use the checklist below to include essential information for students in your service learning course syllabus or introduction to the course’s service-learning project.

- Articulate the connection between the service and the learning goals for the course.
- Specify how students will be expected to demonstrate what they have learned in the placement/project (e.g. field journal, analytical papers, class presentations, etc.). Keep in mind that students are graded on learning, not simply on "showing up" for service work.
- Define the community need(s) that the service placement/project meets.
- Describe the nature of the service placement and/or project. Specify:
  - The roles and responsibilities of students in the placement/service project and those of the community partner.
  - Time requirements associated with the service.
  - IRB guidelines or confidentiality guidelines. Any behavioral conduct guidelines.
  - Transportation plan (if applicable).
  - Any risks associated with the work.
  - Community placement contact information.

For more extensive guidelines in developing a service learning course syllabus, see the “Checklist for Planning a Service-Learning Course” in the Mercer Faculty Guide to Service Learning, p. 21: https://community.mercer.edu/www/mu-community/service/upload/Faculty-SL-Guide-Final-Draft.pdf

For an extensive archive of model syllabi in multiple disciplines, see Campus Compact’s website: http://compact.org/resource-type/syllabi/ Faculty members can also contact Mary Alice Morgan (morgan_ma@Mercer.edu) and the Office of Service Learning for questions or assistance.