

Course Outlines

COURSE OUTLINES (SYLLABI) FOR UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

No later than the first day of class in the term a course is given, Faculties, Departments, Schools or Programs (hereafter called "Academic Units") must post on the appropriate Web site a course outline for each course offered. With the exception of courses taught by Distance Studies (WebCT), this outline also must be available electronically and/or in hard copy form at the first meeting of the course.

In order to allow students to make informed decisions on their course selection and the scheduling of their studies, each course outline must include the following information or direct students to an appropriate course Web site where these details are available:

1. **Course Information**

This includes the course name and number, and the location and days and hours that the course is scheduled (including lecture, laboratory and tutorial hours).

A) **Prerequisite checking - the student's responsibility**

If applicable, a list of the prerequisites for the course and the following notation regarding the Senate regulation with respect to the student's responsibility for ensuring that course prerequisites have been completed successfully or special permission from the Dean obtained:

"Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites."

2. **Instructor Information**

Full name, title and appropriate contact information of the instructor and, if the course is taught by more than one instructor, the name of the person responsible for the course [course coordinator].

3. **Course Syllabus**

A description of the objectives and content of the course, which shall include a statement of what is expected of the student by way of preparation, tests, exercises, essays, laboratory reports, etc. (hereafter called "assignments"), and any specific requirements for attendance and participation.

4. **Course Materials**

A description of the materials that are required (or recommended) for the course, including text books, supplemental information, notes, manuals, laboratory or safety materials, and any specific electronic devices.

5. **Methods of Evaluation**

A statement of the methods by which student performance will be evaluated and the weight of each, including an exact timetable and schedule of assignments, is required. When exact dates cannot be supplied, a tentative schedule must be issued, with an exact schedule to follow as soon as possible. This regulation does not preclude the administration of surprise assignments and quizzes, as long as the total number, approximate frequency, and value of such assignments are specified in the course outline.

Any course-specific conditions that are required to pass the course must be outlined. Conditions might include (i) minimum attendance at lectures, tutorials or laboratories, (ii) minimum overall grade on laboratory, tutorial or essay components of the methods of evaluation, or (iii) minimum required grades on a final exam, to name a few.

A clear indication of how non-illness absences from midterms, tutorials, laboratory experiments, or late essays or assignments, will be dealt with must be provided. The course outline must direct the student to the Policy on Accommodation for Illness

(http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_illness.pdf). In

addition, as indicated in the policy, instructors must state how they will be dealing with accommodation for illness of work worth less than 10% of the total course grade, and whether or not documentation for such accommodation will be required. If documentation is required for either illness or non-illness academic accommodation, then such documentation must be submitted by the student directly to the appropriate Faculty Dean's office and not to the instructor. It will be the Dean's office that will determine if accommodation is warranted.

Course instructors who wish to change the evaluation procedure shown in the course outline must receive prior approval to do so from the dean of the faculty concerned.

6. **Additional Statements**

Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

A clear statement of what electronic devices will or will not be allowed during tests and examinations.

Statement on Use of Personal Response Systems ("Clickers")

If Personal Response Systems ("Clickers") are used in the course, a reference to the Guidelines for their use (*Guidelines are shown below*). Instructors are to communicate clearly to students information on how clickers are used including: how the student's privacy will be protected, how clickers may be used by the instructor for data gathering and for evaluating the student, and why they cannot be used by anyone but the student (since the students involved in misuse of a clicker may be charged with a scholastic offence).

Statement on Academic Offences

The statement: "Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf."

Additionally,

- A) If written work will be assigned in the course and plagiarism-checking software might be used, the following statement to this effect must be included in the course outline:

"All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>)."

- B) If computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams will be given, and software might be used to check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating, the following statement must be added to course outlines:

"Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating."

Support Services

The Web sites for Registrarial Services (<http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>), and the same for affiliated university colleges when appropriate, and any appropriate Student Support Services (including the services provided by the USC listed here: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>) and the Student Development Services, should be provided for easy access.

All course outlines should contain the following statement: "Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help."

Retention of Electronic Version of Course Outlines (Syllabi)

At the same time that course outlines/syllabi are posted on the appropriate Web site, each Department must forward an electronic version of items 1-5 of each course outline (syllabus) to the Office of the Dean of the Faculty or College. By the fourth week after the start of term, the Dean's Office will forward all of the collected outlines to Registrarial Services, where they will be maintained in electronic form in the faculty/staff extranet for a minimum of ten years after the completion of the course. (Final retention periods and disposition will be determined by the relevant records retention and disposition schedule approved by the President's Advisory Committee on University Records and Archives).

COURSE OUTLINES FOR GRADUATE COURSES

As soon as possible and in any case no later than two weeks prior to the course's start, Faculties, Departments, Schools or Programs (hereafter called "Academic Units") must post on the appropriate Web site a course outline for each course offered. At the start of each course this outline also must be available electronically and/or in hard copy form.

In order to allow students to make informed decisions on their course selection and the scheduling of their studies, each course outline must include the following information or direct students to an appropriate course Web site where these details are available:

1. Course Information

This includes the course name and number, and the location and days and hours that the course is scheduled (including all required components of the class: lectures, seminars, colloquia, labs, etc).

2. Instructor Information

Full name, title and appropriate contact information of the instructor and, if the course is taught by more than one instructor, the name of the person responsible for the course [course coordinator].

3. Course Description

A description of the objectives and content of the course, which shall include a statement of what is expected of the student by way of preparation, tests, exercises, essays, laboratory reports, etc. (hereafter called "assignments"), and any specific requirements for attendance and participation.

4. Course Materials

A description of the materials that are required (or recommended) for the course, including textbooks, supplemental information, notes, manuals, laboratory or safety materials, and any specific electronic devices.

5. Methods of Evaluation

A statement of the methods by which student performance will be evaluated and the weight of each, including an exact timetable and schedule of assignments. When exact dates cannot be supplied, a tentative schedule must be issued with an exact schedule to follow as soon as possible. This regulation does not preclude the administration of surprise assignments and quizzes, as long as the total number, approximate frequency, and value of such assignments are specified in the course outline.

Any course-specific conditions that are required to pass the course must be outlined. For example, conditions might include (i) minimum attendance at lectures or laboratories, (ii) minimum overall grade on laboratory or essay components of the methods of evaluation, or (iii) minimum required grades on a final exam.

Course instructors who wish to change the evaluation procedure shown in the course outline must receive prior approval to do so from the graduate chair of the program concerned.

6. Statement on Academic Offences

The statement: "Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf

Additionally,

A) If written work will be assigned in the course and plagiarism-checking software might be used, the following statement to this effect must be included in the course outline:

"All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism-detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>)."

B) If computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams will be given, and software might be used to check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating, the following statement must be added to course outlines:

"Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating."

Retention of Electronic Version of Course Outlines (Syllabi)

At the same time that course outlines/syllabi are posted on the appropriate Web site, each program must forward an electronic version of items 1-5 of each course outline to the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (SGPS). By the fourth week after the start of term, SGPS will forward all of the collected outlines to Registrarial Services, where they will be maintained in electronic form in the faculty/staff extranet for a minimum of ten years after the completion of the course. (Final retention periods and disposition will be determined by the relevant records retention and disposition schedule approved by the President's Advisory Committee.)

GUIDELINES FOR INSTRUCTORS ON THE USE OF PERSONAL RESPONSE SYSTEMS ("CLICKERS")

Personal Response Systems ("clickers") may be used in some classes. If used, instructors should contact the Classroom Management Group (CMG) unit in the Department of Institutional Planning and Budgeting well in advance of delivery of the course. Information is at the following Web site: <http://www.ipb.uwo.ca/cmgl>

If clickers are to be used by an instructor, it is the responsibility of the instructor to:

1. give students thorough instructions on how to use the devices,
2. indicate to students by what means they can confirm that the clicker is functional
3. explain how the devices will be used in service of the educational objectives of the course,
4. explain how tasks done by the students using the device are evaluated for their mark in the course,
5. clarify that students' privacy will be protected with respect to data gathered from the responses,

6. confirm for students that data gathered using the devices will not be used for research purposes without the express written permission of the student,
7. include the Guidelines for Students on the Use of Personal Response Systems in their course outlines.

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS ON THE USE OF PERSONAL RESPONSE SYSTEMS (“CLICKERS”)

Personal Response Systems (“clickers”) may be used in some classes. If clickers are to be used in a class, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the device is activated and functional. Students must see their instructor if they have any concerns about whether the clicker is malfunctioning.

Students must use only their own clicker. If clicker records are used to compute a portion of the course grade:

- the use of somebody else’s clicker in class constitutes a scholastic offence,
- the possession of a clicker belonging to another student will be interpreted as an attempt to commit a scholastic offence.

Related Policies and Notes:

Note: With reference to the Methods of Evaluation Section (page 1, item 5) the following is a suggestion as to what could be used to refer students to the policy on Accommodation for Illness:

For the Policy on Accommodation for Illness and a downloadable SMC see:
http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_illness.pdf
[downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):
http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

Students seeking academic accommodation on illness grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department.

The instructor must then provide a statement, indicating what procedure he/she intends to follow with regards to elements worth less than 10% (bearing in mind that medical documentation can only be received by the student's home Faculty/Academic Counselling).

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/scheduling.pdf