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Course Syllabus Guide and Template (Revised July 2020)

A course syllabus (also referred to as a course outline) is a critical – and required - element of your teaching toolkit. In addition to providing basic course information, the syllabus can be a powerful teaching device that provides students with an outline of each course, including how it is organized, what content will be covered, and the course objectives and expectations.

If the instructor is a member of the Lakehead University Faculty Association Union, the Collective Agreement specifies the minimum amount of information that must be provided to students. As per Article 16.02.07:

“At the commencement of each course, a faculty member shall prepare and make available to the students, information either in hard copy or electronic form concerning course requirements, assignments, evaluation procedures, components and percentage weighting of the final mark, penalties for late filing of assignments, office hours for academic counselling and any other relevant material, and shall file a copy of this information with his/her immediate supervisor. Any change to this information must be provided in either hard copy or electronic form to the students and copied to the immediate supervisor in a timely manner.”

However, based on guidance from the Ontario Human Rights Commission (March 2016), it is **strongly recommended that** **Faculties and departments/schools incorporate a message regarding academic accommodations on all course syllabi including links to policy references and other resources**. A sample of such a message (courtesy of the Faculty of Education) can be found in the Supports for Students section of the template below.

Furthermore, additional information, such as that identified in the template below and [in the literature](https://teachingcommons.lakeheadu.ca/taxonomy/term/40), has been shown to improve student performance, clarify the professional nature of the student-instructor relationship and lead to fewer conflicts over course structure, delivery and expectations. All instructors are strongly encouraged to incorporate as many of these elements as are appropriate for the course.

In addition, we have a responsibility to make all of our documents – whether hard copy or electronic – in an accessible format (as per the AODA). In general, the advice is to “keep it simple, keep it consistent!”. Student Accessibility Services has additional resources on [creating accessible documents](https://www.lakeheadu.ca/current-students/student-services/accessibility/creating-accessible-documents).

The following are some simple elements to keep in mind when creating Accessible documents:

* For emphasis, use **Bold**, NOT *italics* or underlining; limit use of UPPER CASE.
* Use an appropriate font such as Arial or Calibri and a minimum 12pt font size
* Use numbered headings in large or complex documents; Use a table of contents
* Use high contrast colours such as black text on white background
* Insert white space instead of using long paragraphs
* Use tags, captions, and/or alternate text for images
* Use page numbering
* Learn how to make your tables and charts accessible



Course Name

Department / School

Program (if applicable)

Term

**Instructor Information**

Instructor:

Office Location:

Telephone:

E-mail:

Office Hours:

**Teaching Assistant (TA) Information**: if applicable

**Course Identification**

Course Number:

Course Name:

Course Location:

Class Times:

Prerequisites:

**Course Description/Overview** - Insert the Academic Calendar description

**Course Learning Objectives**

(a series of statements that describe what the students will have learned by the time they have completed the course. Follow SMART guidelines (**S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ction-oriented, **R**esults-oriented, **T**imely and Tangible) and use verb descriptors (e.g. Bloom’s Taxonomy) that capture various levels of cognitive processing, depending on year level of your course.)

For example, By the end of this course, students will be able to:

* Identify…
* Develop…
* Design…
* List…
* Analyze…
* Demonstrate…

**Course Resources**

Course Website(s)

* myCourseLink
* Instructor website (if appropriate)

Required Course Text(s)

* List Texts, Readings (location), Websites, etc.

Additional/optional Courses Text(s) – if applicable

**Course Schedule/Outline**

Include a list, by week, of intended topics, associated readings, important events (e.g. guest speaker), holidays, last day to drop classes etc. (Note - a table works well here).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Tentative Topic | Readings |
| week of.. | Topic 1 | Chapter, website, article, other |
|  | Topic 2 |  |
|  | Etc. |  |
|  | Holiday or Break (Thanksgiving, Study Week) |  |
|  | Topic 3 |  |
|  | Etc. |  |
|  | Last Day to drop classes without Academic Penalty |  |

**Assignments and Evaluations**

Be sure to list everything that you intend to use to calculate the final course mark. A table works well here. Note - If you plan to include some kind of participation mark, be clear about your expectations.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Item | Date(s) | Value |
| In-class Assignment(s) |  |  |
| Lab Report(s) |  |  |
| Research Paper(s) |  |  |
| Mid-Term Test(s) |  |  |
| Final Examination | TBA |  |
| Class attendance/participation |  |  |
| Total |  | 100 |

**Late Assignments**

Describe your late assignment policy here.

For example, “Late assignments will automatically receive a 0 however they **will be** reviewed to provide formative evaluation feedback and **must be** submitted for course completion.”

**Assignments**

Describe all of your assignments with as much detail as possible. It is also helpful to include your evaluation framework. (See the last page for an example of an evaluation rubric.)

(If you need more time to finalize details of the assignments, that’s ok but reassure the students that you will provide detail in time for them to act on the information.)

**Course Policies**

Describe your expectations here. For example:

* behavioral standards,
* attendance,
* safety regulations (e.g. completion of WHMIS training for lab work, PPE, etc.)
* netiquette (e.g. set guidelines about how students should communicate with you including hours of availability, reasonable response time, subject headings, salutation, etc.),
* group work/collaboration – be clear on your expectations. **Information to consider including for online (asynchronous or synchronous) course test/exams/assignments to assist in preventing unsanctioned student collaboration.** Beyond providing clear expectations as part of your course syllabus, at the beginning of your test/exam or assignment, you can indicate that by completing the test/exam or in submitting their assignment, the student has read, understands and agree to the following integrity statement.

Academic Integrity Statement:

I understand and agree that:

(1) Unless otherwise allowed by the course instructor, I must complete the assignments in this course without the assistance of anyone else.

(2) Unless otherwise allowed by the course instructor, I must not access any sources or materials (in print, online, or in any other way) to complete any course exam.

I further understand and agree that, if I violate either of these two rules, or if I provide any false or misleading information about my completion of course assignments or exams, I may be prosecuted under the Lakehead University Student Code of Conduct – Academic Integrity, which requires students to act ethically and with integrity in academic matters and to demonstrate behaviours that support the University’s academic values.

**University Related Requirements**

**Regulations**

It is the responsibility of each student registered at Lakehead University to be familiar with, and comply with all the terms, requirements, regulations, policies and conditions in the Lakehead University [Academic Calendar](http://navigator.lakeheadu.ca/Catalog/ViewCatalog.aspx?pageid=viewcatalog&catalogid=25&chapterid=6999&loaduseredits=False). This includes, but is not limited to, Academic Program Requirements, Academic Schedule of Dates, University and Faculty/School Policies and Regulations and the Fees and Refund Policies and Schedules (Lakehead University Regulations webpage, DATE).

**Academic Integrity**

A breach of Academic Integrity is a serious offence. The principle of Academic Integrity, particularly of doing one’s own work, documenting properly (including use of quotation marks, appropriate paraphrasing and referencing/citation), collaborating appropriately, and avoiding misrepresentation, is a core principle in university study. Students are strongly advised to familiarize themselves with the Student Code of Conduct - Academic Integrity (["The Code"](https://www.lakeheadu.ca/students/student-life/student-conduct)) - and, in particular, **sections 26 and 83 through 85**. Non-compliance with the Code will NOT be tolerated in this course and the Code will be adhered to in terms of disciplinary action. The Code provides a full description of academic offences, procedures when Academic Integrity breaches are suspected and sanctions for breaches of Academic Integrity.

**Copyright** (Information to consider including for online [asynchronous or synchronous] course delivery to assist in preventing the unauthorized distribution of course materials)

Students should be aware that all instructional, reference, and administrative materials prepared for this course are protected in their entirety by copyright. Students are expected to comply with this copyright by only accessing and using the course materials for personal educational use related to the course, and that the materials cannot be shared in any way, without the written authorization of the course instructor. If this copyright is infringed in anyway, students may be prosecuted under the Lakehead University Student Code of Conduct – Academic Integrity, which requires students to act ethically and with integrity in academic matters and to demonstrate behaviours that support the University’s academic values.

**Instructors can use the following statement in your mycourselink/D2L site:**

Copyright Compliance:

I understand and agree that all instructional, reference, and administrative materials to which I am given access in this course (the "course materials"), whether they consist of text, still or kinetic images, or sound, whether they are in digital or hard copy formats, and in whatever media they are offered, are protected in their entirety by copyright, and that to comply with this copyright and the law

(1) I may access and download the course materials only for my own personal and non-commercial use for this course; and

(2) I am not permitted to download, copy, or store (in any medium) any text, image, or sound component of the course materials for any other purpose whatsoever, or to forward or share, transmit, broadcast, show, post or play in public, adapt, or change in any way any text, image, or sound component of the course materials, except as expressly authorized, and only to the extent authorized, in writing, by the course instructor."

I further understand and agree that, if I infringe the copyright of the course materials in any way, I may be prosecuted under the Lakehead University Student Code of Conduct – Academic Integrity, which requires students to act ethically and with integrity in academic matters and to demonstrate behaviours that support the University’s academic values.

**Supports for Students** – there are many resources available to support students. These include but are not limited to:

* [Health and Wellness](https://www.lakeheadu.ca/current-students/student-health-and-counselling-centre)
* [Student Success Centre](https://www.lakeheadu.ca/current-students/student-success-centre)
* [Student Accessibility Centre](https://www.lakeheadu.ca/current-students/student-services/accessibility/)
* [Library](https://library.lakeheadu.ca/)
* [Lakehead International](https://www.lakeheadu.ca/international)
* [Indigenous Initiatives](https://www.lakeheadu.ca/indigenous)

Lakehead University is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities and/or medical conditions to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you are a student with a disability and think you may need accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and register as early as possible. For more information, please contact [Student Accessibility Services](http://studentaccessibility.lakeheadu.ca/)  (SC0003, 343-8047 or [sas@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:sas@lakeheadu.ca))

**Mental Health Syllabi Statement**

A statement in the syllabus can send a positive signal of support for students' learning and well-being by including recommendations and encouragement for students to take care of themselves and seek help when they need it.  The statement might also be used to encourage classroom conversations about the stigma that keeps students from getting professional help.

Suggested Statement:

*As a university student, you may sometimes experience mental health concerns or stressful events that interfere with your academic performance and negatively impact your daily activities.*

*All of us can benefit from support during times of struggle. If you or anyone you know experiences academic stress, difficult life events or feelings of anxiety or depression, Student Health and Wellness is here to help. Their services are free for Lakehead Students and appointments are available. You can learn more about confidential mental health services available on and off campus at* [*lakeheadu.ca/shw*](https://www.lakeheadu.ca/students/wellness-recreation/student-health-and-wellness)*.*

*Remember that getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do- for yourself, for those you care about, and for those who care about you.  Asking for support sooner rather than later is almost always helpful.*

**Additional Information**

Course Fees

* List any course fees here.

Course Supplies

* List any required/recommended course supplies here (e.g. lab coat, safety glasses, etc.).

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Example of an Evaluation Rubric for Social Sciences Research Paper | | | | |
| Element | 85-100 | 75-84 | 60-74 | < 60 |
| Writing Mechanics  ( /20) | * conforms to APA standards (headings, manuscript header, margins, page numbers, referencing style) * good spelling and grammar * very good sentence structure * paragraphs are well planned and have excellent flow | * conforms to APA standards (headings, manuscript header, margins, page numbers) * limited spelling or grammatical errors * good sentence structure and paragraph flow | * some mistakes in APA format * some spelling and grammatical mistakes * sentences are somewhat difficult to understand * paragraphs have too many ideas | * mistakes in APA format * mistakes in spelling and grammar take away from understanding * sentences are poorly structured * paragraphs are confusing |
| Research/  Referencing  ( /20) | * excellent referencing within the text * large number of journal articles * wide variety of sources (different journals, books and other information sources) | * good referencing within the text * more than 5 journal articles * variety of sources (different journals) | * missing some referencing in the text * only 5 journal articles * limited variety of sources (multiple use of same journal or edited volume) | * very limited referencing within the text * less than 5 journal sources (or includes web sources) * no variety of sources |
| Content  ( /40) | * all aspects of the assignment are completed * information is accurate, up to date and goes beyond what is required * information is synthesized and connected to course material, as well as connections being made between literature sources * argument is well constructed and connects strongly to conclusion | * all aspects of the assignment are completed information is accurate and up to date * good synthesis of information and connection between literature sources * well constructed argument and connects to conclusion | * missing some required elements of the assignment * some information is inaccurate or out of date * the information is summarized but not well connected to literature * argument is difficult to follow to the conclusion | * several missing elements * information is often inaccurate * there is limited connection between literature or purpose of paper * limited development of argument; no real conclusions |