SYLLABUS DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

Curriculum Committee
Western Iowa Tech Community College
4647 Stone Avenue, P.O. Box 5199
Sioux City, IA 51102-5199

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COURSE SYLLABUS DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this guide is to provide faculty with guidelines for developing or updating a Course Syllabus. The syllabus is subject to updating/revision each semester it is used. The syllabus is an agreement between students and faculty as representatives of WITCC.

The Course Syllabus document describes the main curriculum elements and explains requirements for successful course completion. The primary purposes of a syllabus are to assist the instructor in organizing instruction efficiently and effectively and to inform students, prior to instruction, what is expected of them. Additionally, it may be used as a source of information by the following:

- government and private agencies when evaluating curriculum;
- college registrars and faculty when determining transferability of course credits;
- prospective students in determining whether to enroll in a course;
- part-time and substitute instructors as a guideline for instruction.

A well-designed syllabus is important to students. It helps orient them to the course. The syllabus enumerates course requirements, expectations, and minimum student competencies upon completion. Faculty are to provide a current course syllabus to each student at the first class meeting. Time should be taken to discuss its content at that time.

A course syllabus derives from the “Course Outline” and also includes instructor-formulated elements unique to an instructor’s teaching style and expectations of students. The “Course Outline” is the official control document of course content recognized and approved by the College. Course outlines are electronically stored on the network “X” drive.

Full-time and adjunct instructors are responsible for the preparation and maintenance of a course syllabus for each class taught. The syllabus must contain the specific components that are outlined and explained on the following pages. These components represent the minimum information required by the College.

When preparing a syllabus, an instructor may use any format that includes the College required components and additional information related to a course. An electronic syllabus format is available in E-Documents on mywitcc.com.

Faculty should prepare a syllabus in coordination with the department chair. Faculty need to submit a syllabus for each course taught to the department chair or campus manager. The official syllabus file is maintained by the Academic Dean of Instruction.
For both faculty and students the syllabus is an important document in the teaching-learning process and should be carefully constructed. The checklist in Appendix A will assist faculty in confirming all required components are included in the course syllabus.

Appendix C contains a sample syllabus.

WRITING A COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Syllabus Minimum Components

Though there are components which are common between the course outline and syllabus, the course outline cannot substitute for a syllabus. However, five components of the course syllabus are derived from the course outline. Faculty should use the information directly from the course outline for the following areas.

I. COURSE IDENTIFICATION
   A. Course Title
   B. Prefix and Number
   C. Semester Credit Hours

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PREREQUISITES
   This information is taken directly from the Course Outline.

III. REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND/OR MATERIALS
   This section is taken directly from the Course Outline. The specific edition of text(s) will be cited here. Also recommended study aids may be listed – dictionaries, etc. In addition, course required tools, special clothing, etc., are listed here.

IV. COURSE OBJECTIVES
   This section is taken directly from the Course Outline. Additional course objectives beyond the core course objectives need approval of the department and department chair.

V. CONTENT OUTLINE
   This section is taken directly from the Course Outline. Faculty may include more detail than required for the Course Outline.

VI. COURSE COMPETENCIES
This section is taken directly from the Course Outline. Additional course competencies beyond those on the course outline need approval of the department and department chair.

Additional Course-Related Components

Beyond the basic information derived from the course outline, an effective course syllabus has several components that provide information about the instructor, the teaching and learning elements of the course, and vital College information. An asterisk next to an item below indicates a required component of the course syllabus.

The following information may appear in the format preferred by the instructor.

I. COURSE INFORMATION (Update each semester.)

*Section Number

*Class Location (Campus, Building and Room Number)

*Meeting Days and Time

*Year/Term: (Indicates the term syllabus is being used)

*Lecture and Lab Contact Hours

*Work, Clinical, etc., Schedule
II. INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION (Update each semester)

*Instructor:

*Office Phone:

*Office Location:

*Office Hours:

*Office E-mail:

III. TEACHING AND LEARNING

This section is formulated by the instructor and delineates the teaching and learning process for the course.

The faculty explanation of the teaching and learning process is valuable for students because it explains the instructor’s teaching strategies/methods and the expectations of students for learning. This section should illustrate the collegial nature of the class and show students how to reach the highest levels of learning.

Teaching Strategies/Methods

Practicum, clinical, cooperative work experience and laboratory classes will need to be thoroughly delineated so that students know what they must do to complete the course successfully. Teaching strategies/methods may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- lecture/discussion
- media
- tutorial
- demonstration
- laboratory practice
- on-the-job work experience
- programmed instruction
- computer-assisted instruction
- online/hybrid instruction
- Iowa Communications Network (ICN) two-way interactive video and audio instruction
- Iowa Public Television telecourses
- hands-on experiments
- guest lectures
- other specialized methods that characterize instructional delivery
Learning Expectations
Students achieve their educational goals when they are actively engaged in their learning and development. Students should have a clear understanding of the instructor’s expectations in specific areas. The areas may include but not be limited to the following:

- high academic/skills achievement
- classroom conduct
- hours of outside study
- class involvement/participation
- student learning assessment activities
- team building/workplace ethics
- computer code of conduct

Write clear and specific statements which indicate whether or not, how, and under what circumstances make-up assignments and/or examinations will be permitted, administered, and graded.

This section may include class meeting dates by day and date, a testing schedule, dates when lab projects are to be completed and/or dates other class activities are due.

IV. EVALUATION/GRADING CRITERIA

This section details the following:

1. the methods used for measuring the learning, development, and progress of the student,
2. how the methods will be evaluated and combined in the composition of the final grade, and
3. the grading scale

Students need to know the criteria necessary to achieve a specific grade prior to starting a course and how student performance is evaluated. The evaluation and grading systems should describe a student’s achievement so that the system will be understood by the student, other faculty, parents, administrators, and future employers.
Course Grading Methods
Faculty should list the various methods used to evaluate student work. The methods may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- daily assignments
- laboratory activities
- class participation
- lab/skills projects
- written assignments
- proficiency examinations

Grading Breakdowns
Faculty should give explanations on how final grade is computed.

- how late assignments or missed exams are handled
- how skills projects and proficiency examinations are evaluated and graded
- how written examinations are evaluated and graded
- how class participation is evaluated
- how numerical scores are converted to letter grades
- how much emphasis will be assigned to each evaluation activity in determining the final grade

Grading Scale
Faculty should explain what constitutes an A, B, C, D, or F grade.

V. ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance
The attendance policy is unique to the individual instructors or classes but it must be consistent with the WITCC Board policy. (See Appendix B.) A statement to cover inclement weather and class attendance may also be included.

Note: Faculty are required to take attendance at each class meeting. Enrollment verification must be completed and returned to Enrollment Services as requested early in the semester.

VI. ACADEMIC HONESTY

Faculty should include a statement summarizing the student's academic responsibilities. Faculty may add more detail as needed for their discipline.
Students are responsible for their own learning and development. They have a responsibility to be an active learner by attending class, completing class and laboratory assignments, and preparing in advance of the scheduled class sessions. Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, the following:

- cheating
- plagiarism
- fabrication
- dual submission
- facilitating academic dishonesty

VII. COMPUTER CONDUCT POLICY

Faculty should include a summary of the computer conduct policy that explains the student responsibilities in using technology.

Computer Conduct
Each user is expected to follow established guidelines and not to interfere with or disrupt the orderly processes of WITCC resources such as the Internet. All existing laws and college regulations and policies apply, including not only those laws and regulations that are specific to computers and networks, but also those that may apply generally to student/employee conduct. (See WITCC “Student Handbook” or College catalog for more details.)

VIII. OTHER SPECIFIC INFORMATION

The following information may be included in the syllabus or provided to students as a separate handout.

- bibliography of WITCC Library resources
- student support services (Counseling, Student Success Center, open computer lab, etc.)
- prior skills and/or knowledge needed before taking a course
- appropriate cost and acquisition location of course materials required by the student
- required and/or recommended reading list
- field trips (dates and sites)
- late papers, projects and missed exams policy
- incomplete final grade policy
- mywitcc.com instructions
- class meeting dates
- assignment due dates
- final exam schedule
IX. AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) STATEMENT

This statement must be included in every WITCC syllabus.

*AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)*
If you have a disability for which you will need assistance, please set up an appointment with the instructor to discuss reasonable accommodations that might be helpful. For additional information and/or assistance, contact the Disabilities Coordinator in Admissions A333 or call 274-8733, extension 3216.

X. SAFETY AND SECURITY:

*There are a number of short (4 minutes or less) videos available on mywitcc.com (home page-menu on the left-SAFETY feature) regarding safety features and procedures available on campus. You are strongly advised to view these for your own personal well-being. If you have any questions or concerns, please call the Safety/Security Supervisor at 712-274-8733, extension 3210. If you have an emergency situation at the Sioux City campus, call 1316 or 911 from any telephone on campus immediately. For the outlying campuses call 911 immediately.*
APPENDIX A

Each College Now Instructor is required to have a syllabus to the Division Chairs prior to the start of the class they are teaching. The Division Chair will approve, recommend changes or reject the syllabus. The components listed below are required to be included in each syllabus.

This checklist is used in the process of assuring the same standards of achievement are expected from CEP students as well as on campus students.

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WITCC BOARD POLICY

Title ___________________________ Student Records and Requirements

Attendance Requirements

Students shall be expected to attend all sessions of classes for which they are enrolled. Absences shall not lessen student responsibility for meeting the requirements of any course.

Date of Adoption _______9/21/87____ Legal Reference: (Code of Iowa)

Date of Last Revision _______9/12/88____

Date of Current Revision _______12/11/95____

Related Administrative Procedures and Cross References ________________________